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A Dominant Narrative in Economics?: Preservice Teachers and Pluralism in a Social Studies Methods Class

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Reinhold Hedtke

Pluralist Thinking in Economic and Socioeconomic Education

Keywords

Pluralist thinking, economic education, socioeconomic education, homo oeconomicus

For more than ten years, pluralism in economics and in the education of economists has been a hot issue. Contemporary criticism of conventional economics education has started around the turn of the millennium with student initiatives for pluralist economics like the post-autistic economics movement – with a stronghold in France (autisme-économie) – and gained momentum after the financial crisis of 2007/2008. Students turned against the perceived one-sidedness of syllabi, textbooks and exams of their universities and against economists' and economics' lack of contact with reality. In consequence, economic plurality and pluralism in economic(s) education was put onto the public agenda, initiated controversies and triggered changes in policies of higher education.

Recent student movements, however, are not the first and only stage for the debate on pluralism in economics and economic plurality. On the contrary, methodological, paradigmatic and theoretical pluralism in economic research has triggered a controversial scholarly debate. It involves key questions of teaching economics and business studies in the right way, at universities as well as at schools. Citizens and voters, pupils and students are confronted with contentious issues concerning economic policies and their pluralist scientific rationales.

However, we do not know much about the impact of these debates on curricula, schools, textbooks, classroom practices and teacher training. Undergraduates, in principle, may be fortunate to find a more pluralist place for studying – as far as there are some heterodox professors left – and overcome economics' orthodoxy by changing the university or, at least, the department. Others may join ongoing protest movements for pluralist economics or educate themselves via pluralist platforms and webs of knowledge. In contrast, pupils and students of secondary and vocational schools as well as trainee teachers normally do not have these options. As a rule, they have to come to terms with the established curricula, content, textbooks and exams. The prevailing practices in teaching economics at universities may be described as more or less monoparadigmatic, often prejudiced against problems of the real world economy, frequently politically biased, mostly obliged to conservative viewpoints and

rather close to the interests of the wealthy classes. This, of course, does not present the whole picture because some pluralist niches did survive decades of mainstream pressure and counter movements of academics and civil society gain momentum.

Against this backdrop, the thematic issue of the JSSE addresses phenomena, findings, problems and educational approaches of economic plurality and pluralism in economic research at different levels and in different contexts of the educational system. The issue will focus on teaching and learning in schools and on teacher education at universities and colleges of teacher training.

Economics textbooks promise to be the key to the core of academic economic knowledge. In *"The market deals out profits and losses" – How Standard Economic Textbooks Promote Uncritical Thinking in Metaphors*, however, Silja Graupe and Theresa Steffestun emphasise the major significance of metaphors in economics education and their impact on political and economic discourse. Their analysis focuses on metaphorical semantics around the abstract and mostly empty concept of „the market“ which are, for example, spread in the standard economic textbooks of Paul A. Samuelson and N. Gregory Mankiw (for secondary school economics see Brant <http://jsse.uni-bielefeld.de/index.php/jsse/article/view/1391/1533>, and for the use of “market” Blanchard and Coléno <http://jsse.uni-bielefeld.de/index.php/jsse/article/view/1397/1547>, both in JSSE 4-2015). Graupe and Steffestun make use of textual analysis and conceptual metaphor theory to show how “the market” is (re-) interpreted and linked to ideological and political value judgments. Consequently, the textbooks not only prevent readers from a critical reflection of the metaphorical rhetoric but also display elements of subliminal persuasion and manipulation resulting in an intellectual overwhelming of the students. Against this background, the authors suggest some antidotes for teachers and students to foster a critical and conscious use of metaphors, in textbooks as well as in public discourse.

The next paper deals with a prevalent narrative which Neil Graham Shanks puts in a nutshell as “neoclassical economics is economics”. In *A Dominant Narrative in Economics? Preservice Teachers and Pluralism in a Social Studies Methods Class*, he analyses teachers' conceptualization of this narrative, the counter narratives they develop, and the importance of acquiring pluralist perspectives. Shanks presents an interpretative comparative case study of a teacher preparation programme in the United States which addresses dominant narratives throughout the social studies curriculum. Preservice teachers were able to describe the dominant narrative of unfettered capitalism and its effects and they brought in

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counter-narratives aiming at justice and equality. However, they mostly failed in criticizing neoclassicism's epistemology and its interconnectedness to policies they were critical of. Moreover, their pedagogical content knowledge in economics contained no pluralist elements. The author highlights the importance of teaching explicitly the critique of the epistemological foundations of neoclassical theory and argues for a systematic integration of pluralism into economics methods courses.

As pluralism in academic economic education is a longstanding cause of contest, the relationship of economics and other social sciences in school curricula is a well-known conflict area in a number of countries (see Willis <http://jsse.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/index.php/jsse/article/view/1761/1718> and Lefrançois, Ethier and Cambron-Prémont <http://jsse.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/index.php/jsse/article/view/1682/1719> in JSSE 4-2017, Löfström and van den Berg <http://jsse.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/index.php/jsse/article/view/111/1189> in JSSE 2-2013). The French case is presented by Igor Martinache in his paper *Teaching Economics among other Social Sciences? The Issue of Pluralism in the Struggles Surrounding the Economic and Social Sciences Curricula in the French High School since 1967*. Previous issues of the JSSE discussed conflicts in and around the domain of social science subjects in French schools were (see Simonneaux, Tutiaux-Guillon and Legardez in JSSE 4-2012 <http://jsse.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/index.php/jsse/article/view/1211/1126>, Chatel in JSSE 2-2010 <http://jsse.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/index.php/jsse/article/view/1123/1026> and 4-2009 <http://jsse.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/index.php/jsse/article/view/1101/1004> and Tutiaux-Guillon in JSSE 2-2002 <http://jsse.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/index.php/jsse/article/view/457/373>). Martinache's study shows that pluralism is the heart of the problem with continuing controversies around this school subject. Based on interviews with teachers of Sciences Économiques et Sociales (SES) and key actors, on document analysis and participating observation, the paper carves out how SES-teachers became committed to the defence of pluralism, developed into a "mobilized group" and strengthened their individual professional practices. The author stresses the need of international comparison in this exemplary field of conflict – and the interconnectedness of teaching and learning economics and citizenship.

Sustainability provides a classic example for challenges of citizenship in political and economic contexts and for addressing uncertain, complex and controversial issues. In *Talking about Sustainability Issues when Teaching Business Economics – The 'Positioning' of a Responsible Business Person in Classroom Practice*, Pernilla Andersson presents a study of classroom approaches to sustainability in teaching business. She observed teaching practices after the introduction of the sustainability concept in the upper secondary school syllabus in Sweden. The paper shows how different rules and conditions for doing business are foregrounded in classrooms, especially with respect to contradictory expectations for business persons like adaptation to self-interest, response to customers' interests in sustainable products or sensitiveness

to the needs or interests of humans, animals and nature. Framing and the social construction of roles turn out to be of pivotal importance: talking about 'homo economicus' as realistic figure can obstruct, talking about customers in altruistic terms can foster sustainable decisions and taking the complexity of others' interests into consideration paves the way for doing business (more) sustainably.

Putting oneself in the position of business people expected to decide and act in a sustainable way does not seem to be far away from taking a citizen role in mock elections confronted with the expectation of voting responsibly. The thematically open part of this JSSE issue starts with Julie Ane Odegaard Borge's contribution "Am I a politics person?" *A Qualitative Study of Students' Perspectives on Mock Elections as Political Education*. Based on observation in Norwegian secondary schools, interviews and qualitative content analysis, Borge presents different identities of students' political participation which include different conceptions of their political selves: 'the politician', 'the party member' and 'the voter'. Students who are active members of political parties accept the three analytical categories of political identity, whereas the majority of students who are not reject 'the politician', but accept 'the party member' as their peers. All of them accept the identity of the voter which is, however, a consequence of mock voting as an assignment of the school. In sum, students take part in the mock election understood as a school duty and position themselves towards the different identities but the simulation of voting does not motivate them for participation on their behalf. As a measure of "top-down political education", mock elections seemingly fail in fostering bottom-up participation of young people.

Nora Elise Hesby Mathé and Eyvind Elstad focus on quite another field of participation and ask for a citizenship education which allows students experiencing "how it is very possible to influence political processes without access to formal channels of participation". In their paper *Students' Perceptions of Citizenship Preparation in Social Studies: The Role of Instruction and Students' Interests*, they explore how Norwegian students' social studies experience and appraisal as well as their own political online activities are related to their perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. The quantitative analyses indicate that enjoying social studies, discussions of democracy and politics, the teacher's contributions in lessons and students' online political communication are significantly associated with students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. The authors recommend focusing on students' interests and assuring quality instruction because both increase students' perceived value of the subject for civic and political engagement.

Social science education may not only (de)motivate students for participation but also foster specific political attitudes and support for concrete policies. In *Assessing the Effect of Social Science Education on Punitive Attitudes*, Michael Thomas Costelloe, Christine Arazan and Madeline Stenger present results from an online survey

of undergraduates majoring in the social sciences on support for punitive criminal justice policies. For a United States' university they show that students with a higher level of education – which is known as a strong and consistent predictor of punitiveness – and those studying social sciences are generally less punitive than others. Young people whose study programmes include issues of criminal and social justice are more distant to greater punitiveness compared to those from so-called “hard science disciplines”. (Higher educational) Framing, again, proves to produce performative effects and social scientists can contribute to develop a well-informed viewpoint through research and the education of the youth “to critical thinkers and thoughtful citizens”, thus aiming at a change in the framing of the crime problem and of criminal justice policies.

Disciplines and objects of study have a performative impact on political thinking of students. The study of *Ezinne O. Idika* and *Joseph C. Onuoha* shows that students' performance in the school subject of economics is influenced by people's personality. In *Influence of Economics Teachers' Personality on Secondary School Students' Classroom Performance* we learn about the impact of teachers' qualification, experience, subject matter knowledge and relationship to students on achievements in economics. Analysing a sample of 19 teachers and 326 students in Public Secondary Schools in Nigeria, the authors provide further evidence for the well-known positive effects of experienced teachers, teaching in a supportive environment, building a positive interpersonal relationship to students and leaning on solid knowledge of the subject matter. The authors recommend implementing policies which strengthen these factors.



Silja Graupe, Theresa Steffestun

“The market deals out profits and losses” – How Standard Economic Textbooks Promote Uncritical Thinking in Metaphors

- Standard economic textbooks exhibit a massive and implicit use of metaphors.
- This tacit use of metaphors may deceive the student reader and encourage uncritical thinking.
- Critical reflection in economic education can encourage and enable a responsible use of metaphors.

Purpose: Cognitive Linguistics has repeatedly pointed out the major significance of metaphors. In particular, metaphors are highly effective in the context of political and economic discourse. We analyze the as yet ignored use of metaphors in standard economic textbooks as exemplified by Paul A. Samuelson and N. Gregory Mankiw. The following will focus on the metaphorical semantic context surrounding the abstract concept of „the market“.

Design: Using textual analysis and drawing from Conceptual Metaphor Theory the authors examine how the concept of „the market“ is introduced as an abstract and primarily empty concept, (re-)interpreted with the help of entity metaphors, personifications and orientational metaphors, and linked to ideological and political value judgments. In addition the analysis illustrates how the use of metaphors in textbooks is not made transparent, nor is a critical reflection of the metaphorical rhetoric encouraged.

Findings: In conclusion, based on their own teaching experience, the authors, addressing both teachers and students, outline possibilities of promoting the critical and conscious use of metaphors, not only in textbooks but also in public discourse.

Keywords:

Economic textbooks, Paul A. Samuelson, N. Gregory Mankiw, metaphors in economic discourse, conceptual metaphor theory, economic education

1 Introduction¹

The market economy “should leave the market forces sufficient leeway, to unfold free and powerful. This was the driving force of growth before the crisis and will be the driving force of growth after the crisis”.

(Angela Merkel, WEF 2009)²

“The market is currently only oriented on surviving and not making profits.”

(Josef Ackermann, Spiegel 2008)³

“A market is a mechanism. [...] Prices are the balance wheel of the market mechanism.”

(Samuelson & Nordhaus, 2010, p. 26f)

Recent research has focused on the preeminent significance of market metaphors in current political thought and discourse (e.g., Pühringer, 2015; Lakoff & Wehling, 2016). Pühringer for example, who examines the type of argumentation used by the German Chancellor Angela

Merkel as cited above to push through her economic policies of austerity after the economic, financial and monetary crises of 2008/2009, summarizes his research in the following manner: “Dominant conceptual metaphors in Merkel’s crisis narrative subordinate policy-making to superior ‘market mechanisms’, which are attributed with human and natural characteristics. Moral focus of crisis narrative of ‘living-beyond-ones-means’ forces austerity policies” (Pühringer, 2015, p. 246). Many of us are familiar with how markets are understood metaphorically through the day-to-day use of language. Who has not heard of “the market” and its *driving forces*, of market *forces* and market *mechanisms*, which we are not only called upon to place our trust in but which are apparently conditional for things to *run smoothly*? It may be that the kind of metaphoric imagery used in public discourse has become so familiar to us that we no longer question its validity and instead hold it to be literally true and capable of guiding the debate on economic issues. Yet no one has ever been able to actually see or literally touch “the market *mechanism*” in the way one would touch the motor of a car, for instance. The term carries only metaphorical meaning. Stated simply, this means that concepts have been taken from an area of experience, such as the use of machinery, which, while bearing little or no relationship to economics, are yet utilized to bring meaning to it.

Using metaphors does not make the discourse about “the market” as a mechanism less effective, on the contrary. For example, cognitive linguists Georg Lakoff and Elisabeth Wehling speak explicitly of “the market” as a “myth”, a metaphor used by political conservatives to

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dominate the political discourse by influencing language use on an unconscious level (Lakoff & Wehling, 2016, p. 45).

“Political and economic ideologies are framed in metaphorical terms. Like all other metaphors, political and economic metaphors can hide aspects of reality. But in the area of politics and economics, metaphors matter more, because they constrain our lives. A metaphor in a political or economic system, by virtue of what it hides, can lead to human degradation.” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 236)

Based on this assessment it seems appropriate to expect that economics, as a scientific discipline, would take a particularly careful approach to the use of metaphors in describing the economy, including their implied ideas and concepts. It should be plausible to assume that economics as an academic discipline would encourage skills in recognizing and critically evaluating the use of metaphors, and offer methodologically substantiated alternatives when metaphors are used in the public discourse to describe abstract concepts such as “the market” or “price”. Particularly since important representatives of economics have, despite their other differences, acknowledged the power of (abstract) ideas for decades. Friedrich August Hayek (1899–1992), advocate of a social order based on “free markets”, for instance remarked:

“The power of abstract ideas is largely based on the simple fact that they are not consciously perceived as theories, but that most people understand them as immediately evident truths, which act as tacitly accepted presuppositions.” (Transl. from Hayek, 1980, p. 100)⁴

Hayek’s assessment shows that abstract ideas tend to be easily internalized and become the unquestioned basis for thought and action.⁵ This is because they generate meaning based on specific assumptions and interpretations which are hardly ever subject to conscious reflection, while inversely maintaining a determinative effect on all conscious decisions as well as habitual behavior. Recent studies in Cognitive Linguistics have shown that abstract ideas particularly turn into “immediately evident truths” when metaphors are uncritically applied as a means of interpretation (cf. Wehling, 2016, p. 68; Gibbs, 1996, p. 309; Jamrozik et al., 2016). This is because through metaphors it is possible to make a connection to a mostly unconscious framework of interpretive structures of thought described by cognitive scientists as *frames*, which lend ideas, concepts and terms immediate and persuasive interpretative power. In this manner metaphors implicitly create an image of reality which, in uncritically perceived political and economic contexts of discourse, has a profound effect.

The epistemic significance of metaphors for the discipline of economics has meanwhile been acknowledged (e.g., McCloskey 1983 and 1994; Klamer & Leonard, 1994). Brodbeck points out that this discipline’s specific and mostly unreflected metaphoric rhetoric, in particular

with regards to mechanical metaphors, can be considered its very trademark:

“Economic mechanics agree on one point extensively: Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk [for instance] [...] lends his voice equally to the choir of economic mechanics – he speaks of a ‘mechanics of exchangeable value accumulation’ – as does Leon Walras, the father of modern general equilibrium theory, who speaks of the ‘mechanics of competition’. Even Schumpeter concedes a ‘mechanism of trade’, and even describes the ‘dynamic entrepreneur’ in terms of a machine: ‘Even the entrepreneur is not a factor of change here but the vehicle of a change mechanism.’ In another example, Keynes speaks of a ‘monetary machine’. Furthermore, authors who do not trust the tendency of ‘economic forces’ towards general equilibrium still continue to be spellbound by the concept of mechanics despite their opposition to equilibrium theory: ‘The system’, Gunnar Myrdal explains with regard to the issue of underdevelopment, ‘does not of itself gravitate towards some form of equilibrium of forces but on the contrary, moves far away from it.’” (Transl. from Brodbeck, 1996, pp. 41-42)⁶

While plenty of profound research has been done in order to identify, historically contextualize and epistemologically analyze metaphors used in economic theories, economic scholarship has done little to critically reflect their use in economic education and its main medium, the textbook.⁷ Therefore in the following we will try to contribute to closing this research gap and address the specific application of abstract concepts central to the discipline, such as “the market”, “prices”, “supply”, etc., in economic education. In the following we will inquire how these concepts are metaphorically interpreted, or rather re-interpreted, particularly with regard to the manner they become emotionally as well as politically and ideologically supercharged. Our analysis is based on two textbooks, which have been chosen not only because they exemplify the standard genre of economic textbooks, but also because their global distribution and application makes them highly successful textbooks: *Economics* by Paul A. Samuelson (since 1985 co-authored by William D. Nordhaus, in the following simply Samuelson) and *Economics* by N. Gregory Mankiw. Samuelson’s textbook is widely recognized as the archetype of the modern Economics textbook and serves as a role model in content and style for the majority of currently published textbooks (cf. Walstad et al., 1998; Pearce & Hoover, 1995; Smith, 2000). We consider Mankiw’s textbook as relevant for our inquiry, since it is distributed on a global scale and is one of the most used textbooks in Germany (cf. v. Treeck & Urban, 2016, 9; in case of Germany see: Beckenbach et al., 2016, 214; Rebhan, 2017, pp. 85ff.)⁸. Methodology and content of this analysis will in particular build upon a recent study on elements of persuasion in economics education (Graupe, 2017). It will be shown that the application of metaphors in, and its consequences for standard economic education has not been made transparent in the analyzed textbooks nor has a (critical) reflection of the rhetoric been encouraged.

In our article we will proceed as follows: Section two will provide a summary of the most essential interdisciplinary findings on the significance, application and, most importantly, cognitive effect of metaphors, primarily drawn from *Conceptual Metaphor Theory* as principally formulated by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, 1999 and 2003). After this short theoretical introduction section three will describe how abstract concepts are initially established in the introductory chapters of the textbooks in question. Subsequently we will focus on the concept of “the market”. In section four we will show how these abstract concepts, largely devoid of everyday and experience-based meaning, are metaphorically transformed to carry new semantic meaning. This will be exemplified by showing what role ontological metaphors, personifications and the application of orientational metaphors play in this process. Section five will be devoted to providing examples of how these textbooks, once the metaphors have been introduced, subsequently incorporate them into an entire network of cognitive patterns of interpretation, in cognitive science known as semantic frames, and as a consequence largely become implicitly tethered to political-ideological values. In section six we will conclude with suggestions of how this inducement of uncritical thinking in standard economic textbooks may be countered in the classroom and how economic education can promote students’ critical judgment and epistemic abilities.

2. The significance and impact of metaphors: A short introduction

“Metaphors frame our thinking” (Jamrozik et al., 2016)

The study of metaphors is as old as philosophy itself. The understanding of metaphors and their significance for human beings differ throughout this tradition enormously (for the following cf. Huber, 2005). Common to all interpretations of metaphors is the fundamental etymological meaning of the Greek word *metaphorá* as transference or transposition. The starting point of the reflection on metaphors is often said to be marked by Aristotle, who understood metaphors as a rhetorical means (cf. Aristotle, 1818, pp. 329f.). In his perception, metaphors are words, which have a meaning different from their original meaning transferred to them based on the similarity of the two words.

“But a metaphor is the transposition of a noun to a signification different from its original import, either from the genus to the species, or from the species to the genus; or from the species to species, or according to the analogous. [...] Again, evening has a similar relation to day, that old age has to life. It may therefore be said that evening is the old age of the day, and that the old age is the evening of life. (Aristotle, 1818, pp. 329ff.)”

He introduced, what is commonly called the substitutive function of metaphors: “evening of life” can be substituted by the literal expression “end of life” or the

category “age”. Metaphors in this sense are a reduced comparison. This means that it is possible to say “the lion is the king of the animals” and dismiss words signaling a comparison or analogy, such as “like”. It was Aristotle himself, but also influential philosophers such as Hobbes or Locke, who, based on the understanding of metaphors as figures of speech and rhetorical decor, heavily criticized the use of metaphor especially in philosophical and scientific contexts (cf. Hobbes, 1992, pp. 43 and 45f)⁹:

“This is a way of proceeding quite contrary to metaphor and allusion, wherein for the most part lies that entertainment and pleasantry of wit, which strikes so lively on the fancy, and therefore is so acceptable to all people: because its beauty appears at first sight, and there is required no labour of thought to examine what truth or reason there is in it.” (Locke, 1967, p. 123f)

It is the cognitive turn in linguistics which led to a fundamental shift in the understanding of metaphors from a primarily rhetorical and linguistic interpretation of metaphors as figurative speech to a broader comprehension of metaphors as being the fundamental basis of human cognition, judgment and action (cf. Cassirer, 1983, p. 154; Black, 1996b, p. 398, cited in Huber, 2005, pp. 15 and 23):

“The traditional theory noticed only a few of the modes of metaphor; and limited its application of the term *metaphor* to a few of them only. And thereby it made metaphor seem to be a verbal matter, a shifting and displacement of words, whereas fundamentally it is a borrowing between and inter-course of *thoughts*, a transaction between contexts, *Thought* is metaphoric, and proceeds by comparison, and the metaphors of language derive therefrom.” (Richards, 1936, p. 94; author’s emphasis)

Metaphorical language is the result of metaphorically structured thought; this is the basic statement of cognitive linguistics. Although the discipline maintains the fundamental understanding of metaphors as the transference of meaning, it focuses on an analytical step prior to the rhetorical and linguistic analysis of metaphors and thus asks for the necessary preconditions for metaphorical language use. The philosophers Ivor Richards (1936) and Max Black (1954), who are understood to be the early revolutionaries in the cognitive turn of metaphor theory, point to the creative and interactive quality of the metaphorical process of transference (for the following cf. Black 1996a, pp. 75f. and 1996b, pp. 391f. cited in Huber, 2005, p. 20). Not only is there an interaction of meaning between the source (“king”) and the target of the metaphor (“lion”), which creates new meanings, the cognitive interaction in the process of transference is understood as a mode of human action. This new interpretation of metaphors surpasses the traditional, especially since it points to the interpretative contexts of the metaphorical source and target. That there is a whole range of meaning and normative implication attached to each concept used in metaphorical thinking and expression is one cornerstone of



this modern cognitive approach to metaphors: someone who employs metaphors interacts with meaning. She engages with these fields of meaning by selecting and thereby hiding and highlighting certain elements included in these fields. The Interaction Metaphor Theory (IMT) formulated by Black is understood to be the prelude to the much more recognized Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as put forward by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (cf. Jäkel, 1997; Liebert, 1992). The following will summarize our short introduction in metaphor theory by outlining the mode of cognition, by which this cognitive approach and the performative quality of metaphors is underpinned, to illustrate the profound significance of metaphorical thought for human action.¹⁰

“Metaphor is for most people a device of the poetic imagination and the rhetorical flourish - a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language. Moreover, metaphor is typically viewed as characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action. For this reason, most people think they can get along perfectly well without metaphor. We have found, on the contrary, that metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action. Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature.” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 3)

From the point of view of the linguist Lakoff and the philosopher Johnson, metaphors help to clarify the meaning of concepts through the use of others, by transferring a particular semantic content, and the basic cultural and sensorimotor experiences associated with it, from the source domain of the concept the metaphor refers to the target domain, that is to the concept in need of explanation (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5). Lakoff and Johnson call this process “Mapping” (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 14; Lakoff, 1993, p. 244, cited in Huber, 2005, p. 28). According to conceptual metaphor theory, metaphors are central not only to structuring human language and thought, but also human action (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 4; Schmitt, 2004). Thereby this stance emphasizes metaphors’ performative character, transcending the classical Aristotelian understanding that they are merely rhetorical stylistic devices, hence only significant as decorative rhetorical tools (cf. Kirby, 1997, p. 532). Following Lakoff and Johnson’s account, metaphors shed light on cognitive interpretive *frames* with which people perceive and judge the world and upon which they act (Wehling, 2016, 17f.). Wehling points to the relevance of these frames for human actions by indicating that “frames, not facts, determine our decisions” (Transl. from Wehling, 2016, p. 45)¹¹. In this way frames have a highly selective effect on the range of thought, judgment and action:

“Frames determine how easily facts and information are grasped, independently of whether these seem to be ‘objectively factual’ or not. In fact, there are no more ‘objective’ facts easier to understand once framing comes in to play. There are only facts which are easier to frame than others, or those which cannot be framed at all... .” (Transl. from Wehling, 2016, p. 36)¹²

The dominant role played by interpretive frameworks is more clearly understood once it has been viewed as an essential component or even constitutive element of our cognitive unconscious that is not only systematically different from all conscious (and thus controllable) thought but principally anticipates, thereby systematically informs, reflective thought (cf. e.g., Lakoff & Wehling, 2016, p. 22; Kahneman, 2012; Thaler & Sunstein, 2009, p. 22):

Our unconscious conceptual system functions like a ‘hidden hand’ that shapes how we conceptualize all aspects of our experience. This hidden hand gives form to the metaphysics that is built into our ordinary conceptual systems. It creates the entities that inhabit the cognitive unconscious – abstract entities like friendships, bargains, failures, and lies – that we use in ordinary unconscious reasoning. It thus shapes how we automatically and unconsciously comprehend what we experience. It constitutes our unreflective common sense. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, p. 13)

In this point of view the cognitive unconscious works intuitively, spontaneously, effortlessly, quasi automatically and thus is uncontrollable to conscious thought (cf. Kahneman, 2002, pp. 450f; Lakoff, 2001). Hence, with regard to how the cognitive unconscious functions, metaphors play a central role. More precisely, they must be considered an essential structural element of cognitive interpretive frameworks. In order to deepen our understanding of this, it is important to know that interpretive frameworks do not just appear from out of nowhere. Rather, they are established from tangible, often recurring individual as well as collective human experiences, which essentially become thereby embodied (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1999):

“The content and structure of a frame, thus its individual semantic frame, emerge from our experiences with the world. These include also bodily experiences, e.g. motion sequences, space, time and emotions, as well as for instance from experiences with language and culture.” (Transl. from Wehling, 2016, p. 28)¹³

Since abstract concepts essentially lack reference to concrete experience, metaphors play a significant role in interpreting these, as indicated above, by linking them to other concepts which are less abstract and refer more directly to tangible experience. Yet, the original context in which they are embedded does not need to bear much relation to the new context in which they are being linked to, a fact the use of metaphors conceals. A specific example of this is represented by the European Union’s and its Eurozone members’ creation of a highly complex package of measures to avoid insolvency among its individual member states, metaphorically titled as a “rescue umbrella” (“Rettungsschirm” in German). The highly complex structure they created, its concrete legal, political and financial consequences, extend way beyond the possible range of experience on the part of a majority of EU citizens. Referring to this package as a “rescue umbrella” engenders a metaphorical interpretation of its implications. In this way it becomes possible to trigger a

primarily unconscious, thus seemingly effortless understanding of complex political decision-making processes within the (limited) scope of a semantic frame, i.e. the metaphor's original context or source domain. Because it refers to a readily understood and familiar physical experience, it does not require any real knowledge of the metaphor's target area (those very legal, political and financial processes mentioned above). The term "rescue umbrella" connotes that the resolutions passed by the European Union and Eurozone member states are geared toward "protection", "security" and providing a "bulwark" against the inconvenience of natural and thus uncontrollable forces. Essentially, the metaphor triggers similar connotations for most people, irrespective of whether its associations adequately represent the kind of political measures involved or not. Said differently: beyond appearing not only highly selective, metaphors also can also be deceptive. Respective to the metaphor involved, an entire semantic framework and its underlying cultural and sensorimotor experiences become activated, whereby some are more prominently emphasized than others. The metaphor not only allows or restricts certain possibilities of perceiving reality but moreover, as Lakoff and Johnson emphasize, it also promotes certain ways of dealing with reality (cf. Jamrozik et al., 2016).¹⁴

"Metaphors may create realities for us, especially social realities. A metaphor may thus be a guide for future action. Such actions will, of course, fit the metaphor. This will, in turn reinforce the power of the metaphor to make experience coherent. In this sense metaphors can be self-fulfilling prophecies." (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 156)

We already mentioned that according to Cognitive Linguistics metaphors play an important role in explaining abstract concepts (cf. Gibbs, 1996, p. 309; Jamrozik et al., 2016), their distinguishing characteristic being that they lack reference to the kind of human experience which must be simulated in order to understand them: "Through metaphors we connect abstract ideas to physical experience, which allows them to be 'thought' (Transl. from Wehling, 2016, p. 68).¹⁵ In the words of Lakoff and Johnson: "[W]e typically conceptualize the nonphysical in terms of the physical – that is, we conceptualize the less clearly delineated in terms of the more clearly delineated" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 59). Cognitive Linguistics shows that this form of metaphoric conceptualization often slips under the radar of rational thought and thus escapes its conscious control:

"For the same reasons that schemas and metaphors give us power to conceptualize and reason, so they have power over us. Anything that we rely on constantly, unconsciously, and automatically is so much part of us that it cannot be easily resisted, in large measure because it is barely even noticed. To the extent that we use a conceptual schema or a conceptual metaphor, we accept its validity. Consequently, when someone else uses it, we are predisposed to accept its validity. For this reason, conventionalized schemas and metaphors have persuasive power over us." (Lakoff & Turner, 1989, p. 66)

3 Introducing the abstract concept of "the market"

Metaphors such as "the market is a mechanism" are only effective when specific modes of expression are lacking to delineate a target domain (here: economic activity in the form of monetary exchange), so that one is forced to draw from the mostly implicit basic concepts existing in the source domain to approximate understanding. However, the following quote by Mankiw illustrates that, in economics education, the specific economic language people do indeed acquire in their everyday experience is to be superseded by abstract concepts:

"One of the challenges facing students of economics is that many terms used are also used in everyday language. In economics, however, these terms mean specific things. The challenge, therefore, is to set aside that everyday understanding and think of the term or concept as economists do. Many of the concepts you will come across in this book are abstract. Abstract concepts are ones which are not concrete or real – they have no tangible qualities. We will talk about markets, efficiency, comparative advantage and equilibrium, for example, but it is not easily to physically see these concepts. There are also some concepts that are fundamental to the subject – if you master these concepts they act as a portal which enables you to think like an economist. Once you have mastered these concepts you will never think in the same way again and you will never look at an issue in the same way. These concepts are referred to as threshold concepts." (Mankiw & Taylor, 2014, p. 17)

According to Mankiw's reasoning, economic education is geared toward abandoning an everyday understanding of economic processes and replacing it by abstract concepts which have little to do with the former or other common economic concepts familiar to the students. This essentially involves loosening or even dissolving existing interpretive structures of the cognitive unconscious in a process of *unlearning*. Metaphorically we can speak of uprooting thought from its original soil. Persuasion research speaks in this regard of *depatterning*, change management respectively of *unfreezing* or *moving* thought from established patterns and structures of thought (cf. Lewin, 1947; Schein, 2006).¹⁶

However, is it possible to unequivocally identify such processes in standard economic textbooks? According to our analysis of Samuelson's *Economics* und Mankiw's *Economics* the answer would have to be yes. To illustrate this, let us take a closer look at Samuelson's *Economics* and how the concept of "the market" is introduced in the second chapter:

"The market looks as a jumble of sellers and buyers. It seems almost a miracle that food is produced in suitable amounts, gets transported to the right place, and arrives in a palatable form at the dinner table. But a close look at New York or other economies is convincing proof that a market system is neither chaos nor miracle. It is a system with its own internal logic. And it works." (Samuelson/ Nordhaus, 2010, p. 26)

The above describes "the market" as a miraculous "jumble" which (purportedly) successfully guarantees our

food supply.¹⁷ The authors claim that “a close look” will unmask the miracle. Yet the question who exactly will be looking “closer”, what “a closer” look entails and what “closer” means precisely, remains unclear. The text simply suggests that there are two ways of perceiving “the market”: one that allows it to generally appear as a wondrous chaos, and a “closer” one that sees beyond appearances into a “system” that “works”.

The above exemplifies how the text’s language maneuvers students into a state of uncertainty, since their pre-existing cognitive interpretive structures we said to provide little or no knowledge of the subject. This state is implicitly reinforced by phrases such as “you may be surprised to learn” or “see how remarkable this is” (2010, 26). In addition, the authors promise a situation in which at some point all the confusing, chaotic and astounding characteristics will make surprising sense. This is specifically conjured by introducing the metaphor of the “unseen hand”, which Samuelson introduces as a “paradox” (2005, 28-30): The kind of economic insight transmitted thus involves information which, to the beginner, simply appears surprising and unexpected, shocking the reader into questioning his or her own conventional wisdom. At the same time a peek into a new, intellectual understanding of the subject is conjured, which students can behold with awe from their perspective of non-comprehension: “One of our goals in this book is to understand how Smith’s invisible hand works its magic”, Mankiw writes (2014, p. 8). The implication here is, whatever is shrouded in the fog of conventional understanding will at some future point be more clearly understood by the students.

In our opinion this state of uncertainty is reinforced by a further tactic: Every student at the beginning of their study of economics has likely already acquired a broad network of interpretive structures, i.e. a complex frame semantic, in which different economic terms and concepts have been cognitively intertwined with implicit experience-based references. What is striking is how quickly these economic textbooks succeed in encouraging students to ignore most of their acquired semantic frames. This has been identified as a strategy of concealment which can lead to a phenomenon called hypocognition:

“Hypocognition means the non-existence or loss of ideas through a lack of language describing these ideas. Stated more casually: What discourses don’t mention is simply not being thought. Where there is a lack of words ideas cannot become established or be maintained over time. Our brain circuits do not become fired, they shrivel.” (Transl. from Wehling, 2016, pp. 64-65)¹⁸

The strategy of concealment identified in both textbook analyses is based in particular on focusing economic language and its description of complex economic phenomena solely on the term “the market” without any clear justification from the very first chapter on. In this manner Samuelson claims in his introductory chapter: “Most economic activity in most high-income countries take place in private markets – through the market

mechanism – so we begin our systematic study there” (2010, 26). “The economy” is subsequently reduced to “the market”, first by being transformed into a “system of prices and markets”, from which point it is exclusively referred to as “market system”, or even further abridged to just “markets” or even “the market” (cf. Samuelson & Nordhaus, 2005, p. 26). The manner in which conceptualization is narrowed to where much of the previously acquired knowledge of economics is suspended can also be found in Mankiw. While subsuming his last six principles of his *ten principles of economics* under the general heading “how people interact”, Mankiw frames every form of human inter-action directly within terms of “trade”, then in terms of “market economy” and ultimately in terms of “the market”, the latter being directly linked with the concept of the invisible hand mentioned above. It is within this linguistic context that all other issues are embedded. The following reads, for instance:

“If the invisible hand of the market is so wonderful, why do we need government? [...] Although the invisible hand often leads markets to allocate resources efficiently, that is not always the case. Economists use the term market failure to refer to a situation in which the market on its own fails to produce an efficient allocation of resources.” (Mankiw & Taylor, 2014, p. 8)

The above exemplifies how descriptions of the economy are reduced to “the market”, a term which on the one hand is imbued with the aura of novelty, incomprehensibility as well as wonder, while on the other is also promoted to one of the core conceptualizations students must understand in order to advance in their studies. The introduction of “the market” concept therefore takes place at a moment of cognitive uncertainty where previous semantic connections are dissolved in horror (over one’s apparent ignorance) and awe (over the apparent magic of “the market”). In the sense intended by Mankiw, therefore, the term “the market” is to be considered a *threshold concept* (cf. the quote of Mankiw cited above): a “conceptual gateway” or “portal” where the student must leave her old conceptualizations behind in order to break through to a new, and until yet, unattainable understanding: “a new way of understanding, interpreting, or viewing something may thus emerge – a transformed internal view of subject matter, subject landscape, or even world view” (Meyer & Land, 2005, p. 373) The promise that, through their textbook study, students would become economists proficient in the seemingly magical workings of “the market” may also function as a respective invitation to cross the threshold.

4 The metaphoric rhetoric of “the market”

How is it possible for students to not only reach but also pass through this *conceptual gateway*? Formulated in terms of persuasion research, once *depatterning* has occurred, how does *repatterning* happen? How are previous cognitive structures dissolved, new structures created, or “moved”, then permanently established, or “refrozen”? To clarify this issue we now would like to analyze the two standard economic textbooks in greater

detail with regard to how different kinds of metaphors are introduced and used.

4.1 Ontological metaphors

In general, metaphors play a highly significant role in the context of dissolving and restructuring the way the economy is conceptualized, whereby ontological (or entity) metaphors play a particularly important role. Ontological metaphors ascribe terms meaning as if they were self-contained, discrete entities or things in order to make them easier to conceptualize (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 25). Samuelson's textbook stands clearly in the tradition of economic scholarship in its use of entity metaphors drawn from the field of mechanics or from common knowledge of machinery (cf. the previous quotation by Brodbeck). In this manner in his textbook chapter "What is a market?" one finds, after the economy is reduced to "markets" or just "the market" as quoted and discussed above, the following "definition": "It is a system with its own internal logic. And it works" (2010, p. 26). The key to this new, transformed perspective is to be found in a purely metaphorical description, the source domain of which – systems encompassing self-organizing components that can guarantee their own functioning – is not gone into in any detail whatsoever but, rather, uncritically accepted as the departure point for metaphorical mapping. As a result, students' conceptualizations are being implicitly guided to reinterpret "the market" – originally a place of social exchange and infinite human interaction – into a discrete, self-contained uniform entity. The great "jumble" of complex social processes characteristic of economic activity is no longer described in its genuinely social context but exclusively reformulated as a "system with its own internal logic". Moreover, its reformulation occurs without conscious reflection on the transformation process it has been subjected to.

In addition, the textbook semantically augments the entity metaphor of "the market is a system" by further embedding it in a broader field of metaphorical meanings. The essential source domain in this process is derived, as already mentioned, from the field of mechanics and conventional knowledge of machinery. The chapter provides a first definition of "the market" in the following manner: "A market is a mechanism through which buyers and sellers interact to determine prices and exchange goods and services" (2010, p. 26, authors' emphasis). The metaphor of "the market is a mechanism" is syntactically simple and semantically empty, whereby the word "is" functions merely as a copula carrying no further content determination. The text does not make conscious issue of whether more semantically precise metaphorical mappings are needed to answer questions such as: How can genuinely social processes of exchange be adequately compared to mechanisms or the way machines work? Or, what limits does this comparison have? Instead, in the course of the chapter, the metaphor of "the market is a mechanism" is repeatedly and implicitly established as an apparently ontological statement through the use of other equally uncritical

mechanical metaphors such as "balance wheel", "market equilibrium", "balance", "elaborate mechanism", "super-computer", "signal", "functioning" (Samuelson & Nordhaus, 2010, pp. 26-27). Because no indication for critical reflection is given on how a metaphorical understanding of mechanics can be applied to economics, it must be assumed that conceptualizations of economic relationships are to be established within new semantic frames unconsciously, where in particular conscious and critical reflection is circumvented and implicit knowledge of, and tacit experiences with machinery are used to replace other conceptualizations of economic experience.

4.2 Personification

Metaphorical mapping, however, does not end here. Particularly conspicuous is the fact that entity metaphors such as "the market is a machine" are often ascribed *anthropomorphic* characteristics and thus in the sense of Lakoff and Johnson they also function as personifications (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 33f.). Making complex social processes and experiences appear to act as subjects additionally imbued with human characteristics and motivations helps concepts to become implicitly understandable. Importantly, the subject is not only identified as a person but is also imbued with particular characteristics. In order to exemplify what is meant by this, let us take a look at the metaphor "monarchs of the marketplace" used in Samuelson's *Economics* (2005, p. 28): Samuelson initially speaks metaphorically of "tastes and technology" as so-called "dual monarchs". In another example he speaks of "profits" as "rewards and punishments", which "guide" the market mechanism. He goes on to say: "Like a farmer using a carrot and a stick to coax a donkey forward, the market system deals out profits and losses to induce the firm to produce desired goods" (ibid.). To understand the complex metaphorical mapping involved one must look at their inherent logical ambiguities: Do *tastes* really guide the market mechanism or are they simply forces acting within it? Does "the market" deal out profits, or do profits coerce certain results in "the market"? Instead of providing clarity on these issues, the textbook continues to call up an abundance of similar metaphors which equally implicitly and diffusely create the image of an all-powerful, indistinctly delineated monarch no individual economic participant can withstand.

A further example of personification involves the concept of "the market" in Samuelson's *Economics* which is described not only as if it were a thing (ontological metaphor), hence as machine or mechanism, but also as an independently acting individual (personification) – a machine-like subject acting autonomously, guiding and regulating processes and operating according to pre-defined plans or in the context of fixed conditions: "Yet in the midst of all this turmoil, *markets are constantly solving* the what, how, and for whom. As they *balance* all the forces operating on the economy, markets are *finding* a market equilibrium of supply and demand" (Samuelson & Nordhaus, 2010, p. 27, our emphasis).

Combining entity metaphors with personifications allows an extensive interpretive framework to emerge – created by the combination of “the market” metaphor with others such as “system”, “mechanism” and “person” – to induce an implicit understanding of “the market” as a super actor with the qualities of a machine, i.e. with the regular, predictable calculations of a computer, for instance, coupled with the human ability to decide and act independently.

Mankiw’s use of entity metaphors and personifications to describe social processes in his *Economics* is, in our opinion, considerably more subtle than in Samuelson’s textbook. For example, Mankiw uses mechanical metaphors less frequently; instead, his use of the term “forces” is more common than that of “mechanism”. However the metaphor of the invisible hand and regulating player is used often in his introductory chapter (“the ‘invisible hand’ of the marketplace *guides* this self-interest into promoting general economic well-being”; 2014, p. 7, our emphasis; “one of our goals in this book is to understand how Smith’s invisible hand *works* its magic”; *ibid.*, p. 8, our emphasis).

In other ways, however, “the market” (or other synonymously used terms) is just as ubiquitously and self-evidently ascribed qualities of an independent and sovereign player. In this manner market economies are described as *organizing* economic activity and *addressing* key issues of economics while price and self-interests *guide* economic decision-making (2014, p. 7).

4.3 Orientational metaphors

Mankiw’s *Economics* also offers a paradigmatic example of the subtle use of orientational metaphors in economics textbooks. Orientational metaphors rely on fundamental spatial and physical experiences, such as inside and outside, up and down, left and right, front and back (cf. Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 14). In a striking example, Mankiw compares “the market” metaphorically to a container and thereby intimates a limiting boundary as well as an inner-outer orientation:

“Free markets *contain* many buyers and sellers of numerous goods and services”. (Mankiw & Taylor, 2014, p. 7; our emphasis)

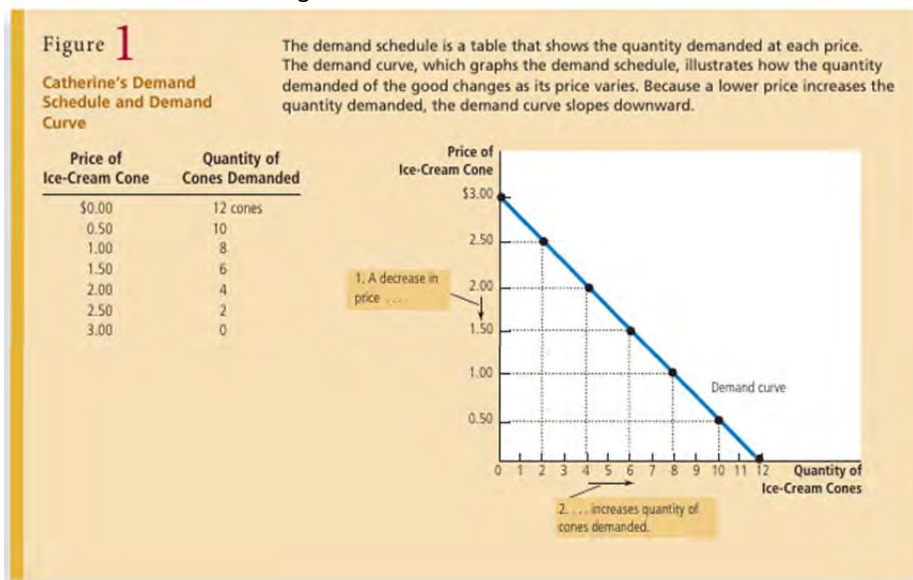
“Competitive market. A market *in which* there are many buyers and sellers so that each has a negligible impact on the market price”. (Mankiw & Taylor, 2014, p. 42; our emphasis)

What these metaphors suggest is that “the market” is not made up of people but encompasses them, as a glass would water, and which is likewise not impacted by its

qualities or characteristics. As such “the market”, understood as a container, remains in this type of framing impassive in the face of social processes taking place within it. The metaphor further suggests that economic processes cannot be delineated clearly outward; further, what lies ‘beyond’ or ‘outside’ it remains unclear. The suggestive power of this metaphor, however, lies in its ability to trigger more subtle and widely unconscious associations connected to common experiences in handling and dealing with containers and vessels such as buckets, cups and saucers etc..

We now would like to discuss one more example of orientational metaphor used by Mankiw, which we consider to play a significant role in standard economic textbooks. It concerns the implicit framing of the target domain in the context of spatial orientations such as “up”, “down”, “right”, “left” and “at the same place” and illustrated with the help of diagrams, yet without any conscious reflection on the context’s appropriateness.

Illustration 1 shows a diagram from Mankiw’s textbook:



Source: Mankiw, 2012, p. 68.

The diagram is described as follows: “Law of demand. The claim that, other things being equal, the quantity demanded of a good falls when the price of a good rises” (2012, p. 68, our emphasis). From the perspective of cognitive linguistics, by combining graphic and verbal descriptions, phenomena of quantity (demand becomes more) become metaphorically reinterpreted in terms of spatial expansion or movement: By being able to rise or fall, amounts and prices appear to move like spheres in physical space. More precisely: The sentence “demand falls” is a metaphor based on the orientation metaphor “less is down”, thus also on natural physical experiences such as a vertical build-up of building blocks. The metaphor “prices rise” derives in turn from the orientation metaphor “more is up” founded equally on basic experiences such as an increase of water levels when filling a glass.¹⁹

In this manner highly complex social phenomena such as economic demand become implicitly apprehensible because their interpretation is conceptually and intuitively reduced to not only tangible but also easily predictable and thus principally controllable physical conditions of everyday life. What the textbook neglects to do is to make its analogy to physics explicit and thus its connection to a different field of knowledge accessible to reason. As a result, readers are hardly capable of identifying these analogies as metaphors, if at all, because they tacitly draw upon fundamentally common physical experiences. Hence, knowledge appearing completely self-evident within the context of its source domain is uncritically used to augment knowledge in a target domain. Further research has to inquire, if and how the constant use of terms such as “rising” and “falling”, which because of their relation to and experience with gravity and its incontrovertible predictability in the context of their source domain, can actually lead to a completely uncritical understanding of “principles” in the economic sphere (cf. Mankiw’s example above), which becomes tacitly reinforced by the repetitive and consistent use of orientational metaphors in the sense of the mentioned ‘restructuring’ or ‘refreezing’.

5 Emotionally and ideologically charging the concept of “the market”

The example of orientation metaphors illustrates how standard economic textbooks embed metaphorically framed economic terms in what Cognitive Linguistics call deep seated frames to the point where students begin to grasp the economy without ever having to critically reflect on it. The fact that metaphors help complex economic phenomena appear more understandable simply by connecting them to physical experience does not mean, however, that these deep seated frames automatically also involve political-ideological value judgments (cf. Wehling, 2016, p. 61-62).²⁰ Yet both standard textbooks under analysis exhibited instances of implicit judgment which can be described as emotional or ideological framing. This type of framing not only makes a particular semantic interpretive framework accessible but also makes a moral judgment (cf. *ibid*). Again, following cognitive linguistics, this judgment does not take place on the level of rational thought but rather on the level of the unconscious.

Here, too, a few examples will help us illustrate the issue. Let us turn to the introductory chapter on “What is a market?” by Samuelson. A study of the phrasing in the chapter shows that it is consistently structured according to antagonistic dualisms in which “good” and “bad” confront each other.

Illustration 2 provides an overview of the dualisms exhibited in this chapter.

Verge of starvation Mortal terror of a breakdown Coercion Centralized direction Government Control of economic activity Government intervention Central intelligence	High-Income countries Private markets Market mechanism Voluntary trade Improve own economic situation Invisibly coordinated Doing very well economically Sleep easily Elaborate economic processes Coordinated through the market Willingly Elaborate mechanism Communication device Functioning remarkably well
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Source: Authors’ graphic depiction. Sample of dualisms from “The Market Mechanism” (cf. Samuelson & Nordhaus, 2010, p. 26).

In lieu of a clear definition of “the market”, Samuelson’s textbook structures the concept according to complimentary or positive aspects through direct connection to terms such as “well”, “elaborate”, and “voluntary”, seen on the right side of the list above. In comparison, “the market” is contrasted by qualities ascribed to government, exclusively associated with words carrying negative connotations such as “intervention”, “coercion”, and “starvation” without providing any explicit empirical, historical or other form of documentation and justification to back this view. This can be identified as a case of emotional framing, since both sides of the antagonistic polarity between “the market” and “the non-market” (Ötsch, 2009, p. 21) are each described in a manner triggering positive or negative feelings intuitively. Hence, everything not belonging to the “the market”, i.e. the “non-market”, is described in pejorative contexts in which terms such as “mortal terror” and “verge of starvation” appear, while everything to do with “the market” is explained according to positively connoted expressions such as “sleep easily”, “doing well”.

More striking examples of ideological framing of “the market” are to be found in both textbooks. Each is structured along a “Black and White Fallacy” (cf. Hill, 2015, 276). For instance, in Samuelson’s introduction on the significance of studying economics, one reads the following:

“A word to the sovereign student: You have read in history books of revolutions that shake civilizations to their roots – religious conflicts, war for political liberation, struggles against colonialism and imperialism. Two decades ago, economic revolutions in Eastern Europe, in the former Soviet Union, in China, and elsewhere tore those societies apart. Young people battered down walls, overthrew established authority, and agitated for democracy and a market economy because of discontent with their centralized socialist governments. Students like yourselves were marching, and even going to jail, to win the right to study radical ideas and learn from Western textbooks like this one in the hope that they may enjoy the freedom and economic prosperity of



democratic market economies.” (Samuelson & Nordhaus, 2010, p. xxii)

The significance of economics education is implicitly placed in the context of political struggles that have been ideologically interpreted in advance. The political semantic frame activated by Samuelson in the above quote could be outlined as follows: An enemy is building walls, thereby limiting freedom; the enemy is sustained by established powers identified as socialists and centralists who throw students into jail. The enemy makes young people unhappy. In contrast to this, there is a side that supports freedom, prosperity and democracy. The argumentation is clearly based on the following ideological model: (absolute) Evil against (absolute) Good (cf. Ötsch, 2009, 40-41), whereby “Good” is always associated with one’s own side. This creates the idea of a “divided world in which there is a “WE” in a perennial battle with “THE OTHERS” (Transl. from Ötsch, 2002, p. 16-17).²¹

The passage sends the following implicit message: This handbook serves the good. By studying it you will belong to the good guys, THE WE. At the same time you will be drawn directly into the battle between ‚good‘ and ‚evil‘. If others have sacrificed themselves for the struggle for “the good”, who would selfishly close ranks with “THE OTHERS”, the bad guys, by rejecting the kind of economics presented in the textbook, the right to which THE WE had to fight so fiercely for?

In short, Samuelson’s introduction immediately activates an ideological frame which meanwhile has probably become at least partially established in the unconscious minds of many Western readers, a frame associated not with scholarship but with political-ideological debates. In this frame Samuelson endeavors to extend the semantic frame ‚East versus West‘, ‚capitalism versus communism‘ to include “the market” or market economy. Without defining what “the market” or market economy actually is, Samuelson embeds the concept within the semantic frame of a divided, or bifurcated world view. This occurs in manner by which “the market” is automatically placed on the ‚right‘, i.e. ‚good‘ side:

“The bifurcated (dualistic) world is conveyed by a bifurcated language (a dual code). the market is only endowed with positive qualities. It is described [...] as good, desirable, worthwhile. [...] The non-market, however is attributed with everything that is bad. [...] Language must therefore differentiate clearly between the two parts. A bifurcated language is the means through which a bifurcated world is conveyed.” (Transl. from Ötsch, 2009, p. 21)²²

Additionally, the study of economics itself becomes linguistically intertwined with the network of positively connoted concepts of freedom, prosperity, democracy, market economy. Samuelson’s textbook appears on the side of THE WE, hence on the side of ‘good’. What is essential is that the confrontation between ‘freedom’ and ‘lack of freedom’ as described by Samuelson is in no way substantiated by facts: No proof is given whether

young men and women took to the streets or risked being imprisoned in the Soviet Union or anywhere else for the right to read Samuelson’s textbook. Nor are references made to explicit historical places, persons or relevant literature. Samuelson’s introductory text addresses political-ideological experiences and their corresponding emotions, not critical reasoning. It throws students immediately into a heated conflict where little opportunity is given to reflect on what side to take.

In Mankiw’s textbook similarly politically charged, black/white, dualist conceptualizations take place with regard to the battle of systems between East and West, communism and capitalism, in which “the market” is also embedded, even if the emotional associations they engender are more subtle. A distinctive example of a politically charged conceptualization in Mankiw is found, for instance, in the formulation of his “Ten Principles”, which seek to convey the condensed essence of economic thought. Concluding this section the passage is quoted in its entirety so that the reader can form her or his own opinion:

“The collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the 1980s may be the most important change in the world during the past half century. Communist countries worked on the premise that central planners in the government were in the best position to guide economic activity and answer the three key questions of the economic problem. [...] The theory behind central planning was that only the government could organize economic activity in a way that promoted economic well-being for the country as a whole. Today, most countries that once had centrally planned economies [...] have abandoned this system and are trying to develop market economies. In a market economy, the decisions of a central planner are replaced by the decisions of millions of firms and households. [...] At a first glance, the success of market economies is puzzling. After all, in a market economy, no one is considering the economic well-being of society as a whole. Free markets contain many buyers and sellers of numerous goods and services, and all of them are interested primarily in their own well-being. Yet, despite decentralized decision making and self-interested decision makers, market economies have proven remarkably successful in organizing economic activity in a way that promotes overall economic well-being.” (Mankiw & Taylor, 2014, pp. 6-7)

6 Conclusion

The above presented examples of how metaphors are tacitly used in standard economic textbooks, followed by a discussion whether this use could promote an unnoticed transformation of the conceptualization of the economy and hinder its critical reflection. There are, however, broader issues involved which must be addressed by future research, such as: 1) To what extent are metaphors used in standard economic textbooks? 2) What is the impact of this use, and how can it be verified? 3) To what extent is this impact intentional on the part of the authors and if so, why? 4) Is there a correlation between the use of metaphors in economic textbooks and economic theory and if so, how did this evolve?

We would like to address one last but important question: If we were to assume that the use of metaphors as discussed above promotes uncritical acceptance with regard to the conceptualization of “the market”, how can this impact be counteracted? We would like to point to Friestad and Wright (1984), who developed *persuasion knowledge models* by which the actual success of persuasion strategies cannot be measured solely by the quality of the methods used. Rather, each instance of persuasion is determined by the interplay between those intending to persuade and the recipients’ coping strategies. According to this reasoning, therefore, it would be important to recognize that every *single* effort to promote students’ critical reflection helps to attenuate the *effect* of persuasion strategies in standard economic textbooks through their uncritical use of metaphors – independent of whether persuasion was intended by the authors and publishers or not.

In this regard we would like to mention two successful examples of promoting students’ and teachers’ powers of critical reflection. First it must be noted that the use of metaphors is not rejected per se, which, according to cognitive linguistics, would be completely nonsensical. Instead, using metaphors provides students with a creative tool of human thought while offering an opportunity to learn how to use this tool critically. For example, let us look at the metaphor “free markets contain many buyers and sellers” (Mankiw/ Taylor, 2014, 7). Teachers can take this phrase and point students towards its foundational metaphor “markets are containers” – in a similar manner as in this paper – and discuss its advantages as well as disadvantages in application. They can also compare this metaphor to others used in different textbooks, for example those explicitly pursuing a different approach in contrast to Mankiw or Samuelson. Teachers can engage in discussion with their students concerning the following questions: Do the metaphors employed to explain abstract concepts such as “market” or “price” differ? Are the ways these metaphors are used different? A reflection on the kind of imagery they engender therefore becomes the catalyst for a process of interrogative thought: What actually encompasses people engaged in market activity? What do they become segregated from?, etc.. This process would allow for alternative metaphors to become generated. What happens, for instance, when students use an alternative metaphor, e.g. “money as barrier to market entrance”, coined by Brodbeck? In using metaphors it is important to recognize what is being high-lighted and concealed by them, to systematically uncover their deceptive and performative power and establish responsible connections to alternative source domains through critical reflection.

Finally, the uncritical transformation process of thought and language with regard to the economy, the strategy of *depatterning* and *repatterning* effectuated by inducing a cognitive state of shock and awe, can be countered by:

1) strengthening students’ reflection of their own interpretive structures and of the concomitant corre-

lations between common experiences and economic phenomena;

2) consistent historical, empirical and qualified documentation and evaluation of unsubstantiated claims made in the textbooks, and

3) raising awareness of political-ideological discourses and power relations.

As a result we hope that students as well as teachers will become empowered to critically reflect on the use of – and find creative ways of dealing with – metaphors in standard economics teaching while being able to understand more in depth how the knowledge they engender, and behavior they influence, impact everyday life, not only with regard to common language use but also concrete social and economic policies. We hold the didactic elements put forward here to be an important, although not exhaustive, contribution towards establishing a form of academic economics education which meets the pedagogical standard established by the Beutelsbach Consensus with regard to schools, which prohibits political education from overwhelming the student.²³ Based on the research presented here, we conclude by recommending a reformulation and application of a new consensus on the standards of curricular and pedagogical ethics in economic education at schools and universities.

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Endnotes

¹ We would like to thank Madeline Ferretti and the anonymous referees for their help in revising and improving the article. The remaining errors are the authors’.

² cf. Pühringer, 2015.

³ cf. Pühringer & Hirte, 2015, p. 609, author’s emphasis.

⁴ The original reads: “Die Macht abstrakter Ideen beruht in hohem Maße auf eben der Tatsache, daß sie nicht bewußt als Theorien aufgefaßt, sondern von den meisten Menschen als unmittelbar einleuchtende Wahrheiten angesehen werden, die als stillschweigend angenommene Voraussetzungen fungieren” (Hayek, 1980, 100).

⁵ Hayek’s rival, John Maynard Keynes, shared this opinion: “The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slave of some defunct economist” (Keynes, 1936, 383).

⁶ The original reads: “Die Wirtschafts-Mechaniker sind sich darin auf eine tiefe Weise einig: Eugen von Böhm-Bawerk [...] stimmt in diesen Chor der Wirtschaftsmechaniker ebenso ein – er spricht von einer ‘Mechanik der Tauschwertbildung’ – wie Leon Walras, der Vater der modernen Gleichgewichtstheorie, der von einem ‘Mechanismus der Konkurrenz’ spricht. Selbst Schumpeter kennt einen ‘Mechanismus der Verkehrswirtschaft’, und sogar sein ‘dynamischer Unternehmer’ wird von ihm als Maschine beschrieben. ‘Auch der Unternehmer ist hier kein Veränderungsfaktor, sondern Träger des Veränderungsmechanismus.’ Noch Keynes spricht von einer ‘monetären Maschine’. Auch Autoren, die nicht auf eine Tendenz zum Gleichgewicht der ‘ökonomischen Kräfte’ vertrauen, verbleiben in ihrer Umkehrung der Gleichgewichtstheorie im Bann der Mechanik. ‘Das System’, sagt Gunnar Myrdal über das Problem der Unterentwicklung, bewegt sich von sich aus nicht in Richtung auf irgendein Gleichgewicht der Kräfte, sondern ganz im Gegenteil davon weg.” (Brodbeck, 1996, 41-42).

⁷ For examples of research concerning the use and significance of metaphors in economic theory c.f. Aho 1985, Brodbeck 1996, Büscher 1991, Lagueux 1990, Mirowski 1990, Ötsch 1990, Pribram 1992.

⁸ Of course this exemplary study does not generate *automatic* conclusions for the entire body of textbooks. The following examination will illustrate to what extent uncritical thinking is encouraged by the implicit use of metaphors in the textbooks by Samuelson and Mankiw. We hope to provide readers with the ability to identify, judge and deal with metaphors through critical reflection.

⁹ Buchholz (1998) demonstrates how the severest critics of metaphorical language themselves employ metaphors in the elaboration of their critique and in their thinking.

¹⁰ For a critique of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory cf. Liebert, 1992 and Schmitt, 2011.

¹¹ The original reads: “Frames, nicht Fakten, bedingen unser Entscheidungsverhalten.” (Wehling, 2016, 45).

¹² The original reads: “Frames bestimmen, mit welcher Leichtigkeit wir Fakten und Informationen begreifen, unabhängig davon, wie ‚objektiv‘ gut oder schlecht begreifbar diese Fakten vermeintlich sind. Tatsächlich gibt es keine ‚objektiv‘ leichter zugänglichen Fakten, sobald Frames ins Spiel kommen. Es gibt nur solche Fakten, die gut in den Frame passen und solche, die schlecht oder gar nicht in den Frame passen” (Wehling, 2016, 36).

¹³ The original reads: “Inhalt und Strukturen eines Frames, also die jeweilige Frame-Semantik, speisen sich aus unseren Erfahrungen mit der Welt. Dazu gehört körperliche Erfahrung – wie etwa mit Bewegungsabläufen, Raum, Zeit und Emotionen – ebenso wie etwa Erfahrungen mit Sprache und Kultur” (Wehling, 2016, 28).

¹⁴ An experiment carried out by Thibodeau and Boroditzki (2011) illustrates this in an exemplary manner: Participants are given texts on the increase of urban crime and described by various metaphors. Participants who were introduced to the issue of crime as a beast suggested criminals be caught and locked behind bars. Participants who were provided the description of crime as a virus infecting cities recommended that the causes of crime be investigated and the population “immunized” accordingly. The authors concluded that the metaphor’s original domain influences not only how people perceive but also react to the situation. For further empirical research on Conceptual Metaphor Theory cf. Gibbs/ Colston 1995; Allbritton 1995; Liebert 1997 and for an overview Valenzuela/ Soriano 2005.

¹⁵ The original reads: “Abstrakte Ideen werden von uns über Metaphern an körperliche Erfahrung angebunden und damit ‚denkbar‘ gemacht” (Wehling, 2016, 68).

¹⁶ Empirical research concerning the conventional cognitive semantic framework acquired by high-school or first semester college students in the course of their young lives before commencing their studies in Economics is still a desideratum. The central questions could be: What is their more or less embodied understanding of concepts such as “market”, “competition”, “supply and demand” or more fundamental threshold concepts? How does it differ to the meaning given to them in economic textbooks? How does the process of de- and repatterning of concepts in economic textbooks with regard to these specific understandings occur? In our view it is furthermore important that this research especially focuses on the significance of the socio-cultural background of those students.

¹⁷ The authors fail to provide statistical data to substantiate this claim.

¹⁸ The original reads: “Hypokognition bedeutet die Nicht-Existenz oder den Wegfall von Ideen durch den Mangel an sprachlicher Umsetzung dieser Ideen. Etwas salopper gesagt: Was in Diskursen nicht gesagt wird, wird schlicht und ergreifend auch nicht gedacht. Denn wo die Worte fehlen, da können auch die Gedanken nicht etabliert werden oder langfristig bestehen. Die Schaltkreise in unserem Gehirn werden nicht angeworfen, sie verkümmern” (Wehling, 2016, 64-65).

¹⁹ Cf. Lakoff/ Wehling (2016,16): “Prices *rise* only in our heads. What a price really does is become more. Prices are phenomena of quantity. We understand prices to *rise* and *fall* because we think in the metaphor *more* is *above*.” (our translation, author’s emphasis).

²⁰ The connection of metaphors, frames and ideology is quite complex and a promising field of research, as it is shown by the application of Critical Metaphor Theory in Critical Discourse Analysis. Hart (2011) not only gives an overview on the research fields concerned with this connection but also applies Critical Metaphor Analysis to discover ideological elements in the political discourse on immigration.

²¹ The original reads: “zweigeteilten Welt, in der DIE WIR und DIE ANDEREN einander bekämpfen” (Ötsch, 2002, 16-17). Ötsch describes THE WE versus THE OTHERS as the core pattern underlying a demagogic world view. Cf. Ötsch, 2002, 15.

²² The original reads: „Die zweigeteilte (duale) Welt wird durch eine zweigeteilte Sprache (ein dualer Code) transportiert. DER MARKT wird nur mit positiven Eigenschaften ausgestattet. Er wird als gut, wünschenswert, erstrebenswert, [...] beschrieben. [...] Dem NICHT-MARKT hingegen wird alles Üble zugeschrieben. [...] Dazu müssen beide Teile sprachlich klar gekennzeichnet werden. Die zweigeteilte Sprache ist das Vehikel zum Transport der zweigeteilten Welt” (Ötsch, 2009, 21).

²³ The Beutelsbach Consensus is a result of a conference that took place in the 1970s in Germany to establish a form of minimal standard for civic and religious education with the goal of preserving students’ ability to form independent judgment while attending to the dividing line between political education and indoctrination.

Neil Graham Shanks

A Dominant Narrative in Economics?: Preservice Teachers and Pluralism in a Social Studies Methods Class

- The literature concluding neoclassical economics is a dominant narrative in economics education.
- Data reveals preservice teachers' conceptualization of the dominant narrative in economics.
- Preservice teachers built progressive counter-narratives, but without pluralist critique.
- In some cases content knowledge decreased with conventional coverage of neoclassical topics.
- More attention should be given to how pluralist perspectives are included in methods courses.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to evaluate one effort to challenge the problematic assumptions of the dominant narrative of neoclassical economics within a teacher preparation program that focuses on addressing dominant narratives throughout the social studies curriculum.

Design/methodology/approach: Utilizing a theoretical framework that intersects Pedagogical Content Knowledge and pluralist economics, this study consists of a general interpretive study conducted in a master's plus certification social studies methods course. Data was collected from several class sessions, including observational and artifact data, as well as semi-structured interviews with participants after the conclusion of the class.

Findings: Preservice teachers were able to spell out a dominant narrative in economics that exposed the effect of the narrative, but rarely critiqued its epistemology. Second, the fluctuations in content and curricular knowledge as well as the broader challenge of explaining pluralism in a relevant way meant the observed pedagogical content knowledge in economics was devoid of pluralist content.

Research limitations/implications: Implications from this study include the need to explicitly critique the epistemological foundations of neoclassical theory, the value of appreciative stances toward preservice teacher content knowledge, and the need to strategically integrate pluralism into economics methods courses

Keywords:

Pluralism, Economics education, social studies methods, PCK, dominant narrative

1 Introduction

"Would you repeat, Dr. Seldon, your thoughts concerning the future of Trantor?"

A. I have said, and I say again, that Trantor will lie in ruins within the next five centuries.

Q. You do not consider your statement a disloyal one?"

A. No, sir. Scientific truth is beyond loyalty and disloyalty.

Q. You are sure that your statement represents scientific truth?"

A. I am.

Q. On what basis?"

A. On the basis of the mathematics of psychohistory."
(Asimov, 1983, p. 25)

Issac Asimov's *Foundation* trilogy has been heralded as one of the great achievements in science fiction. The winner of the Hugo award for best all-time series ("1966 Hugo Awards," 2007) is a landmark "upon which a vast structure of stories [have] been built" (Gunn, 1982, p. 21). In the series, the mathematician Hari Seldon devises the science of psychohistory, or "that branch of mathematics which deals with the reactions of human conglomerates to fixed social and economic stimuli" (Asimov,

1983, p. 17) in order to determine the course of the galactic future. It is used to predict the fall of the Galactic Empire (with 92.5% certainty) and to engender the conditions necessary to rebuild a more stable galactic society. As with all literary works, the concepts embedded in this work stem from the author's social and political context, and much has been made of the overwhelmingly modernist rationalism at play in this work which began in the shadow of World War II and concluded in the early Cold War (Kakela, 2011). The fictional science of psychohistory, which is designed to discount the "vagaries of an individual" (p. 30) in favor of the "broad sweeps of economics and sociology" (p. 195) embodies much of the modernist perspective in the discipline of history itself. History as a discipline has been (and in many cases still is) considered a search for an objective truth that is "just lay[ing] there, deeply entombed in archival deposits, but only awaiting discovery and the kiss of life by worthy knight-errant historians" (Southgate, 2005, p. 85); it presupposes progress that "would be in qualities already known to be good in themselves" (Bebbington, 1979, p. 69); and it offers a chance to shape the future as evidenced by the well-worn axiom that 'those who fail to learn history are doomed to repeat it'. In terms of historiographical scholarship, these entrenched philosophies have been addressed, and the effect of the critique on the dominant narrative of objectivity, progress, and prediction has made its way to the study of history education, in the form of criticisms of textbooks, teach-

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ing methods, and the overarching ideology that guides these choices (Apple, 2004; Loewen, 2008; Wineburg, 2012).

That same intellectual changing of the guard has begun to enter into a different discipline within social studies, though the rationalist impulse holds greater sway in the most 'scientific' of the social sciences: economics. A fundamental debate is occurring between those who consider economics to be, like Seldon's psychohistory, a mathematic exploration of the mass will of individual actors, where the market is guided in a mechanistic fashion by an invisible hand that is value-free and positive (Brant, 2016); and those who want to consider uncertainties (Mikl-Horke, 2010), alternatives (Kim, 2012), and cultural diversity (Bendixen, 2010) as a way to disrupt the neo-classical model where the "combined assumptions of maximizing behavior, market equilibrium, and stable preferences, used relentlessly and unflinchingly, form the heart of the economic approach" (Becker, 1976, p. 5). Moving beyond the dominant narrative of the neo-classical paradigm is as imperative as it has been to move beyond dominant narratives in history education. This paper aims to outline the neoclassical narrative and its impact in economic education, analyze the way that preservice teachers conceptualize the dominant narrative in economics, and evaluate one effort to trouble the narrative via pluralist economics in a social studies methods class.

2 Literature review

In the field of social studies education there has been a great deal of attention paid to the role of narrative in history education. Wertsch (2000) contends that narratives are sociocultural tools that enable a polity to make sense of the world, affording them the opportunity to understand "sets of temporally distributed events into interpretable wholes" while also constraining possibilities by "inherently [limiting] one's perspective" (p. 515). In the realm of history education, narratives in the United States have often attempted to bring temporally distributed events into an interpretable whole that glorifies individual achievement, freedom, and national progress (Barton & Levstik, 2004). They have also constrained the possibility of working for a more just society by promoting the myth of meritocracy (McNamee & Miller, 2004), or suggesting we are in a post-racial society (Akom, 2008; Smith & Brown, 2014). Troubling these narratives requires a

"skilled and sophisticated reading of historical evidence that may construct nuanced, complex and sometimes contradictory historical conclusions than those found in the official history curriculum" (Salinas & Blevins, 2014, p. 37).

As historians and history education scholars have worked to combat dominant narratives through more humanizing counter-narratives (Loewen, 2010; Salinas, Fránquiz, & Rodríguez, 2016; Takaki, 2008; Zinn, 2010), so too must economic educators conceptualize and

counter the pervasive dominant narrative that exists in both the field of economics and in economics education.

3 The dominant narrative in Economics

The dominant narrative in economics upholds the neo-classical version of economics as the only real form of economic analysis, and has done so for decades (Fine, 2008; Freeman, 2010; Keen, 2011; Lee & Keen, 2004). By outlining the core tenets of this narrative, and their prevalence in economics standards and textbooks, educators can better explore the consequences of a narrative so ingrained in economic thought as to function as the field entire rather than one of many potential versions of economics.

3.1 Basic assumptions

The most significant assumption that undergirds the dominant narrative in economics involves an assumption about the nature of human beings. For neoclassical economics to 'work' (i.e. for the myriad models to function analytically and predictively), human beings must make choices based exclusively on "individual material self-interest" (R. Miller, 1993, p. 29). These choices assume humans are "insatiably acquisitive" and ignore "[a]ll other prior moral incentives, such as community and family welfare" (p. 29). That rational and isolated view of human beings allows neoclassical economics to fetishize the market (c.f. Jo, Chester, & King, 2012) as "central coordination device of economic activities" (Ötsch & Kapeller, 2010, p. 19). Markets and the models they spawn increase the prestige of economics by making it less of a social, or soft, science, and more in keeping with positivist, scientific inquiry (Adams, Keane, Dutton, & Steinmetz, 2005; Brant, 2016) where "the world is objective in the sense that it is independent of its knowers and by using scientific method it is possible to discover universal laws" (Brant, 2016, p. 9). By emphasizing positivist scientific inquiry founded on Cartesian rationality, economics as a discipline believes itself to be a predictive science with universal 'laws' in the tradition of 'hard' sciences like physics (Cameron & Astrid Siegmann, 2012).

3.2 The prevalence of the narrative in K-12 economic education

Neoclassical economics *is* economics if one analyzes economics standards and textbooks that are prevalent in American K-12 classrooms. The Council for Economic Education's (2010) *Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics (VNCE)* replicate curriculum recommendations that have been included in economic curriculum for decades (Walstad & Watts, 2015) and are recommended as "essential principle[s] of economics that an economically literate student should know" (MacDonald & Siegfried, 2012, p. 310). These national standards make up the basis of almost all state standards (MacDonald & Siegfried, 2012), and are also implemented in the majority of economic classrooms (Khayum, Valentine, & Friesner, 2006). The authors of the *Standards* make no bones about their allegiance to



the neoclassical narrative, writing that the standards “reflect the view of a large majority of economists today in favor of a ‘neoclassical model’ of economic behavior” (Siegried & Krueger, 2010, p. vi). They explicitly confirm that they exclude other paradigms because “[i]ncluding strongly held minority views of economic processes and concepts would have confused and frustrated teachers and students” (p. vi). Thus, neoclassical norms pervade classrooms around the country, functioning as an unquestioned narrative due to the perceived inability of teachers and students to grapple with alternatives, alternatives which might be more relevant or meaningful as will be discussed in the sections that follow.

The *VNCE* form the content basis for economics textbooks throughout the country. According to Lee and Lopus’s (2007) analysis, “all [high school] textbooks cover most of the 20 Voluntary National Standards” and most come close to covering all 20 (p. 203), a finding that is replicated in many undergraduate and graduate textbooks (Lee & Keen, 2004). Textbooks in social studies are physical representations of official knowledge (Apple, 2000), and dominate history classes (Loewen, 2008) with problematic representations of national history (Axtell, 1987; Brown & Brown, 2010; Cargill & Mayer, 1998). In economics, the ideological stakes of textbook control are high. Authors of textbooks are not simply trying to sell more books, but “[b]y their own account, they are much more invested in the struggle for the best minds in our society” (Graupe, 2012, p. 62). Paul Samuelson, author of *Economics* which sold four million copies over five decades (Skousen, 1997) is widely quoted as saying, “I don’t care who writes a nation’s laws — or crafts its advanced treatises — if I can write its economics textbooks” (Saunders & Walstad, 1990, p. ix). This is an acknowledgement by America’s first Nobel laureate in economics and “the foremost academic economist of the 20th century” (Weinstein, 2009, para. 1) that the fundamental assumptions of the dominant narrative can supersede politics, diplomacy, and even democracy itself.

The narrowing of economic curriculum in K-12 settings has a negative effect on the potential for pluralism in K-12 economics classrooms and a negative effect on the discipline itself, as many students are turned off when it seems that “[m]ainstream economics really [has] nothing to say of any intelligence about the economic relations characterizing the life I had led at home . . . Human connections, human needs, and the appropriate ethical responses . . . were left to other fields” (Nelson, 2010, p. 27). The integration of as many pluralist perspectives as possible as early as possible would have the effect of showing students that there are more than one way to see the world economically and contribute to diversity in the field.

3.3 Consequences of the Dominant Narrative

Ötsch and Kapeller (2012) acknowledge neoclassical economics as the dominating (“orthodox”), core theory of current “mainstream” economics while acknowledging that the commitment to the central tenets of neoclassical economics varies within the mainstream” (p.

1036) This is a vital point to acknowledge in what follows. Neoclassical economists are often self-reflective about the nature of their place in the discipline and attempt to address these consequences within their chosen economic paradigm. For example, neoclassical economics do critique some of the mathematization and model fetishism in neoclassical theory (Rodrick, 2017a). They acknowledge the occasional disparity between how economics is discussed in seminar rooms of academia and in public (Rodrick, 2017b). They also often attend to issues of inequality (CORE, 2017; Shanks, 2017), environmental cost (Krugman & Wells, 2012, and ethics (Wight & Morton, 2007). Given the overwhelming adherence to limited notions of neoclassicism in K-12 education described in the previous section, however, the following critique attends to the deleterious effects of neoclassicism in its most basic form, which is the form in which most students of economics and preservice teachers with limited economics exposure (Ayers, 2016; Joshi & Marri, 2006) encounter economics. This is not an attempt to construct strawman, but rather an attempt to use the axioms of neoclassical economics to explore the problematic ways they could be used to see the world and illustrate the need for pluralist perspectives (Arnsperger & Varoufakis, 2006).

Neoclassical economics hinges on ‘man’, or homo economicus, as both “a self-interested utility maximizer [and] rational agent” (Lutz & Lux, 1988, p. 104) and a robotic operator within the technical functioning of the market (Graupe, 2012). This reifies notions of individualism over collectivism (Remmele, 2010, 2011), and denies the agency of social institutions, interpersonal relationships, and communal processes and systems (Hunt, 2005). A social studies teacher looking to integrate economics into their curriculum is then left with a vision of ‘man’ devoid of ethics (Rider, 1999) and without “gender, biography, emotions, religion, location, and preferences” (Bögenhold, 2010, p. 1571), effectively rendering economics separate from any other social studies discipline seeking to interrogate these elements. Additionally this individualism is “in effect linked to free-market ideology, which celebrates the actions and fulfillment of an atomistic individual who does not belong to any class, gender, race, or age group” (Arestis, Charles, & Fontana, 2015, p. 371).

Economics has long attempted to be the most ‘scientific’ of the social sciences (Henderson, 1989; Jo et al., 2012). In the Eurocentric milieu of positivistic epistemology, that requires the construction of theoretical ‘laws’ that track and predict markets in the same way physics tracks and predicts motion (Cameron & Astrid Siegmann, 2012). While the market is a core concept throughout economic curricula, it is often left undefined in economics classes, or when it is, the lexicon surrounding its definition leaves one to believe that ‘market’ is “the keyword on the register of freedom, from now on first in front of the register of equality. The reality of ‘market’ as means of social regulation is never questioned, it is obvious” (Blanchard & Coléno, 2016, p. 23). The market then, discursively represents freedom and

equality (Mikl-Horke, 2010), disabusing students of any attempt to analyze markets as “social fields in which people with different interests, status and power fight for the appropriation of profit” (p. 7). When students of economics cannot see markets as man-made and socially constructed (Cech & Marks, 2007), they likewise cannot be subjects that act to change the way markets operate, and are left as objects acted upon the forces that maintain hegemony.

The collective impact of a narrative that adheres to “anglo-celtic liberal individualism” (Arnsperger & Varoufakis, 2006, p. 8) and reveres markets (Pilkington, 2012; Rosenbaum, 2000; Williamson, 1985) is the enshrinement of neoliberal policies as not only preferred, but the only logical and rational choices for economic decision makers (Wright-Maley & Davis, 2016). This subverts democracy by assuming that “individual decisions are theoretically based on personal utility maximization” and therefore “politics can only be regarded by mainstream economics as a constraint on individual economic rationality” (Courlet Branco, 2016, pp. 378–379) and “political debates [become] purely ‘economic’ questions to be answered by experts” (Earle et al., 2016, Chapter 1, Section 2, para. 2). The recent financial crisis throws the consequences of the dominant narrative in relief, by showing that the economic norms of individualism and rationalism were not disbanded as a result of the crisis, indeed “the capitalist value of economic self-interests and particular masculine ideals such as risk-taking and authoritative action have merged in a way to sustain the norm of high status/high earnings leading to the Great Recession” (Arestis et al., 2015, p. 382). As social studies teachers and teacher educators seek to evaluate the ramifications of neoliberalism and counter its destructive potential (Blevins & Talbert, 2015; Magill & Rodriguez, 2017; Schmeichel, 2011), they must consider the way that the dominant narrative in economics allows market fundamentalism to guide policy at the expense of democracy.

3.4 Pedagogical content knowledge

One way to conceptualize teacher knowledge is through Shulman’s (2004) typology of *content knowledge*, *general pedagogical knowledge*, *curriculum knowledge*, and *pedagogical content knowledge*. Shulman, drawing on Schwab (1982) describes content knowledge as subject knowledge that “include both the substantive and the syntactic structures” (Shulman, 2004, p. 202) of a discipline, requiring teachers to “not only be capable of defining for students the accepted truths in a domain” but to “be able to explain why a particular proposition is deemed warranted, why it is worth knowing, and how it relates to other propositions, both within the discipline and without, both in theory and in practice” (Shulman, 2004, p. 202). Attempting to enhance the limited content knowledge in economics, then, requires attention to the function of the dominant narrative and counter-narratives that would challenge it.

Curricular knowledge includes the “particular grasp of the materials and programs that serve as ‘tools of the

trade’ for teachers” (Shulman, 2004, p. 227). This includes not only the traditional curriculum in a discipline but an understanding of “the curricular alternatives available for instruction” (Shulman, 2004, p. 204) as well as an understanding of the curriculum in other subjects and in previous and future grade levels. The emphasis on an expansive grasp of curriculum in a discipline is essential to thinking about ways to counter the dominant narrative in economics and must be attended to by teacher educators seeking to challenge the neoclassical norm.

Curricular knowledge and *content knowledge* come together in Shulman’s description of *pedagogical content knowledge*, or “that special amalgam of content and pedagogy that is uniquely the province of teachers, their own special form of professional understanding” (Shulman, 2004, p. 227). This form of knowledge includes analogies, illustrations and representations that have been proven effective and an understanding of what makes learning easy or difficult in a subject based on student preconceptions. Often “those preconceptions are misconceptions” so “teachers need knowledge of the strategies most likely to be fruitful in reorganizing the understanding of learners” (Shulman, 2004, p. 203). An understanding of the prevailing misconception that neoclassical economics *is* economics has to be fundamental to addressing *pedagogical content knowledge* in preservice social studies teachers.

3.5 Pluralism as a component of a counter narrative”

If social studies teacher educators are aware of the function of the dominant narrative as it relates to *content*, *curricular*, and *pedagogical content knowledge*, they must consider an alternative that will challenge the dominant propositions, expand the curriculum, and address misconceptions about economics. In attempting to illustrate one way to meet this challenge, this paper intersects *content*, *curricular*, and *pedagogical content knowledge* with economic *pluralism* as one potential counter-narrative to the dominant, neoclassical order.

According to Freeman (2009), pluralism “restores the lost academic principle of controversy to economics” by making “explicit the alternative theoretical approaches to any given problem” and “presenting the different solutions and policies which might arise from each approach, the presuppositions on which it rests, and the basis – in any given case – for choosing between them” (p. 24). Often referred to as heterodoxy (c.f. Lee, 2012), pluralism as a descriptive is preferable as it removes the concomitant supposition that there is an ‘orthodoxy’ that is superior. In either case, pluralism and heterodoxy have a literature base that attempt to include a range of neoclassical alternatives including neo-Keynesianism, Marxism, institutionalism, feminism, Austrianism, and many more (Denis, 2009). Economic educators should be familiar with these alternatives and their tenets (c.f. Proctor et al., 2017) when attempting to counter the dominant narrative, but more importantly, they should understand the significant departures between neoclassical and pluralist economics. Jeziorski, Legardez, &

Valente (2013) explain the biggest difference between neoclassical and heterodox economics as being in the treatment of certainty. Neoclassical economists attempt to impose certainty in their models and understanding of the world (Arnsperger & Varoufakis, 2006), whereas heterodox economists, from Keynes to Marx, include uncertainty in their models and at different levels of economic thought. By recognizing the socially constructed and uncertain nature of economic theory, economic educators can begin to think of individuals as contextualized and socialized (Bendixen, 2010), their behavior as driven by more than the profit motive (Moorhouse, 2009), and their environment as something to be sustained (Nelson & Goodwin, 2009). They may also begin to explore structural inequality by excavating neoclassical standards for their underlying value systems (Vickery, Holmes, & Brown, 2015), utilize Critical Race Theory to critique political applications of neoclassical theory (L. King & Finley, 2015), and think about the impact of theorizing using an individual as opposed to a community (Cumbers & McMaster, 2012; Nichols, 2016). While *pluralism* is by no means the only way to trouble the dominant narrative in economics, it should be the first way to counter the narrative given the explicit focus on a critique of the foundations of neoclassical thought.

By integrating *content, curricular, and pedagogical content knowledge* with economic *pluralism*, this study represents an attempt to ameliorate the limited amount of research on economics within social studies (S. Miller & VanFossen, 2008), within social studies teacher education literature (Ayers, 2015; Joshi & Marri, 2006), and the absence of pluralist economics literature for preservice teachers. Understanding what teachers know about economics early in their teaching preparation and how they respond to a deliberate critique of the dominant narrative with the inclusion of pluralism as a counter-narrative is essential for teacher educators who wish to avoid the deleterious ramifications of neoclassicism.

4 Methods

This study seeks to understand the way preservice teachers conceptualize the dominant narrative in economics, and how their PCK in economics impacts their ability to utilize pluralism to trouble the dominant narrative. In pursuit of this understanding, a qualitative study was used to analyze preservice teachers in a program that offers a master's degree in curriculum and instruction in conjunction with a teaching certificate. The sections that follow illustrate the design of the study, the considerations that went into selecting the group under study, the way that data was collected, and the methods by which it was analyzed.

4.1 Research Design

Due to research questions that sought to understand the thinking of preservice teachers and their implementation of their conceptualization, a general interpretive study was used in the tradition of qualitative research design. Qualitative research was desirable due to the emphasis

on a specific group of preservice teachers, the attempt to explore their ideas in-depth, and to understand the way that their beliefs were implemented (Mertens, 2015). Drawing from the Interpretivist tradition was also purposeful, as interpretive inquiry affords the researcher the ability to engage with "complexities and particularities of people's actions", a "multiplicity of voices and visions", and may also "inspire others to perceive, believe, or act in different ways" (Glesne, 2011, p. 24). The deep understanding and analysis of teachers' views on dominant narratives and their implementation of counter-narratives necessitated the use of this design due to its affordance of understanding a unique situation in a rigorous and profound way.

4.2 Setting and participants

The preservice teachers in this study attended a large, public university in the southwest. The program that offered them a master's degree in conjunction with teacher certification had an explicit emphasis on preparing teachers to succeed in urban contexts by valuing the linguistic and cultural diversity of students in urban schools (Yosso, 2005), drawing on their funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) as part of an asset-oriented perspective to combat traditional deficit perspectives about students in urban schools (Bomer, Dworin, May, & Semingson, 2008). Additionally, the program emphasizes critical multicultural citizenship (Castro, 2013) as part of a desire to utilize the diverse strengths of urban students to work toward a more just and equitable society.

Purposefully sampling justice-oriented preservice teachers in this program was the result of a desire to "discover, understand, and gain insight . . . from which the most can be learned" (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). The intent to explore conceptualizations of dominant narratives lead to the selection of a group of preservice teachers who opted to enroll in a program that explicitly challenges these narratives, and supports the continued countering of those narratives throughout the course sequence. This study took place in the second semester of a two year program, where in addition to coursework, preservice teachers were in their second semester of fieldwork. Their fieldwork requirements included a minimum of 45 hours in a public school throughout the semester. The course attached to the fieldwork was the second of two secondary social studies methods courses in the degree plan. The course was designed to continue the work of the previous methods course by further exploring dominant narratives in social studies, and countering them in both curriculum and pedagogy. Importantly, the course was structured according to the following outline: two weeks on knowledge construction and instructional design, two weeks on teaching economics, two weeks on discussion and collaboration techniques, two weeks on world history, four weeks on historical inquiry, and two weeks on geography. This limited time for economics methods is typical of social studies preparation programs (Joshi & Marri, 2006) and thus represents an ideal (yet limited) timeframe to



explore the potential for pluralist integration. The nine participants included three males and six females. Of these, six identified as white, two as Latinx, and one as Black.

My positionality informs both the research that I pursue, and the data and findings that result from that research. My time spent teaching economics in an urban school lead to questions about the utility and relativity of neoclassical economics to the marginalized students in my classroom. In particular, the explicit emphasis on the benefits of free-market capitalism, the myth of meritocracy, and the absence of race in the state standards seemed to be directly in opposition to the lived reality of the Black and Brown children whose families worked hard and yet were caught in cyclical poverty. Additionally, while much of my teaching used relatable examples and explored real-world issues, I often feel I failed as a classroom teacher to critique the neoclassical model as the foundation of these harmful concepts, and rather pursued a progressive curriculum that was critical of current systems through neoclassical lenses.

I am also white, male, cisgendered and conform to normative ideals of ability and sexuality. This means that while I explicitly endeavor to teach an anti-racist, feminist, inclusive curriculum, I still earn the wages of whiteness (Roediger, 1999) and other unearned privileges in my social interactions which may color the data collected as well as my analysis of that data. Additionally, I had formerly served as assistant instructor to these students and was a Teaching Assistant in the course, thus I cannot be sure that my authority, however meliorated by my attempt to foster a co-learning (Freire, 1993) environment does not alter the data I collected.

4.3 Data collection

In the Spring of 2017, preservice teachers participated in two (2) class sessions on economics methods. The first class assigned readings about the state of economics education (Walstad & Watts, 2015), and a description of an economic methods course including the challenges contained therein (Joshi & Marri, 2006). The in-class work focused on telling stories with economics, and included preservice teacher-generated stories, an exploration of the content knowledge necessary to teach their story, an overview of the Council for Economic Education's (2010) *Voluntary National Content Standards in Economics*, and a discussion on their perceived pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge in economics including a survey of the *Standards* where they indicated their familiarity with each of the twenty standards and their ability to teach it. The second class assigned Graupe's (2012) piece that troubles the neoclassical perspective on man, and assigned each individual to read about an economic perspective on the Network for Pluralist Economics' (n.d.) website that outlines each perspective's core elements, terminology, ontology, epistemology, and methodology. The in-class activities involved teaching three core components of economics (Law of demand, fiscal policy, and income) via modeling

traditional, neoclassical methods. Preservice teachers then split into groups to discuss their assigned economic perspective and how the lesson modeling conformed to the neoclassical model. They wrote about the neoclassical ontology, epistemology, methodology, and values on post-its and added them to posters representing the three core concepts. They then considered ways to trouble the dominant narrative that they had described within these concepts. The sessions were recorded and transcribed for analysis and student artifacts were collected from the class. In addition, preservice teacher-generated lesson plans were assigned after the two classes, and were collected. Finally, digitally recorded, semi-structured interviews were conducted to further interrogate preservice teacher attitudes and to member check preliminary data findings from class activities and artifacts.

4.4 Data analysis

Upon completion of data collection, qualitative methods were used to analyze discussion postings, class dialogue, unit artifacts and interviews. In this method of qualitative inquiry, "the researcher focuses analytical techniques on searching through the data for themes and patterns" (Glesne, 2011, p. 187). Transcripts of interviews were manually coded as well as audio data from the class sessions and discussion postings and analyzed them as Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2014) suggest by noting patterns and themes, arriving at comparisons and contrasts and determining conceptual explanations of the observations. For example, preservice teachers were regularly critiqued the consequences of the dominant narrative by criticizing the ubiquity of free-market capitalism (Feiner, 1994b), yet often lacked the *pedagogical content knowledge* (Shulman, 2004) to critique the underlying epistemology of neoclassical economics in their approaches to teaching economics. The patterns, themes, and comparisons of interview, observation, and artifact data lead to the findings included in this paper. The data and resultant themes were then interpreted, and checked with participants through a series of member checks to verify that conclusions matched their perspectives, and to help develop new ideas and interpretations.

5 Results

An exploration of the way that preservice teachers conceptualize the dominant narrative in economics and how their PCK affects the use of pluralism as a counter narrative revealed two important themes. First, preservice teachers were able to spell out a dominant narrative in economics that took into account the effect of the narrative, but rarely included a critique of epistemology. Second, the fluctuations in *content knowledge* as well as the broader challenge of explaining pluralism in a relevant way meant the observed *pedagogical content knowledge* in economics was devoid of pluralism.

5.1 Effect over epistemology

Due to the explicit emphasis in this teacher preparation program on the critique of dominant narratives in other disciplines (history, geography, citizenship, etc.), it should be no surprise that preservice teachers in this study were able to quickly and easily articulate a dominant narrative in economics. However, their limited exposure to critiques of economic theory and economic theory itself meant that their descriptions focused on the effects of the dominant narrative rather than the way the narrative functions within the discipline. This conceptualization had a similar effect on their articulations of a “counter narrative”, which often was critical of the structure of the economy, but rarely explored ways that the discipline of economics was culpable in that structure.

5.2 The dominant narrative as unfettered capitalism

In interviews and class activities, preservice teachers revealed their impression of the dominant narrative in economics as one that emphasized the rampant destructive potential of capitalism, particularly with respect to the way that government policy pursues the goals of capitalism. Christa described the dominant narrative in terms of capitalist priorities, saying the narrative was “basically, like profit, and increasing profit overall by any means necessary. It’s sort of a mathematical algorithm that equals this goal or this output. Whatever the process in between is irrelevant. It doesn’t matter who is at a disadvantage” (interview, 6/14/17). Fanny’s portrayal of the dominant narrative ascribed specific fiscal choices to those conservative policies. She talked about the federal budget and

“[h]ow much we spend on the military compared with education . . . why [income] tax is higher than capital gains tax” leading to “a dominant narrative to me of a United States economy that is more supportive toward people who hold wealth” (interview, 6/22/17).

The way these preservice teachers described the narrative as emphasizing political means of enforcing capital and protecting entrenched wealth were demonstrated in class activities as well. When asked to tell stories with economics, groups produced a variety of stories that critiqued the intersection of capitalism and politics in the past and the present. In one economic story, preservice teachers documented the effect of capitalist rationality on “mill towns of New England” (class artifact, 1/31/17) and how the subsequent “offshoring” to China and the Philippines lead to “lack of opportunity . . . blight, [and] poverty” (class artifact, 1/31/17). Another economic story described the impact of the oil industry in West Texas where a boom in oil prices lead to investment in towns, businesses and jobs; but the reliance on a single, extractive industry meant that the drop in crude prices lead to unemployment, poverty, and transient living situations. Finally, the third economic story called attention to the juxtaposition of the traditional role of the Secretary of State as a promoter of peace and equality, with the 2017 appointment of Rex Tillerson, former

Exxon CEO to that office. This choice was depicted as having the effect of installing an oil derrick on top of the globe, emphasizing the global hegemony between the United States and Russia, and promoting dollar signs over peace signs.

By telling stories and describing narratives of acquisitiveness, free markets, and conservative economic policies, preservice teachers demonstrated an understanding of the ramifications of a neoclassical vision of economics (Wright-Maley & Davis, 2016), in that the technocratic rationality of neoclassicism informs the neoliberal agenda (Krätke & Thomas, 2011; Lucey, Agnello & Laney, 2017), however this critical vision fails to explore the underlying disciplinary narrative that maintains the outcomes they identified. The focus on profits over people (Chomsky, 1999) is a fundamental tenet of the neoclassical vision of economics that emphasizes “the ubiquity of self-interest, the primacy of competition over cooperation, and the primacy of efficiency concerns over concerns for equity” (Ferber & Nelson, 2003, p. 7). When this view of humans is applied to markets or the economy writ large it promotes the belief that “money, profits, markets, and corporations are parts of an ‘economic machine’” that “operates in an automatic fashion, following inexorable and amoral ‘laws’” (Nelson, 2010, p. 1) that, according to some neoclassical theorists are best regulated by no regulation at all (Earle et al., 2016; Ferber & Nelson, 2003; Johnson, 2016; Sober, 2016) Preservice teachers in this study, however, largely failed to make the link between the effects of capitalism and the underlying philosophy that promotes it in the discipline of economics.

5.3 Progressive counter-narratives without the pluralism

In interviews and class sessions, preservice teachers were decidedly enthusiastic about teaching a version of economics that spoke back to the capitalist, neoliberal policies they identified as the dominant narrative. These counter-narratives were grounded in a vision of economics and social studies education that pursued justice and equality, but largely failed to critique neoclassicism as a disciplinary structure that maintained an unjust and unequal economic order.

In describing the purpose of their economic stories, Vince and Sturgill, who created the story about commodity prices and their ramifications for oil-dependent communities, said they wanted their counter-narrative to show the challenges faced by people who made long-term decisions about education, investments, and lifestyle based on the short-term fluctuations of oil prices. While this story could have been used to critique the neoclassical reliance on rational decision-making in order to ensure the functionality of models (c.f. Thaler, 1994), instead their stated purpose for telling the story was to show “a story of a lot of people [we] graduated with” who chose to forgo education in order to “stay and work in the oil fields, and for about five or six months that was great for them, but then everything went down, they lost their jobs and it’s just up and down when people depend

on oil for economic security” (class observation, 1/31/17). Fanny and Seth’s economic story similarly drew from their experiences living in New England as they outlined the consistent challenges of working-class life in mill towns. Whether it was the ‘radium girls’ of the early industrial era or the minimum wage workers in the mill, their story was intended to be critical of the effects of job movement leaving it full of “blight and poverty and it’s really just bleak driving around” and the ramifications of “economic turmoil, specifically, to quote the Sex Pistols, there’s ‘Noooo future for you’” (class observation, 1/31/17). The frustration with companies like “GE moving its headquarters from Connecticut to Boston” (class observation, 1/31/17) was the extent of the critique, as opposed to the neoclassical theory that undergirds policies that promote the free movement of capital as companies ‘race to the bottom’ (Rudra, 2008) in pursuit of cheap labor.

When asked specifically about counter-narratives in interviews, preservice teachers continued to critique the status quo, but still struggled to link neoclassicism with the policies they were critical of. Christa talked about the counter-narrative she and Fanny tried to project in their lesson on Katrina:

“What houses were being re-built, and who was paying for that, and the presence of non-profits in New Orleans all of a sudden versus which areas got re-built first; and by that time I was like, well, it’s a tourist area. Was it built first because it generates revenue so that the prioritizing once again, revenue over people. Right?” (interview, 6/14/17)

Fanny also talked about how they were “able to challenge some of the dominant narratives of how we go about in the United States rebuilding cities and what revitalization looks like and how gentrification eventually sneaks into.” (interview, 6/22/17), however when asked if pluralism or alternative economic perspectives were present she said, “not outright obviously . . . That’d be interesting to look at it from that perspective, but that’s not something that [we were] able to do” (interview, 6/22/17). She and others found the array of pluralist theories to be intimidating, and thus the counter-narratives in economics that were created in this case were limited to superficial, progressive critiques of the effects of capitalism.

5.4 Vanishing content and pedagogical knowledge and the limits of PCK

Economics can be an intimidating subject for many social studies teachers given the fact that many teachers of economics are prepared to teach comprehensive social studies (S. Miller & VanFossen, 2008) and lack coursework explicitly in economics (Aske, 2003; Walstad, 2001). In this study, economics content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge was relatively low among most participants, reflecting previous findings in the literature (Ayers, 2016; Joshi & Marri, 2006), however, some teachers described specific reasons for their intimidation in economics that advance previous findings.

Additionally, according to at least one measure, the attempt to teach specific concepts in a critical manner *lowered* self-assessed confidence in content knowledge, while increasing content knowledge that was covered, signifying that perhaps the deep dive into specific content areas reveals a missing depth of knowledge in other areas. Finally, economic lessons reveal that preservice teachers were able to excavate restrictive state standards (Vickery et al., 2015) for material that critiqued the dominant narrative as they saw it, though pluralism was not specifically a technique used in that critique.

5.5 Where did all the content knowledge go?

Aside from Susan, an exceptional member of the case, the remaining participants all indicated they had fewer than three total courses in economics when combining both high school and college. Most had a single semester in high school and a few had a semester or two in college. Interview and survey data revealed that preservice teachers in this study held a relatively low level of confidence in their economic content knowledge and that knowledge diminished after studying specific concepts. In interviews, preservice teachers compared their economic content knowledge to other social studies disciplines by saying it was “somewhere in the middle” (Christa, interview, 6/14/17), “toward the bottom” (Vivian, interview, 6/13/17), below “history or geography” (Fanny, interview, 6/22/17), and as “more familiar with history . . . geography . . . and political science” (Seth, interview, 6/12/17). In class, participants initially rated their understanding of economic concepts relatively high. On the first day, seven of the participants took a brief survey of their understanding of the 20 VNCE standards. The majority of the class (four or more) indicated familiarity with 16 of the standards, with only Allocation, Specialization, Government Failure, and Economic Fluctuation receiving less than half of the group’s indication of familiarity. Four of the standards were familiar to six of the seven participants: Markets and Prices, Competition and Market Structure, Institutions, and Income. They were also able to attach economic concepts to the stories they wrote. For example, when Christa and Vivian presented a story on cyclical poverty and the role of credit, they attributed economic concepts of “decision making, institutions, money and inflation, interest rates, and government failure” (class artifact 1/31/17) as necessary concepts to teach about their story. In describing the economic content that they were most familiar with, many responses centered upon supply and demand or practical economics. Christa described her familiarity with “supply and demand, the curves, the different kinds of graphs” (interview, 6/14/17), Seth likewise was familiar with “supply and demand, obviously” as well as more concrete concepts like “how the stock market works, the ideas behind minimum wage and what you pay your workers, how it affects the economy, a little bit about inflation for example. I’d say, maybe most of my familiarity with economics is in current events though” (interview, 6/12/17). These interviews and class data show a conflicting



portrait of preservice teacher content knowledge that may become clear later on. While superficially, teachers were familiar with many concepts and could attach them to economic lessons, their knowledge was often limited and on a surface level compared to other disciplines. This superficiality would play a significant role in the disappearance of content knowledge after the second week of economics instruction

As described earlier, the second class session modeled the teaching of three economic concepts in a deeper way. These concepts were the law of demand, fiscal policy, and income. In the initial survey, six out of seven preservice teachers indicated they were familiar with the concept of income. After spending time in a traditional way of teaching income, creating a logo for the concept, breaking down the way that neoclassical and pluralist perspectives might address the concept in terms of ontology, epistemology, methodology, and values; the following day found that only four teachers were familiar with the content. A similar finding emerged with respect to the law of demand. 'Markets and prices' as defined in the *VNCE* (Siegried & Krueger, 2010) was another concept that six preservice teachers felt familiar with in an initial survey, yet after a sample lesson and neoclassical critique, only 5 felt comfortable with the concept. Fiscal policy likewise dropped from five respondents indicating familiarity to three. To explain this seeming disappearance, Christa deserves to be quoted at length. Her response encapsulates the feelings of a number of participants who looked at the concepts listed in the *VNCE* and felt confident in their knowledge, only for that confidence to be undermined via a more thorough exploration.

"With economics, I would struggle with my own anxieties about what I don't understand about the economy or certain stocks because I feel like that was always a white man's understanding of economics was stocks. Even if I have and I have learned about it, I'm still very self-conscious about starting that conversation with especially my male students or colleagues or whatever because I don't want to seem like I'm uninformed, which I am, because that was how women and men are socialized differently in certain jobs and tasks. . . . Because of that, I'd have less confidence in teaching that subject in general because of my own insecurities about the content knowledge. Even if I did study it and teach it for a few years, there would still be that underlining fear, I guess, in teaching it." (interview, 6/14/17)

When asked about this in class, teachers commented on the fact that they had initially felt that they had personal experience with a lot of standards, but then realized through our activities that they didn't understand them in the depth they were presented. For them, it was unlikely that "teachers would have taken seven economics classes unless you were an economics major" (class observation, 1/31/17) and it appeared that the standards didn't really account for "student background knowledge" (class observation, 1/31/17) in the way they expected upon first glance at the standards. Thus

confidence in *content knowledge* was highly dependent on when and how content was presented, and also varied based on positionality and interpretation of the discipline of economics.

5.6 PCK and counter-narratives without the pluralism

In interviews and lesson plans, preservice teachers revealed a desire to challenge the dominant narrative in economics as they saw it, yet struggled to implement a counter-narrative that utilized their nascent understanding of pluralism. In one lesson, preservice teachers sought to "Identify the impact of Hurricane Katrina on diverse economic populations of New Orleans" and to "challenge the dominant narrative of financial/economic literacy that influences fiscal policy" (class artifact, 2/26/17). Students in this lesson would use *A.D. New Orleans after the deluge* (Neufeld, 2009), a graphic novel about Katrina as a starting point to research the socio-economic backgrounds of various characters using primary sources. They would then create storyboards to tell a story of what it would have been like to rebuild based on a variety of factors including race and class. This was explicitly designed to counter the dominant narrative as it questioned the priorities of the rebuilding effort. However, when asked whether this challenge, which could have explored the neoclassical emphasis on growth (or re-growth) at all costs, included elements of pluralism, Fanny said, "Not outright obviously. I don't know if I would try -- That'd be interesting to look at it from that perspective, but that's not something that I was trying to do" (interview, 6/22/17). The authors of this lesson clearly had a desire to critique the priorities involved in rebuilding New Orleans, yet they could not make the connection to the underlying economic epistemology that promoted rebuilding through free market principles such as charter schools (Buras, 2011), and denied the social costs to communities of both migration into and out of New Orleans (McCarthy, Peterson, Sastry, & Pollard, 2006).

Another created lesson had a similar inability to explicitly call out neoclassical epistemology. In a lesson designed to "explain the concept of comparative advantage" and evaluate the benefits and costs of free trade" (class artifact, 2/25/17), preservice teachers implemented a student centered, active lesson, where students answered flash cards about sports or art in varying quantities designed to show the benefits of comparative advantage. They then performed some specific calculations about comparative and absolute advantage and the benefits of free trade. Finally, they journaled their response to a quote by Karl Marx about the ramifications of free trade. The goal of this lesson was to show that:

"...free trade doesn't help . . . if one group is like good at making corn . . . like America . . . they can push all of the corn production from say Mexico . . . using a country's strength to their economic benefit." (Vivian, interview 6/13/17)

While there was some “comparative and socialist” (Vivian, interview, 6/13/17) work using the Marx quote, the preservice teachers were struck by the difficulty of working with explicitly neoclassical standards, saying:

“Do I have to make them do these freaking models? I didn’t want to and I didn’t even want to teach about it. I just wanted to simulate it and then discuss the simulation and I felt like that. But then I did. I did include all of the stuff and do the models. So, that was not good. It was like literally like a thing where I’m sitting there going, “I shouldn’t do this,” but then I did do it.” (Susan, interview, 6/2/17)

Following up on this, Susan remarked that she did include some counter-narratives in the lesson, but struggled to put even her significant understanding of pluralism into practice:

“We simulated that and then had the students disrupt that by saying, ‘Okay, well what happens if this country is good at making everything? What happens to country B? What happens if country B puts a tax on things? . . . So we just tried to throw in some of those real-life situations where it’s like, actually is this good for the people there? And I feel like people who have less of the neo-classical exposure are probably more apt to be like, ‘No, obviously not.’ Because they haven’t been indoctrinated.” (Susan, interview, 6/2/17)

Her hypothesis that less neoclassical exposure might lead to a greater awareness of the general inability of the neoclassical model to address the individual ramifications of free trade (Schneider & Shackelford, 2001) was perhaps correct, given that many of the preservice teachers in this study had little exposure to economics and yet felt strongly that there were serious problems with the discipline. However, despite this their critiques often rested on a political or social level, failing to grab economic theory at its neoclassical root to be pulled out and replanted with pluralism.

6 Findings

In this study, preservice teachers were able to fashion a counter-narrative that critiqued the effects of the neo-classical dominant narrative, but that challenge often failed to get at the epistemological foundations of the narrative they critiqued. Additionally, some content knowledge was enhanced through methods instruction, but their confidence in teaching other concepts decreased. The failure of an epistemological counter-narrative reared its head when planning lessons, showing that the pedagogical content knowledge of these preservice teachers was critical of social forces informed by neo-classical theory, but could not challenge the orthodoxy without further practice.

These results are instructive in several ways. Given the context of this study, in a teacher preparation program that has an explicit emphasis on criticizing dominant narratives, teachers in this study were able to quickly conceptualize a dominant narrative in economics, and develop lessons to counter that dominant narrative even when their content knowledge was limited. While these

counter-narratives rarely promoted pluralism as a remedy for neoclassical theory, they did speak back against free market orthodoxy and the ramifications of unfettered capitalism. The clear denunciation of these policies and the ease at which preservice teachers planned lessons to challenge them shows that when economics education is embedded in a comprehensive, programmatic emphasis on critique and “counter narrative”, a lack of content knowledge is not necessarily a barrier to a more critical vision of economic education. Therefore, it appears that an alignment of program purpose, teacher purpose, and methods emphasis can assist in assuring that preservice teachers can surmount their limitations of content knowledge and pursue critical social studies teaching.

The support necessary to attend to limited content knowledge must be carefully considered, and is most effective when it draws on the elements of preservice teachers’ lived experiences that relate to economics. Confidence in self-evaluated content and curricular knowledge was at its peak among preservice teachers after a class session in which they created their own economic stories, described the purpose of those stories, and determined the economic standards that would be implicated in those stories. This shows that an appreciative stance to preservice teacher background knowledge has an important role to play in confidence, but also the implementation of a critical rationale. However, *after* specific methods were taught that aligned with *VNCE* standards and after they dove deeply into pluralist economic theory, their broader confidence was wounded with the exception of the specific content covered in class. This shows that a straightforward emphasis on new content and methods may be harmful if not accompanied with an emphasis on the knowledge and strengths that preservice teachers bring to the table. Additionally, the stereotype threat that several students reported with respect to the whiteness and maleness of the discipline of economics shows that context is an important consideration when addressing economic content.

Finally, the impetus to include pluralism as a counter-narrative was clearly too much and too fast. Preservice teachers struggled to apprehend their assigned pluralist perspective and thus it was no surprise when they struggled to implement pluralism in their planned lessons. The approach of using a jigsaw to cover every pluralist perspective possible meant that some perspectives were covered in greater depth than others, and meant that some individuals understood the critique of the neoclassical perspective and others struggled. Regardless of how well preservice teachers understood their assigned perspective, however, they were unable to integrate a pluralist critique of neoclassical theory into their lessons. Even with the specific intention to lay out neoclassical concepts, critique them, and provide coherent alternatives, the lasting impact of this pluralist exploration was limited several months later. While it should be no surprise that a critique that has failed to gain broad acceptance in the field of economics was

challenging to implement in a limited way in a social studies methods course, this well-intentioned attempt fell short.

7 Implications and recommendations

First and foremost, social studies educators and teacher educators who are already challenging dominant narratives in history (Hall, 2005; Salinas et al., 2016; Sleeter, 2002), geography (Schmidt & Kenreich, 2015), media literacy (Duncan-Andrade, 2007), and elsewhere, must consider the dominant narrative in economics. The neo-classical paradigm holds so much power over the discipline of economics, particularly at the high school level. If teacher educators are concerned about the neoliberal policies that are implemented under the faux-neutral guise of neoclassical theory, they must begin to address neoclassical hegemony in some way as part of their social studies teacher preparation program.

As teacher educators pursue this critical stance in their methods courses and elsewhere, attention should be paid to the role of an appreciative stance toward preservice teachers' background and experience with economics. Rather than seeing preservice teachers' lack of specific content knowledge as a deficit, an asset-oriented stance might build content knowledge on the back of the economic stories that students are familiar with, thus increasing their confidence with unfamiliar terminology and engendering confidence in economic curricular knowledge as well. Utilizing these experiences may also help combat the pervasive failure of economics to attend to race, class, and gender and thus make students comfortable with a curriculum that, in neoclassical theory, often ignores their very existence.

Finally, while pluralism is an essential component of a counter-narrative to neoclassical theory (Dobusch & Kapeller, 2012), the way in which it is integrated in a broader critique of economics is deserving of scrutiny. While teacher education programs concerned with structural inequality will likely find preservice teachers willing to critique the economic system as it exists, the theoretical and epistemological underpinnings of this system are much harder to apprehend. Thus, one important takeaway from this study might be to minimize the pluralist perspectives under study, focusing on one perspective at a time, and carefully selected for its utility and harmony with student context. For instance, a class of preservice teachers where a number of members have been affected by climate change might use ecological economics to critique neoclassical approaches to addressing environmental costs (c.f. Jacobs, 2013). Similar scenarios might invite a specific integration of feminist or behavioral economics, but by focusing on one critique rather than trying to cover all, teacher educators may avoid this study's struggle with implementing pluralism beyond the walls of the methods course.

8 Conclusion

"Can the future be changed, Dr. Seldon?

A. Obviously. This courtroom may explode in the next few hours, or it may not. If it did, the future would undoubtedly be changed in some minor respects.

Q. You quibble, Dr. Seldon. Can the overall history of the human race be changed?

A. Yes.

Q. Easily?

A. No. With great difficulty.

Q. Why?

A. The psychohistoric trend of a planet-full of people contains a huge inertia. Either as many people must be concerned, or if the number of people be relatively small, enormous time for change must be allowed. Do you understand?" (Asimov, 1983, p. 26-27).

To challenge a dominant narrative is to challenge inertia. For years social studies educators and teacher educators have worked to dismantle the overwhelming force of a nationalist, imperialist, white supremacist dominant narrative in history. Vestiges of this narrative are still being challenged, yet little attention has been paid to the function of the neoclassical narrative in economics. Unlike history, the weight of this narrative is felt beyond the K-12 classroom and into academia, further entrenching a perspective that glorifies individualism, justifies neoliberal policies, and dehumanizes those outside the mythical norm. While this exploration showed that pluralism as a counter-narrative was a challenge to implement in a short time-frame, the impetus is there for more social studies teacher educators to consider the role of the neoclassical narrative in the way they prepare teachers for critical purposes in their classrooms. Preservice teachers can conceptualize dominant narratives, and even offer counter-narratives, but further thought must be given to the way that narrative is challenged. Without a firm grasp of the epistemology of neoclassicism, without support that builds on students' economic experiences, and without a more focused and deliberate approach to implementing pluralist content, economics education may take an enormous time to change the status quo, or may only change it in some minor respects. Asimov's fictional psychohistory considered it "risky . . . to introduce the vagaries of an individual in the psychohistoric equations" (Asimov, 1983, p. 30), yet it is incumbent upon each individual social studies teacher educator to critique, challenge, and counter the dominant narrative of economics in order for a more humanizing version of economics to spread.

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Igor Martinache

Teaching Economics Among Other Social Sciences? The Issue of Pluralism in the Struggles Surrounding the Economic and Social Sciences Curricula in the French High School since 1967

- A comprehensive presentation of Economic and Social Sciences education in France and its evolutions.
- A detailed examination of the different controversies raised by this interdisciplinary teaching.
- An analysis of the curricula evolutions and of their epistemological and political stakes.
- A case analysis suggesting that the issue of pluralism in economics implies the definition of its very nature.

Purpose: This article aims at presenting the original design of the teaching of Economic and Social Sciences (SES) in the French High School and at demonstrating that the issue of pluralism lies at the core of the various controversies surrounding it since its creation.

Approach: This article is based on more than 40 interviews with SES teachers and key personalities, on curricula and official reports analyses and on a ten years participating observation in the SES teachers professional association.

Findings: This text strives to display how the defence of pluralism has become a core issue to SES teachers, as a "mobilized group" as well as in their individual professional practices.

Research implications: Such statements may be deepened in two directions. The first consists in comparing the French situation to that in other countries as regards the teaching of economics and social sciences in high school. The second may imply to investigate deeper about teachers' training and practices about such issues.

Practical implications: The other aim of this text is raising debates about the objectives of teaching economics and social sciences in general in high school in a context where school is more and more committed to strengthening citizenship as well as preparing for higher education and professional life.

Keywords:

Economics, pluralism, France, high school, methods, social sciences, active pedagogy

1 Introduction

In 1967 a new subject was introduced in the French high school: "introduction to economic and social facts". This new teaching was created as part of a larger school reform conducted by the National Education Minister, Christian Fouchet. Soon renamed "Economic and Social Sciences" (*Sciences économiques et sociales* - SES), it was animated by a "desire to modernise the school and open it up to the contemporary world" (Chatel, 1993, p. 7). To do so, its designers chose to emphasize two dimensions: the first consists in overcoming the existing disciplinary divisions in the academic sphere through an entry by "objects". This means that each social phenomenon considered must be studied in its different dimensions (economic social, political, historical, etc.) by mobilizing the tools and knowledge established by the various social sciences - including economics. The second specificity lies in the primacy of an active pedagogy that favours studying documents and dialogue course rather than lecture and dictation. The study of social sciences - chief among

which is economics - means to build an intellectual posture, allowing students to question their own representations and those conveyed in their environment using methods, tools and knowledge established by researchers in the corresponding disciplines, not forgetting that, although one paradigm usually dominates at a given moment, all knowledge is provisional (Kuhn, 1962). The first programs in 1967 were accompanied by the following official instructions: "the originality of this teaching is undoubtedly to lead to the knowledge of our current societies and their mechanisms, to establish an uncertain secondary relationship between culture and economic and social realities. But this knowledge can only be gradually introduced: to ensure the development of an 'experimental' mind, these are the most reasonable objectives of this new discipline"¹ (MEN, 1967).

From the outset, the objectives of this teaching have oscillated between contributing to civic education and introducing scientific reasoning. The objectives set out in the preamble of the latest programs are stated in significant order: "to enable students to progressively appropriate the concepts, methods and essential problems of three social sciences", "to prepare students for the pursuit post-baccalaureate" and finally "to contribute to their civic education" (MEN, 2013). Although these three goals can by no means be considered as exclusive, a certain number of tensions emerge between them as shown by the almost uninterrupted controversies that SES teaching has raised since its creation.

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Indeed, despite these apparently consensual and “reasonable objectives”, this new discipline has soon been under several attacks aiming at its curricula. This article details the struggles for defining what could be considered as a “good” economics curriculum in high school, its main actors and their motivations. Its core thesis is that such struggles are actually inseparably epistemological, pedagogical and political and have decisively fostered the development of a school subject – not to say a specific “school culture” (Chervel, 1998)² – relatively autonomous from the academic fields it mobilizes. The specific culture, largely maintained by the SES teachers' association, rests on two important pillars: the crossing of disciplinary views on different problematic social phenomena and the use of active methods in the name of pluralism and civic education. Such slogans are ambiguous enough to gather around them the majority of teachers, but they do not extinguish debates and research into the best practices for addressing social inequalities in learning. Crossing an analysis of the curricular development until today and a comprehensive sociological perspective with active SES teachers, we will argue here that, beyond their concrete differences in practice, SES teachers are mainly found in defending the pluralism of epistemological approaches as well as that of methods because of their own socialization, which has led them to distance themselves from the economy as it had been taught to them at the University and because they are concerned above all with involving students in their teaching.

The materials supporting the following statements lie upon a ten years participatory observation among SES teachers – and especially in the bodies of the SES teachers association (APSES) –, including the regular reading of several mailing lists among this professional group; about forty semi-directive formal interviews with SES teachers from different backgrounds and generations in three French academic areas (Paris-Créteil-Versailles, Lyon and Lille)³ and with some of prominent figures of the history of the SES; completed by the study of different public and private archives concerning the discipline, including curricula and official reports, and of course a secondary analysis of the existing literature on this subject.

2 The introduction of SES and its constituent ambiguities

When SES were created, economy was already taught in high school since 1952 through a discipline then called Economic Techniques of Management (EMT), to which is dedicated a baccalaureate section⁴. But, while it is “implanted in technical education, taught by teachers of technical education, for students of technical education” (Chatel, 2015, p. 35), the new “Initiation to economic and social facts” teaching is intended for general education students, of higher social background. It is even quickly placed in the centre of a specific section among the five created in the new high school organization carried by the than Minister of Education Christian Fouchet in 1965.

This so-called “B” series comes directly between the A (letters) and C (exact sciences), conferring on the SES the status of a “third culture” alongside the literary and scientific ones⁵. This development did not come without some debate in the academic sphere, but governmental decisions were ultimately taken by the opponents of the status quo. One must keep in mind that, at that time, the school of the Annals founded by Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre that pleaded for a “decompartmentalization” of the humanities and social sciences, enjoyed a considerable aura, starting with its leader Fernand Braudel.

The Minister of Education entrusts the task of setting up the new teaching to his closest collaborator, Charles Morazé. He recruits a geographer, Marcel Roncayolo, and an economy historian, Guy Palmade, to lead the work. The first coordinates the writing of the programs while the second is appointed dean of the general inspection of the discipline. Around them a commission, composed of researchers and “economic or political actors” representing the different academic disciplines covered by the SES is also gathered, with a certain concern for pluralism (but not for gender equality, or social diversity), as it includes figures as different as the sociologist then close to the workers' movement Alain Touraine the liberal economist Jean-Claude Casanova and the leader of the “second left” and future Prime Minister, Michel Rocard. However, they quickly agree on the primary objective beyond their differences: “to give a teaching of the modern world, of the world in which they found themselves - and not only of our industrialized world - to the young people who passed the *bac* [*calauréat*]; [...] to put them back in their time and not only in past historical epochs”, which is summed up by a slogan then in use in the group: “We must make them capable of reading *Le Monde*” (Marcel Roncayolo, interviewed on January 22, 2013). According to Marcel Roncayolo, the SES thus represented the “opposite of a professional education”, turned towards the acquisition of techniques and a profession for a short-term insertion in the “market” of work. The SES are then primarily addressed to a relatively small minority of students dedicated to long studies and therefore requiring above all a certain number of intellectual reflexes associated with a solid general culture⁶.

2.1 Mobilizing academic disciplines: between multi- and transdisciplinarity

In the changing society of the “Glorious Thirty” (Fourastié, 1979) – the three decades of strong economic growth and low unemployment rate in industrialized countries –, social sciences become more and more seen as indispensable to the luggage of the “honest man”. The SES thus adopt a “multi-transdisciplinarity”⁷ (Chatel, 1993) which aims to not only associate but truly integrate economics with the other social sciences thus allowing a “problem-object” to be studied in its multiple dimensions – economic, sociological, political, anthropological and historical – even though, from the very beginning, “economics dominates at all levels of class”

(*Ibid.*, p. 22). These objects must themselves echo as much as possible the problems of the time and the concerns of students. "Family", "population", "human needs and consumption", or "labour and economic activities" are some of the justifiable objects of such an integrative approach in the first programs. As the official instructions accompanying the 1967 programs further specify: "Economic and social education presupposes the knowledge of a vocabulary, of a limited number of rigorously defined concepts, as is necessary for elementary manipulation, reading the encrypted data and their graphical expression; in short, a language that should be familiar to students". But, they add immediately: "This language is difficult to define, because this teaching is different from other disciplines of second degree, as it corresponds to several academic disciplines with orders, concepts and methods of their own. But it would be dangerous to engage pupils in premature specialization, even though they do not possess the basic methods of working and thinking. The introduction to economic and social facts must, while responding to an obvious curiosity among students, facilitate the acquisition of these methods: critical observation, use of quantitative study, reading books and surveys ground "(MEN, 1967). It is therefore a clever mix between the description and analysis of current social phenomena on one hand and the transmission of knowledge and methods from the academic disciplines on the other. In any case, the hierarchy between these objectives is clearly affirmed by the same text: "It is therefore less a question of accumulating knowledge than of creating in pupils a certain intellectual attitude", further specifying that "the encyclopedism of facts is to banish. But it is necessary to establish a certain relativity of the phenomena, to take a certain measure of the distances, the differences, and, if necessary, of the permanences. Maybe to understand the mechanism of certain passages or mutations" (*Ibid.*).

2.2 Teaching intellectual methods before knowledges

Methodology plays a major role in this teaching: its first goal is to transmit to students rigorous methods of analysing and reasoning. But the teachers themselves are required to deploy strong educational know-how insofar as they have to work on social representations. Both of them, students and teachers, are actually asked to adopt the same posture: experimentation by the first programs. Students are thus invited to confront their direct observations, drawn from their own experience or aroused by the teacher, with indirect observations drawn from statistical or textual documents, which enables them, according to the official text, "to pass of the immediate environment, - point of useful but not exclusive application of this teaching - to a less close world" (MEN, 1967). For their part, the teachers are summoned to enrol in a "continuous pedagogical research", and to be attentive to their pedagogical progression while caring to respect a "gradation" from one class to another: "Gradation according to the themes but even more according to the more or less complex levels of description and analysis" (*Ibid.*). It is up to them, above all, to establish a

quasi-permanent dialogue, with and between the pupils, but also between them and the documents: "The very definition of this teaching does not make it possible to distinguish between a theoretical lecture and application exercises. On the contrary, it is desirable that in most cases the study of a theme should be based on a concrete analysis, a set of observations, a comparison of statistics or texts. The interest of this teaching is indeed to gradually clear rules of reasoning and analysis" (*Ibid.*). It is nevertheless pointed out to the teachers that they must be attentive to giving the "grids" of analysis, that is to say the tools of description and analysis that they do not necessarily have⁸, and that "the proposed themes do not lend themselves to this method as well". Still, "under these reservations", the Initiation to the economic and social facts demands "a constant exchange between teachers and students, between concrete data and notions, the teacher intervening at the" strategic points "to guide the students, to make up for their information or reasoning failures, to push them to go beyond superficial analyses, and to provide them with definitions, critical and indispensable schemas" (*Ibid.*). In sum, summarizes Marcel Roncayolo: for the students, "it is not a question of receiving a teaching, but of participating in it" (quoted interview). This original project does not, of course, presume actual practices of teachers at that time or today, the diversity of which too few field researches have unfortunately studied (Chatel, 1995a and b, Deauviau, 2009)⁹. However, to this day it continues to crystallize representations and debates around the teaching of the SES, which partly conceal certain issues, especially that of pluralism.

2.3 The first attacks from within the State apparatus

Despite all the efforts of its architects, this founding project never allures unanimity in favour of it. Oppositions have actually never stopped expressing since its very conception. The commission set up to develop this new teaching is indeed already divided by sharp disagreements between its members. Some professors of the faculty of economics or law as well as the representatives of the general inspection of Economic Techniques and Management write proposals for programs, making it a propaedeutic to university teaching focused on the transmission of tools and techniques – mathematical in particular –, then eliminating any other discipline but economics as it is taught in the University (Chatel, 2015, pp. 43-44 and 46). Nevertheless, these alternative projects are finally dismissed for the benefit of the "integrative social sciences" line defended by Charles Morazé himself. The first attacks against the SES thus actually came from within the State apparatus as soon as this new school subject was born. The Association of Philosophy Teachers especially launched an appeal to the government entitled "For the safeguarding of the philosophy class" asking for the burial of the project while asserting that their teaching already addressed the issues claimed by the SES. It was signed by several thousand people, including major intellectual personalities of the time such as Louis Althusser,

Françoise Dolto or Raymond Aron, but eventually failed after a close governmental arbitration (Chatel, 2015, p. 41). Opponents even could be found among the teachers recruited to teach the new subject and coming from EMT or History-Geography, who also considered that the new teaching threatened to take the "noblest part of their teaching" (Henri Lanta, former teacher and inspector of EMT who became one of the first teachers and general inspectors of SES, interviewed on December 20, 2012).

It can therefore be seen at this stage that the founding project does not lack ambitions, but also ambiguities. These lie in the objectives assigned to this new discipline, both in terms of the knowledge to be transmitted and the pedagogical methods to be implemented and the audiences for which it is intended. All these elements are probably largely due to a top-down definition of this discipline, and open the way to fierce controversy. However, the latter will encourage teachers themselves to take relative control of their teaching, both collectively and individually, which will crystallize into the demand for pluralism at different levels.

3 The never ending struggles for defining the "right" SES curricula and the construction of a specific SES culture

In 1979, the Prime Minister, Raymond Barre, also a university professor in economics, asked Joel Bourdin¹⁰, professor of economics and management at the University of Dakar, to conduct an audit of SES in preparation for a new reform of the high school system. In his report, Bourdin sharply criticized both the multi-disciplinarity and the active pedagogy and advocated the outright disappearance of the SES and the B series, which he qualified as "channel of reception for the rejections of the other series". These conclusions elicited considerable mobilization from SES teachers, coordinated in particular by their professional association, the APSES, created in 1971. It launched a two-day strike for all SES teachers and organized a national demonstration under the catchphrase of the "fight for an adjective" (the "social" in SES) in Paris on June 2, 1980, which ended at the Labour Exchange with a series of speeches by famous "constituent members" (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) who brought their "symbolic capital", as Pierre Bourdieu, Jacques Attali, essayist and future personal adviser to President Mitterrand, Françoise Héritier or Edmond Malinvaud, Professor in economics at the Collège de France and former Director of the French National Statistical Institute, then particularly endowed with "scientific capital".

3.1 The transformation of SES teachers into a mobilized group

The then president of the APSES emphasizes the importance of the social capital shared by his colleagues, that is to say the resources related to the personal relations of ones and others knotted during their studies or their professional practice in particular - counting the son of the Prime Minister among his students, as well as an intensive solicitation of personalities with an important academic aura to sign their various petitions for the

defence of the SES¹¹. They particularly took care to solicit academics from different schools of thought by trying to convince them that the defence of SES also served their own interest (Robert Jammes, interviewed on December 9, 2011). This advocacy of pluralism at all scales can also be found in a series of about fifteen posters produced by APS-ES that teachers are invited to post in the classrooms and printed on tee-shirts that APSES constituents wear until today during their gatherings. There are represented different guardianship figures from the SES ranging from Pierre Bourdieu (exclaiming "SES, it's my habitus") and Karl Marx ("SES, it's capital") to Friedrich Von Hayek ("My freedom to think this is the SES") and Gary Becker ("SES for a better human capital"). Thus we can notice that this peculiar group has invented its own "protest action repertoire" (Tilly, 1986), and the 1980 demonstration still works as a "founding myth" that keeps the group of the SES teachers together alongside with the feeling of being under permanent attacks, much more than sharing a professional ideology about what to teach and how to teach it, exactly as other researchers have shown about local policy actors in France (Desage & Godard, 2005). Although most of the practising teachers are too young to have participated, I have often heard about the 1980 events in interviews or during the APSES meetings observed. One of the APSES leader exclaimed significantly during a meeting of the association's director committee¹²: "we are a social movement", what aroused the enthusiasm of many presents (Field notes, October 15, 2017). And indeed, the feeling of being a "besieged fortress" by various lobbies wanting to "denature" their discipline seems to contribute strongly to unifying the group of SES teachers around their association, the APSES, which to date brings together more than 2200 teachers among the approximately 5500 SES teachers in France. Not without irony, everything suggests that it is these attacks that have thus contributed to transforming an association initially created by the Inspectorate General to serve as a "transmission belt" (Robert Jammes, quoted interview) into a "mobilized group" to defend the autonomy of their teaching. Moreover, like any mobilization (McCarthy & Zald, 1977), this would not have been possible - and would not have lasted - without the existence of militant (teachers are one of the most unionized professions in France) and intellectual resources, which are directly related to the subject taught. All in all, one can argue that from this very moment, pluralism has become both an issue and an instrument in the struggle of SES teachers for their autonomy.

3.2 A progressive compartmentalization of mainstream economics in curricula

This mobilization gets enough echo for the Ministry of Education to set up a new commission including the president of the APSES but also Joel Bourdin himself. This one sees his previous report totally disavowed and the place of the SES is even strengthened, entering the common core of the 2nd class while an option is proposed to the pupils of the series A and C. The

commission also prepares the first programs revision that intervene in 1982. It also increases the place of the economy while emphasizing the macroeconomic scale and the "measurement of economic and social facts" on the theoretical analyses. From this date, the separation between the economic and sociological dimensions continues to grow while the historical dimension shrinks, even though the founders of the discipline held up to it (Chatel & Grosse, 2015, p. 37). Six years later, in 1988, the programs are again changed and for the first time make explicit reference to academic disciplines while the requirement to prepare students for higher studies is formulated (Chatel & Grosse, 2002, p. 132). It must be said that, at the same time, attacks against the discipline have not stopped and have even increased. At this time, some academic economists attack the "scientific" quality of SES in line with the Bourdin report (Chatel & Grosse, 2015, p. 37), but a new commission convened on the occasion of the creation by the National Council of programs in 1989. Led by Edmond Malinvaud, its final report which reinforces the SES by distinguishing its "cultural aim" from the "academic aim" of the superior (*Ibid.*). Henri Lanta, then member of the commission, says that Malinvaud "repeated that in the programs of SES he had spotted at least ten 'big questions' which he said he was unable to answer. It was obviously not difficult to point out that advancing students' understanding of economic and social facts and mechanisms did not require College de France level answers" (Quoted interview). The new programs adopted from 1993 as part of the Jospin reform that change the name of the B series to ES (social and economic) seem to reinforce the initial project, by adopting an organization around "integrating concepts", leaving more space for the sociological dimension as well as interdisciplinarity and the study of current events. But at the same time they also reinforce in practice the partition between these disciplines and the concern accorded to "scholarly knowledge" (Chatel & Grosse, 2015, p. 38).

3.3 A new injunction: to transmit a "positive" vision of market and firms

The following attacks will mainly emanate from outside the Ministry of Education, and more particularly from the employers and the Ministry of Economy and Finance. In 2006, the latter set up a Council for the dissemination of economic culture (Codice), bringing together journalists, company managers, senior officials and economists. Together they control several opinion polls that build a new public problem: the supposed "economic inculture of the French". Obviously, it is not about the 'economy' that statisticians and senior officials like, the large aggregates used as tools for steering public action, and even less the 'economy' of everyday life, as it could be apprehended by employees looking at their payroll, worried about the level of reimbursement of their medical expenses or imagining the purchase of a home. It is rather about the economy apprehended through the glasses of the dominant economic actors of the moment (big companies, professionals of the financial sector,

state agencies of regulation of the markets) which enjoy a privileged access" (Rozier, 2009, p. 67). The SES, which actually affect only a minority of high school students, are one of the major scapegoat for this accusation towards the French alleged lack of economic knowledge and hostility to free-market economy. In fact, for nearly three decades several employers' organizations, most prominently the Institute of Enterprise (IDE) created in 1975, take a close interest in the teaching of SES in an attempt to influence it in a direction that it considers more favourable to the market economy.

Through its "Teachers-Companies" program, the IDE aims to "bring together" each other by offering them educational materials to the first, via a dedicated website, but also training courses, especially the "*Entretiens Enseignants-Entreprises*" (Teachers-Companies Meetings)¹³, and even internships in companies. Other associations close to the French Companies Movement (MEDEF), the major employers Union in France, such as the so-called "Positive Enterprise" or "Institute for Economic and Fiscal Research", periodically publish "studies" based on SES manuals rather than programs. They denounce the "reductive" and "pessimistic" vision of "business" and "market". The section "Political Economy, Statistics and Finance" of the Academy of Moral and Political Sciences (ASMP), part of the prestigious Institute de France (Delmas, 2006), is another hotbed of attacks against SES. It released a very critical report against the ES series in 2008 led by Yvon Gattaz, former president of the major employers' organization and founding president of an association called "Youth and Enterprise", who also firmly criticizes SES. At the end of 2016, this institution commissioned eight "international" economists (that is to say actually not working in France) an audit of the SES manuals from a given publisher each. Their reports are generally quite measured in their conclusions, even laudatory for some, but the ASMP invites the two most critical rapporteurs at two symposia it organizes in early 2017. Amongst them, an economist at the Citygroup bank in New-York declared that "nowadays no one speaks of social classes" and then advocated to focus the SES on micro-economy and particularly on the study of market by future company executives, and by the future citizen who will have to validate structural reforms" (field notes, conference "Teaching economics in high school", Institut de France, Paris, January 30, 2017).

The current president of this ASMP section, Michel Pébereau alone embodies the permeability of the public and private spheres. Former member of the cabinets of right-wing Finance Ministers, he taught economics at Sciences-Po while chairing the Foundation ruling this elite school, and led the privatization of the BNP-Paribas bank in 1993 before chairing its board of directors for 20 years, also serving on the boards of several huge French companies. President of the Institute of Enterprise between 2005 and 2010, this multipositional agent (Boltanski, 1973) was appointed to the High Council of Education at its creation in 2005 and shortly afterwards was appointed in the commission chaired by the

Professor in Economics at the College de France Roger Guesnerie, charged to audit the manuals and programs of SES. The report that it gives at the beginning of July 2008 recognizes the "solidity of the rooting" of the teaching of SES in high school, its "attractiveness" and the good student and professional integration of ES series graduates. But its authors also affirm the need to bring it towards "excellence" and accumulate a series of criticisms joining the employers' diagnoses. They write that the programs "put more emphasis on the problems of our society and little on its successes", criticize the fact that programs are too busy, but at the same time note a number of shortcomings. The company and the market would suffer in particular from insufficient treatment in their eyes while sociology would often be "too abstract, too deterministic and too compassionate". Following this report, a group of "experts" chaired by the academic economist Jacques Le Cacheux, has been set up to rewrite the programs.

These programs, which came into effect from the 2010, ratified the partitioning between economics and other social sciences – themselves reduced to sociology and political sciences –, except for a small part entitled "crossed views". To each discipline its objects, as if the sociologists had nothing to bring on the understanding of the concrete markets, the currency or the firms, whereas social classes or conflicts would have no relevance in the economic analyses. It is then a question of privileging the transmission of "scholarly" knowledge upon student experience, be that direct or indirect. The APSES, whose president resigned from the commission like some other members in reaction to the "employer influences" within it (David, 2012), finally denounces "the encyclopedism" of the programs, that is to say the inflation of the number of notions to transmit, as well as the new tests of the baccalaureate who favour the restitution of knowledge on the confrontation of ideas, and thus strongly frame learning. The APSES also criticizes the lack of pluralism of these programs. By separating economics from other social sciences and reproducing the division between micro and macroeconomics, they would in fact have given pride of place to mainstream theory to the detriment of heterodox approaches¹⁴. Such a position has also been translated in recent years with associations of researchers and students in economics demanding more pluralism in recruitment and economics courses in University in France like abroad.

4 The issue of pluralism among SES teachers: a pluralism of visions

4.1 A split among the discipline itself

If the correlation between the curricular evolution of the SES and the growing lobbying of certain employer groups appears quite obvious, its precise channels deserve to be studied more precisely (Rozier, 2018). We can nevertheless hypothesize that the influence of the latter is exerted less by direct lobbying than by the vector of shared moments of sociability where the compatibility of the habitus of one and the other plays a full role, such as during the *Entretiens-Enseignants-Entreprises* where the

General Inspection is well represented. It would, however, be far too simplistic to present the SES as a fortress under siege against attacks by liberal lobbies. There are also divisions among teachers themselves about the relevance of the founding project and particularly the object-based approach. Its main opponent is a former active member of the APSES, Alain Beitone, for whom SES must be more modelled on the knowledge taught at university under the theory of didactic transposition (Chevallard, 1991). Its very designer blames more or less implicitly the APSES to defend a "solipsiste" and "endogenous knowledge" deaf to academic evolutions (Chevallard, 1997). Alain Beitone and his supporters, who formed an association competing with the APSES named *Action SES* in 1998¹⁵, consider that:

"There are three conceptions of what the school of tomorrow should be: a conservative, even reactionary position, which formulates a discourse of restoration of an idealized past and which does not resign itself to the opening of middle school, high school and university to a growing proportion of an age group; a falsely modernist position which proposes to respond to the massification of secondary schools by a downward revision of educational content and by emphasising a socio-educational dimension; a position which considers that access to knowledge for all is a requirement of democracy and that for this it is necessary to renew the forms of school organisation, transform teaching methods and deepen didactic reflection" (Orientation Report of *Action SES*, 1999).

This group naturally claims the latter while implicitly attributing the second to the APSES. This split occurred during another educational reform threatening the ES series with extinction, and can then be seen as an attempt to legitimize the school discipline. It seems nonetheless to sacrifice the issue of pluralism, or more precisely the question of the hegemony of neoclassicism, in passing: "The conception of the 'normal science' of Kuhn (a dominant paradigm between two 'scientific revolutions'), on the other hand, seems to be particularly unsuited to economics" (Beitone & Legardez, p. 35), even though these authors claim a "multi-paradigmatic" approach. More recently, a former leader of *Action SES* wrote in defence of the current SES programs in the drafting of which Alain Beitone played a key role, that a "characteristic feature of the 'spirit of SES' is its penchant for heterodoxy, or more precisely for a reading of theoretical oppositions within the economy that gives the opposition between the 'dominant economy' and the 'heterodoxies' a central place" (Buisson-Fenet, 2012). But according to him, "In economics as in sociology, the 'war of the great paradigms' has considerably weakened. It is rather difficult to specify what a Keynesian or a neoclassical is today". He thus invites to a renewal of pedagogical practices inspired for instance by the textbooks in microeconomics where can be found "playful sessions by mobilizing 'economic games' or enigma solving with students born from the observation of empirical data". Such proposals are in line with those put forward by employers' lobbies, such as the animation of

mini-enterprises in classrooms, the effects of which on pupils nevertheless deserve further investigation (Rozier, 2014).

4.2 A majority of teachers committed to pluralism for practical more than ideological reasons.

This opposition among SES teachers actually does not refer to partisan stances in the political field. Alain Beitone defines himself as a “far-left-winger” (Interview by Cloé Gobert¹⁶, July 8, 2013), while some of his supporters militate to the Socialist Party of the alterglobalist association ATTAC. On the other hand, APSES members are found throughout the union and political spectrum, which complicates relations between the association and the teachers' unions (Llobet & Martinache, 2014). Be that as it may, one may wonder why the APSES continues to gather so many SES teachers (2200 out of around 5500 SES teachers) when the Beitone supporters barely exceeds a hundred, essentially Beitone former students who frequently teach SES in the elitist “classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles”¹⁷.

Whatever their position regarding the “APSES-Beitone debate”, all the teachers interviewed declare themselves very attached both to social sciences, they often describe however more like a “way of looking at the world”, and pedagogy, and are convinced that one cannot teach in high school the same way one teach in University. Many explain that they literally “fell in love” with SES during their own schooling, but also often reproach their own teachers for having lacked of pedagogy. Contrary to what one might think, the trigger for teaching did not always occur in high school, but at University, through the meeting of one or several particularly “open” teacher who made them discover alternative visions of economics:

“At the University, I took Jean-Claude Delaunay's [a marxist economist] classes, and for me it was a revelation, compared to my SES teaching in high school. We had a teacher who without saying it taught us [economic] liberalism during the two years we had it. We didn't even know it was called the liberal economy, it was the natural functioning of the economy” (Man, 55, certifié¹⁸, teacher for 34 years, non-member of APSES, interviewed on July 17, 2013).

For some, the “vocation” came even later, after having begun (or achieved) a Phd thesis. They explain that they had turned to SES teaching because they did not feel comfortable with the excessive specialisation required by research, but also with the need to affiliate to a theoretic paradigm:

“It's my ecumenical side, which makes me uncomfortable in research, because I can't find a chapel, I kind of like everybody. And so, I can't position myself. When I was doing my introductory sociology classes, I was really trying to defend all the authors. I think that's really the beauty of the thing. I'm not here to impose something on the students” (Woman, 33, agrégée, abandoned a PhD in sociology, SES teacher for 1 year in a deprived area, non-member of APSES but “symmathisant”, interviewed on April 29, 2011).

Such justification may naturally be interpreted as “necessity made virtuous”, as the great reverence, not to say fascination, we could observe from SES teachers every time they face researchers. In the words of one interviewee, “to some extent SES teachers are to academics what general practitioners are to medical specialists.” They have a less in-depth but more general vision of economic and social sciences. And even if they do not always realize it, they are also researchers in their own way when they select documents and information to feed their courses, but also when they experiment with pedagogical devices to adapt to their public. Like in the previous extract, as if they had internalized accusations of influencing students, the first professional virtue every interviewed teacher put forward is their “axiological neutrality”, often quoting Max Weber. They therefore put their honour in presenting all the arguments in the debate on the phenomenon under study, and often boast that their students cannot guess their political opinions. Others prefer conversely make them explicit as if not to mislead the pupils:

“I always present the discussions between economic liberals and keynesians etc., the pupils quickly understand which side I am on, I think. But I always explain to them, I prefer to be honest than pseudo-neutral, because I don't see how I could be neutral. I do the whole Liberal theory well, and then I always end up with a little ironical remark. And then the others theories or approaches. But it is true that I have a conception of the profession where my goal is not so much to learn a list of knowledge, but to provoke them so that they can think by themselves. I like to come to class and tell them things like 'Unemployed people are lazy' and see how they react. Unfortunately, some often agree... At the beginning, I was very rigorous during my lessons. Now, I'm still attached to that: at the end of the year, students normally have two well filled notebooks. But I like when classes are animated, when they put the pen down and follow, that they think at the same time what. I'm not trying to convince them. If I make a remark that is not politically neutral, I tell them 'that is not neutral, but your point of view isn't either'. Now I'm sure they can differentiate a left-wing speech from a right-wing one” (Man, 34, agrégé, teacher in a deprived area, interviewed on June 27, 2008).

This taste for presenting and even provoking controversies in classes actually appears as a way to adapt to teenagers teachers consider unable to reach too high a degree of abstraction. Even this teacher who works in a privileged private-school and defines herself as “pro-business” and “favourable to change” as regards curricula explains some months after the last programs reform:

“There are some notions that were studied on in the final year, which will now be worked on in Year 12. Honestly, I'm going to have a hard time, and I'm still wondering today: how am I going to bring a Year 12 student, given how little they're interested in current affairs, to explain comparative advantages for example. Already a senior student has a little trouble mastering these notions. It's gonna be pretty tough on some things. I don't always find it suitable for a 15-year-old pupil who is more interested in video games, his mobile

phone and Facebook than in the world around him" (Woman, 32, agrégée, teacher for 8 years, non-member of APSES, interviewed on June 14, 2011).

Beyond that, such a pragmatism nonetheless also corresponds more deeply to the way these teachers see their role: not simply to transmit established knowledge, but to help shape citizens by cultivating their curiosity for the world around them and equipping them with corresponding intellectual methods. From this point of view, scientific knowledge is considered as a tool, not as the purpose. As explained an interviewee: "This year, I really wanted to follow [the official program], but rapidly, it pissed them off, it pissed me off, and I'm sure they won't remember anything. While they are full of questions about how the economy works and what's happening in the world!".

In the same time, many SES teachers consider their knowledge gives them a particular social mission, consisting in "denaturalizing certain categories of thought", be those economic or social. But they don't consider this as a political action. This mission often goes beyond the classroom: some have created blogs where they post and comment on scientific articles, others accompany their students as jurors for the best SES book or comic book of the year award and certain even organize conferences with their pupils involving economic researchers or actors. In all of these initiatives, they shall endeavour to respect as far as possible the pluralism of ideas. One of the most prominent of these "SES entrepreneurs" who created some years ago an economics festival during a whole week where the students of his high school are involved until the presentation of the lectures explains:

"I really try to have a wide variety of speakers. A wide variety of schools of thought [...] One of the very first was Michel Pébereau. It was right after the financial crisis and the pupils had a lot of questions. In addition, it was interesting to see him deliver his speech, because he was the one who criticized the SES handbooks. I was even deterred to invite him, because I was bringing the wolf into the sheepfold I just answer it would be very interesting to put him the position of teaching teenagers" (Man, 55, teacher for 34 years, non-member of APSES but "sympathisant").

To a certain extent, even though SES teachers may sometimes feel an "inferiority complex" as regards academic researchers as regards "scholarly knowledge" (what can besides be discussed), they are nevertheless aware they master a "knowledge about teaching" and a "curricular knowledge" (Deauviau, 2009, pp. 202-203), they are thus eager to promote. Attention to pluralism and debates belong to these ones, what may contribute to explain they don't adhere in majority to the positions defended by Alain Beitone, which may be perceived as placing an exclusive emphasis on scholarly knowledge". Nevertheless, as useful it is may be considered, this intern controversies among SES teachers actually appear

a little be artificial and contribute to conceal other no less crucial issues.

4.3 Some quite artificial debates that hide crucial issues

Even more than the employer lobbies, Alain Beitone and his supporters seem to personalize the main enemy of the SES for the APSES members, at least among the most acculturated of its members. Both camps are aggressively, even insultingly, invective on the professional mailing lists, without succeeding in establishing a constructive debate about curricula and pedagogical practices. A close scrutiny on their respective writings and discussions nevertheless suggest most of their antagonisms lay more on caricatures and misunderstandings than real bones of contentions. On the one hand, Alain Beitone himself does not totally reject a kind of inductive pedagogy based on problem-questions that pupils ask themselves:

"Favour an investigation-structuring approach: [...] It is not a question of sinking into the discussion of coffee trade or ideological debates, but of showing students that all scientific knowledge is an answer to a question. Nor is it a question of believing that students invent knowledge in the classroom. There is a body of knowledge in which students need to be trained. But the pedagogical approach, if we want students to engage in learning, must consist of starting from these questions (investigation) to appropriate the knowledge, including conceptual and theoretical, that are necessary to interpret reality (structuring)" (Beitone, 2010 quoted by Gobert, 2009, p. 147).

On the other hand, APSES leaders are far from being the "anti-scientific relativists" or "leftist activists" their opponents often describe. Protesting against the disconnection between economics and sociology in the latter programs, they indeed decide to build a so-called "bypass program" for Year 12 reorganizing the elements of the official program by objects crossing sociological and economic points of view. They accompanied this programme with a free online textbook built by the teachers themselves, requesting validation of each chapter by university researchers from various schools of thought and also matching each with a cross-interview between an economist and a sociologist. More anecdotally, APSES active members systematically correct their interlocutors when they are designated as professors of economics, insisting on "sciences" as much as "social". We could even hear one of the former APSES national president recently telling that she had attended a meeting organized by her head teacher for science teachers [implicitly nature sciences] to defend the seriousness of her own discipline, triggering the approving laughter of her colleagues.

The core of the divergence may actually lie less in the opportunity to cross disciplinary points of view upon given objects than in the evolutionary vision of science that animates Alain Beitone:

"All disciplines borrow things from other disciplines. There are political scientists who work with the neoclassical

conceptual apparatus, to lead economic analyses of democracy for example. In the same way that economists borrow from sociologists, sociologists from economists, physicists from chemists, etc. [But] to be validated, a knowledge must be subjected to the test of scientific debates, which can only be conducted by people who are competent in the field, i.e. a physicist cannot participate in the evaluation of a political science thesis, and so on. Or even biology for that matter. So specialization is a condition for the existence of scientific debates between people who are experts in their respective fields" (Alain Beitone, quoted interview)

Strongly questioned by some sociology of science works, starting with those of Bruno Latour (De Vries, 2016), this approach clearly excludes discussions of science by lay persons, especially students. It has the merit of avoiding the frequent confusion between "prescribed knowledge" and "experiential knowledge" (Deauvau, 2009, pp. 71-73), which are at the root of many cognitive misunderstandings on the part of students, and therefore of academic difficulties, particularly for disadvantaged students (Bautier & Rochex, 1998). It risks however leaving students in a position of passive reverence towards knowledge and prevent them from really appropriating it. Moreover, even though that is not the purpose of its defenders, who like to introduce themselves as Economic and Sociology instead of SES teachers, this stance does no more justify why economics should be taught alongside with other social sciences. It can thus open the way to a separation of both disciplines desired by employers' lobbies.

It can also be discussed from an epistemological point of view, inasmuch as it refers to the haunting debate concerning the unity of the social sciences (Myrdal, 1975 ; Nachane, 2015 ; Cat, 2017). In his latest book, Bernard Lahire proposes an alternative vision of scientific progress that puts the growing specialisation of research fields under tension in an inspiring way:

"The history of scientific progress is made up of periods of specialization during which researchers work on specific points in a dispersed and uncoordinated manner (in different disciplines and in different sectors of each of these disciplines), and periods of synthesis in which researchers gather and articulate what was scattered, translate into a common language all the significant results written in a multitude of disciplinary dialects, and develop integrating theories or synthetic models" (Lahire, 2018, p.16).

Be that as it may, there is undoubtedly a way to maintain together scientific rigour, transdisciplinarity, pluralism, student interest and civic education purposes, while striving to contain social inequalities in learning. Curriculum developers could, for example, draw more inspiration from research programmes on *Socially Vivid Issues*, which refer to "complex and interdisciplinary issues that do not have a single, universal solution because they are based on distributed and situated knowledge" (Simonneaux & Legardez, 2006; Simmoneaux & Calmettes, 2013). There is no need to explain that socio-economic life is full of such issues, which also imply an

enhanced dialogue with other sciences, in opposition to the inward-looking tendency of mainstream economics.

5 Conclusion

The issue of economic pluralism has become particularly acute in recent years, as recently recalled in France by the publication of a provocative essay by two neo-classical economists (Cahuc & Zylberberg, 2016). They indeed describe any heterodox approach to the neo-classical current as "economic negationism", which has sparked lively debate in academic circles and in the public arena (Coriat & al., 2017). This focus on the case of the SES teaching nevertheless aimed to show that the question of pluralism does not exactly arise in the same way in high school economic education as well as in the academic sphere. To understand the specificity of the former, it appears necessary to take a joint approach from the top of the controversies surrounding the legitimate definition of SES programmes and from the bottom by examining the trajectories and representations of a diverse sample of teachers. This makes it possible to understand firstly that, it is the very ambiguity of the founding project of the SES that has fostered these uninterrupted controversies. Secondly, that these recurrent attacks have even fostered the empowerment of this discipline, especially through the main professional association of teachers, which has developed into a "mobilized group". The latter has thus gradually built up a distinctive professional culture, made up of unifying myths and symbols, sufficiently vague for a majority of teachers to recognize themselves in it. The demand for pluralism represents a key element of this and serves both to defend a transdisciplinary entry through objects and as a tool to respond to criticism that portray SES teachers as antiliberal ideologues influencing students. Nonetheless, this commitment to pluralism also corresponds to the social dispositions that led SES teachers to this profession rather than another - many interviewees besides replied that they could not have taught anything other than SES - and to the concrete context of their practices, particularly the need they feel to adapt to an audience to whom too academic a teaching would not be appropriate. On the other end, the APSES dissidents who tries to legitimate SES by bringing them closer to academic disciplines remain very much in the minority, probably in large part because of the definition of professional excellence they embody, which involves mastering knowledge rather than pedagogical experience, and the "symbolic violence" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1970) they then exercise on their colleagues, who sometimes had difficult relations with the academic sphere.

All in all, such observations suggest that conversely to some assertions (Buisson-Fenet, 2018), epistemological, pedagogical and political controversies around the SES curricula cannot be concretely separated. While attempts to reduce high school economics education to a celebration of the market economy are emerging in other countries (Szukala, 2015), it is the very representation of the economy as a (social) science that is at

stake: would it have become an indisputable truth that can be achieved, for instance, by randomized experiments, or is it a forum for debate between competing paradigms, which are based on irreconcilable assumptions. The question undoubtedly goes beyond high school education, but it includes it nevertheless.

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Endnotes

¹ The author is responsible for all the translations of French texts and interviews that are quoted in this text.

² Grammarian and historian, André Chervel promoted an approach to the history of school subjects as endogenous cultures, by establishing that the latter were not simply the transposition of knowledge developed by scientists, nor the application of proven pedagogical methods elsewhere, as we tended to imagine them. Without claiming to settle the debate here between didactic transposition and school culture, we rather endorse an intermediate position, such as the one that envisages teaching in terms of "transformations of knowledge" (Chatel, 1995a and b).

³ The teachers interviewed were approached following a snowball recruitment process (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). While this obviously does not allow for statistical representativeness, we have been particularly careful to meet the greatest possible diversity of teachers, in terms of age, experience, status, context of practice and activism. These interviews lasted between 1h30 and 3h30 and were structured around several major themes: the educational and professional trajectory (including social background); the relation with the various disciplines composing the economic and social sciences; the way of building courses; the relationships with pupils and colleagues; the cultural practices and sociability outside school. The interviews were conducted and analysed in accordance with the principles of comprehensive sociology (Kauffman, 1996), based on initial assumptions and sufficiently open questions and a thematic codification of the transcripts and observation notes to elaborate progressively a "grounded theory" (Charmaz & Mitchell, 2001).

⁴ In France, high school is traditionally divided between different sectors, where students orientate after Year 10. Some subjects, such as mathematics, literature or history-geography are taught in every sectors, but their content is adapted. Since 1994, Year 11 is common to all students following a general and technological cursus, and then they must orientate themselves towards a given sector (Scientific (S), Literary (L) or Economic and Social (ES) – the only one where they will continue to study SES - as regards the general ones). These must nevertheless disappear in September 2019 in favor of a common core curriculum accompanied by a choice of "specialties", among which the SES.

⁵ As one of his principal architects explains: "the idea was to create a section for people who were no longer literary, who were not interested enough in ancient languages, but who were not dedicated to Polytechnique" (Marcel Roncayolo, quoted interview).

⁶ It should be remembered that in 1967 only 15.4% of an age group obtained a high school degree ("baccalauréat") in France.

⁷ This epistemological ambiguity is important to notice: do the SES mobilize different tools from several social sciences or do they pretend to invent their own, overcoming the academic borders? It will be then be written "multidisciplinarity" but one must keep this ambiguity in mind.

⁸ The text of the instructions does not mention it and perhaps its editors are not yet aware of it, but there is also a major stake of social ine-

qualities, between the "heirs" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1964, 1970) and have a "cultural capital" that is adequate to develop the necessary intellectual tools and students of more popular origin on their own, instead of making "implicit pedagogy" (Berrnstein, 1971).

⁹ These studies have among others shown there is a frequent gap between teachers' discourses and practices. Given our questioning here, we will nevertheless focus on the formers and can indeed note from our field work that there is still today an almost unanimous rejection of the lecture course among the teachers observed and interviewed, even if most end up admitting to using it.

¹⁰ The latter would later pursue a mainly political career by becoming senator from 1989 to 2014 under the major right-wing party label (RPR renamed Union for a Popular Movement (*Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* – UMP – under President Chirac).

¹¹ What has been confirmed by several different interviewees.

¹² The APSES is organized into regional associations corresponding to the official French academic districts. Each sends a number of representatives proportional to the number of its members to the national APSES Steering Committee. In a way, this represents the "parliament" of the association. It meets three times a year in addition to the national general assembly and elects from among its members the 11 members of the national bureau, which constitutes the executive body of the association.

¹³ Where academic economists, company leaders, journalists and high-level public servants come to speak with (or to be more accurate) in front of an audience of several hundreds of SES as well as management and economics teachers during two days with the official support of the National Education Ministry, despite its proximity with the MEDEF. Many inspectors not only attend to the event, but take part in its organization. Among the participants of the 2017 edition were for instance the Minister of Education himself, a deputy of the presidential majority who was also a high-level mathematician, the Banque de France Governor, as well as several business leaders (Danone, IBM, Engie, etc.), alongside several researchers, all of neoclassical obedience. Such a blurring of the lines between the origins of the speeches made contributes to a more general confusion as to the economic nature and thus contributes to naturalizing a "desocialized" approach to the economy despite the formal existence of discussion between the "experts" and the public. On this point, our own observations of this event join those made elsewhere on other meetings of this type (Angeletti, 2011).

¹⁴ The opposition between a standard economy and a heterodoxy deserves discussion, as does the heterogeneity of the approaches under this label, coined by Allan Gruchy in 1987. Nevertheless, the latter is a banner that brings together many researchers and students who have in common to criticize the unrealistic assumptions of the former that do not sufficiently take into account the social and institutional anchoring of agents. Their shared research agenda may lie upon a definition of economics as the "science of the *social provisioning process*", whose « explanation involves human agency in a cultural context and social processes in historical time affecting resources, consumption patterns, production and reproduction, and the meaning (or ideology) of market, state, and non-market/state activities engaged in social provisioning" (Lee, 2008).

¹⁵ However, it did not manage to exceed a hundred members, essentially teachers trained by Alain Beitone, and was dissolved after a few years of existence. For more details on this internal opposition to SES teachers since the last curriculum reform in the early 2010, see Harlé & Lanéelle (2015).

¹⁶ I warmly thank Cloé Gobert for having sent me the transcript of some of the interviews conducted for her master (Gobert, 2014), as well as for our rich exchanges.

¹⁷ The socialization of these teachers and in particular a particularly reverential relationship with science thus seems to play a crucial role in explaining their positions. A prosopography of these "dissidents" of the SES remains to be done.

¹⁸ There are in France two recruitment competitions to become secondary school teacher: the CAPES (whose holders are qualified as "certified") and the aggregation, more selective, both academically and socially.

Pernilla Andersson

Talking About Sustainability Issues When Teaching Business Economics - The 'Positioning' of a Responsible Business Person in Classroom Practice

- Presents the business roles that are privileged (i.e. framed as more reasonable or desirable) in classroom practice when teaching business economics and talking about sustainability issues.
- Discusses the potential implications of different teaching approaches and aspects of subject matter in relation to how students as future business people could be equipped to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues.
- Provides detailed empirical examples to facilitate teachers' and students' critical reflections.

Purpose: This paper presents a study of the roles of a business person privileged by teachers when the concept of 'sustainable development' is incorporated into the subject of business economics.

Methodology: A logics approach to discourse analysis was used to analyse the empirical material, which consisted of video recorded observations in five teachers' classrooms collected two years after the inclusion of the concept in the upper secondary school syllabus in Sweden.

Findings: The results show how different rules and conditions for doing business are foregrounded in classroom practice. This in turn has different implications for whether a responsible business person is expected to: a) adapt to self-interest, b) respond to customers' increasing interests in sustainable products, or c) be sensitive to the needs or interests of others (including humans, animals and nature), when making business decisions. The results also illuminate how talking about 'homo economicus' as 'real' can hinder, how talking about customers in altruistic terms can facilitate, and how talking about the complexity of others' interests can suggest ways of doing business (more) sustainably.

Practical implications: The empirical examples that illuminate the privileging of specific roles could be used for critical reflection in order to make students better equipped to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues.

Keywords:

Business education, sustainable development, classroom observations, discourse analysis, companion meanings

1 Introduction

It has long been suggested that the 'homo economicus' assumption underpinning neo-classical theory is not limited to its theoretical function, but also has a 'productive' function by 'creating' individuals acting in accordance with the assumption (Schütz, 1953). Several studies have pointed out that economists/economics students act in selfish ways, although there is some disagreement about the effect of education (Etzioni, 2015; Wang, Malhotra, & Murnighan, 2011). Although selfish behaviour is not necessarily problematic in itself, there seems to be a consensus among academic economists that it is problematic if economics education 'creates' selfish behaviour. Nelson (2006) and Zaman (2013) offer some clues as to how this process can be understood. They describe that and how we have come to embrace the metaphorical understanding of economy as a machine, running on self-interest, as something real rather than a figure of speech. Along the way, the tools with which sustainability issues could be addressed have

become limited to those that fit 'homo economicus'. In the wake of the financial crisis of 2008 and increased concerns about climate change, this critique of economics education has been re-actualised to the extent that economics students have re-organised themselves worldwide and called for a curricular reform (Earle, Moral, & Ward-Perkins, 2016). With regard to business education, it has been argued that rather than being part of a solution, business education has been part of the problem, because it contributes to behaviour that makes it more difficult for businesses to address problems that require cooperation, reflexivity and responsiveness (Hühn, 2014; Starik, Rands, Marcus, & Clark, 2010; Wang et al., 2011). Reflexivity and responsiveness are necessary in that the sustainability challenges of today are often complex and uncertain, which implies difficulties when it comes to stipulating laws, legislation and voluntary principles. From this perspective, it can be argued that business education needs to equip students to make decisions also in the absence of previously established (sustainability) guidelines (Gross, 2007; Pellizzoni, 2004). This requires being sensitive and receptive to the needs of others or 'the condition of socio-ecological systems' before deciding what to do. In addition to reason, the lack of pre-defined principles or goals to follow calls for the involvement of personal feelings (Andersson, 2016), which is at odds with what could be or has been described as a more mainstream business approach. In order to equip students for the challenges of the 21st

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century, it has been suggested that economics education needs to embrace a more complex and dynamic picture of human nature (Brant, 2016; Nelson, 2006; Raworth, 2017; Zaman, 2013). Against this background, it can be argued that, from an educational point of view, it is important to identify situations in educational practices where 'homo economicus' is reproduced or challenged. Furthermore, suspecting that an emphasis on numerical analysis may have a negative effect on decision makers from a sustainability point of view, Wang et al. (2011) propose investigations of how different aspects of education could foster specific behaviour. Considering the above critique of business education, and the current initiatives to address this critique by seeking to include sustainability in the business curriculum (Cullen, 2015; UNESCO, 2006, 2014), I suggest that it is important to pay attention to the roles of a business person that are privileged (i.e. framed/made or 'constructed' as more reasonable or desirable) in this context. The purpose of this paper is therefore to: (a) identify the roles of a responsible business person that are privileged by teachers' in classroom practice when 'sustainable development' is integrated into the curriculum and (b) illuminate different aspects of the subject matter and/or particular classroom practices opening up for different (egoistic or altruistic) roles. Talking about sustainability issues in educational practice often evokes strong emotional reactions. How a business person is expected to deal with personal feelings relating to sustainability issues is therefore also included in the analysis.

The paper is structured in the following way. In the first section the methodological approach is outlined. This section includes the analytical concept of 'a logic' (Glynos & Howarth, 2007) that is developed within a discourse theoretical framework (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985/2001) and is here used to analyse teachers' actions in classroom practice. In the second section the analysis of the empirical material and its results are presented in the form of three different business roles that could be described as 'companion meanings', 'collateral teaching'¹ or what is sometimes referred to as the 'hidden curriculum'. Examples from the empirical material are used to describe how and in which situations different roles are privileged. In the third part, the differences between the logics positioning a business person are clarified. This includes different ways of talking about 'interests' and what a responsible business person is expected to do. In the last section, the findings are discussed with regard to the implications for teachers, teacher educators and others involved in lesson designs, as well as future research. This includes a discussion of the results in relation to how students could be better equipped to address complex and uncertain sustainability issues

2 Methodological approach

The theoretical approach in this study is inspired by previous work on 'the social construction of gender roles' in school settings (Martinsson & Reimers, 2008). The methodological approach is also similar to those used in studies of classroom practices in situ analysing 'com-

panion meanings' in science education (Roberts & Östman 1998, Lidar, Lundqvist, & Östman, 2006; Wickman & Östman, 2002; Östman, 2015) and classroom studies of environment and sustainability education (Rudsberg & Öhman, 2010; Öhman & Öhman, 2013; Östman, 2010). Inspired by critical pragmatism (Rorty, 1982; Cherryholmes, 1988), the aim is to facilitate teachers' and students' critical reflections by making the discourses, rules, presuppositions and assumptions on which they rest visible.

2.1 A logics approach to discourse analysis

In order to allow empirical openness regarding the role of business privileged in educational practice I have found it necessary to divert from any essentialist assumptions relating to the role of business. I therefore draw on antiessentialist and poststructuralist discourse theory. This implies a theoretical starting point that there is nothing 'natural' about the role of business, or what 'sustainable development' is. In this respect, the concepts 'sustainable development' and 'the role of business' are both regarded as floating signifiers (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 134; Howarth, 2013, p. 193; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985/2001), and the role of a responsible business person is regarded as a social construct². From this theoretical perspective, the places and processes in which the meaning (-s) of 'the role of a responsible business person' is made are important study objects. In the study reported on here, the classroom both tells us something about the society in which we live and is a place in which meanings (like the meaning of a responsible business person), as a result of articulatory practices, can change. Teacher and student dialogues (understood as articulatory practices) are here analysed to capture the roles of a responsible business person that are privileged (Wertsch, 1991; see also Östman, 2015) by teachers in classroom practice. A logics approach to discourse analysis (Glynos & Howarth, 2007, p. 136; Laclau, 2000) is used for this analysis. The analytical procedure can be described as retroductive (Glynos & Howarth, 2007) in that it starts in the empirical material without any previous categorisations (of what the role of business entails).

The concept of a logic is designed to capture the rules, conditions, presuppositions and assumptions that make a practice possible, intelligible and vulnerable. For instance, a lesson design that involves imagining different stakeholders' perspectives is intelligible in relation to a *presupposition* that different stakeholders' interests are important to consider. Logics can be perceived as social or political depending on the historical and cultural context in which they occur. They are political if they challenge sedimented norms and are social if they reproduce existing norms (Glynos & Howarth, 2007; Gunnarsson Payne, 2006). Accordingly, a logic may not necessarily be perceived as logical by an individual.

A logic position subjects within a structure, which is how the privileging of a specific role can be captured through an analysis of articulated logics. The role of a 'business person' is here understood as a subject posi-

tion, which together with a number of other subject positions makes up an individual's identity. For example, someone can be a mother, a financial controller and an animal rights activist at the same time, which are different subject positions that might pull in different directions in a given situation. A logic can be said to position subjects within a social structure, in that they 'tell' subjects how to act in different situations and 'tell' other people how to respond to these actions. Accordingly, when a teacher brings a logic into play by her or his actions, they reproduce or challenge existing expectations of what a responsible business person should do. Thus, analysing the logic that is articulated in a classroom also captures the *positioning* of a business person (or the social construction of the role of business in a specific situation). Considering that classroom practices always are situated in a wider social context, an analysis of the logics that are visible in classroom practices also mean accessing the logics that are 'available' in the wider social context. In this way, logics can be described as discursive resources, i.e. as possible ways of understanding, seeing, acting and talking about something in a social context. This is why in the presentation of the results I talk about logics as *identified* and coming into play *by* teachers' actions, in the sense that logics exist in a social context and are reproduced or challenged by teachers' actions.

Furthermore, in the presentation of the results I make a distinction between emotions, feelings and personal convictions. In line with Shouse, feelings are here understood as sensations 'that have been checked against previous experiences and labelled' and are linked to identity through our previous experiences. Feelings can be stable and long-lasting. They can also be described as internalised emotions, and in this sense emotions serve as a kind of 'feelings factory'.³ An emotion is a display or projection of a feeling that is physical, temporary and connected to specific events (Shouse, 2005). When we act in accordance with our personal convictions, our actions are in line with our feelings that hold our identities together – what is often referred to as the inner compass.

2.2 The empirical material

The empirical material was collected two years after a curriculum reform in which the concept of sustainable development⁴ was integrated into the business economics syllabus for upper secondary education. The first paragraph of the syllabus states that teaching should aim to help students to understand the role and conditions of business, including taking responsibility for sustainable development:

"Teaching in the subject of business economics should aim at helping students develop their understanding of the role and conditions of business in society from local to global levels. This includes companies' responsibility for sustainable development [...] Teaching in the subject of business economics should give students the opportunities to develop [...] ability to reflect on the responsibility of business for sustainable development and on democratic values, ethics

and gender when financial decisions are made." (National Agency of Education, 2011)

In general, in Sweden syllabuses are short and formulated in a way that give teachers both responsibility and freedom to interpret them in their own ways. In line with this common practice, the only guidance the teachers received was the above quote. I collected the empirical material in my role as a passive observer (Yin, 2009) in the classrooms of five teachers. The teachers worked at schools located in different socio-economic and geographical settings in Sweden. Some of the schools were run by private actors and some by municipalities.

The empirical material consisted of field notes, 20 video and audio-recorded lessons (77 minutes on average), images of the teachers' notes and written instructions on the whiteboard and the texts used in the lessons. I used material from a previous interview study of teachers (Andersson & Öhman, 2016) as a guide when approaching the teachers and selecting which lessons to observe. The selection criteria included the possibility of capturing as many different teaching approaches, methods, content and perspectives on business ethical responsibilities as possible. Three of the teachers volunteered to participate in the classroom study after participating in the interview study. Two more teachers were later contacted in order to capture specific lesson activities that I had been unable to observe in the first three teachers' lessons. The subject content involved an analysis of a business annual report/financial performance indicators, marketing/eco-labelling, branding, running a business and the social responsibilities of a business. The teaching methods included lecturing, leading group discussions and value exercises, supervising individual assignments and leading discussions after watching documentaries about the consequences of unsustainable business practices.

2.2.1 Ethical considerations

The teachers and the students were informed that the research concerned ways of teaching sustainable development in business education. All the students were informed, both orally and in writing, that participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time. Six out of the 82 students said that they did not want to be recorded on video. Their wishes were respected by not pointing the camera at them. If they were accidentally captured on camera their faces and voices were either blurred out or removed. However, these measures did not prevent me describing the teachers' actions in the classroom. During the lessons, I did my best to ensure that nobody felt uneasy about the situation. As a result, when students were being assessed I sometimes moved away and did not record the situation at all. The decisions made with regard to ethical considerations are in line with the recommendations published by the Swedish Research Council (2002, 2011).



2.2.2 Transcription of material

I made detailed transcriptions of all the parts of the lessons in which anything relating to sustainability and/or the role of business in generally emerged (a total of 134 pages and 52,000 words). When transcribing the video recordings, audio-recordings and field notes were used as support if and when the video recordings were inaudible. The images of the teachers' notes on the whiteboard were also included in the transcripts.

2.3 Analytical procedure

As a first step, I *identified and described* all the teachers' actions that involved a depiction of what could be regarded as unsustainable, a description of other actors (customers, owners etc.) in relation to a business, a description of the conditions of doing business, or indications of what a business can or should do. Repeated actions, such as when a teacher asked a different student a similar question, were excluded in order to provide dense lists of teachers' actions for each set of lessons. The teachers' actions were listed in chronological order to facilitate an analysis of each action in the context of the lessons' dramaturgy. This first step resulted in a list of teachers' actions, which facilitated a detailed analysis of the logics that came into play (see Appendix I).

Second, in order to identify the logic or logics that emerged, the teachers' actions were *analysed* in terms of how they presented the rules and conditions of doing business and the role of a business person in the context of talking about sustainable development. The analysis included rules and conditions that were expressed explicitly and also in the form of what could be described as 'collateral teaching', or what in line with Östman (2010) could be called companion meanings. Thus, apart from when a teacher explicitly told students that 'a business must consider customers' demands', the analysis also revealed when the same rule was expressed 'implicitly', for instance by explaining how to do a customer survey. The chronological list of teachers' actions was used to determine when a teacher summarised key points or messages of a lesson or when she or he 'played devil's advocate'. A group of researchers with relevant teaching experience and experience of analysing discourses in educational practice were also consulted in this step. As a result of this second step in the analytical procedure, three logics of doing business sustainably were constructed or 'identified': the logic of self-interest, the logic of conscious customers and the logic of others' interests. Each logic positions a business differently, as one that should: adapt to self-interest, respond to conscious customers' interests or be sensitive to the needs or interests of others.

Third, the differences between the logics were *clarified*, which included an analysis of assumptions relating to different actors' behaviour. The difference between the two first logics (self-interest and conscious consumers interest) was small yet significant for the positioning of a business person.

3 The roles of a responsible business person in classroom practice

This section presents the three different roles of a business person that were privileged by teachers in classroom practice. This includes a presentation of the logics positioning a business person that emerged as a result of the teachers' actions. For the sake of transparency, detailed examples are provided and a general description of the lessons in which the specific logic was identified is provided in order to contextualise the examples (see textboxes 1-10). Each example includes references to Appendix I in order to provide a broader context for each example.

The examples, which include quotes from the empirical material, have been selected to show the various ways in which the rules and conditions of doing business sustainably are depicted. Depictions of other economic actors, like customers, are also included as examples of these 'rules and conditions'. The analysis of the empirical material showed that these rules and conditions concerned customers, business owners, profit and the role of a business person. The teachers were consistent in their 'use' of a logic, which meant that no change of logic was identified in any lesson/set of lessons. Although a further analysis is beyond the scope of this paper, it can also be noted that the practice of the three (out of five) teachers that participated in the preceding interview study (see also section 2.1) also were consistent in relation to their previous reasoning.

The quotes have been translated from Swedish to English in order to capture how teachers and students might express themselves in a similar situation. Many Swedish expressions cannot be translated literally, and in such cases typical English expressions have been used. In the quotes, the designation '...' means a short pause, whereas '[...]' means words have been deleted. The words that were emphasised by the teachers or students are underlined. The teachers' specific actions are referred to by number, for example in the textboxes (1-11), when referring to the teacher (1-5) and when indicating the number of her or his utterances. For instance, (4.2.3) refers to the third utterance of teacher 2 in textbox 4.

The presentation of the three logics is followed by a comparison of the logics to clarify how they differ with regard to how customers, business owners, profits and the role of a business person are depicted. This also includes the different kinds of (egoistic vs. more altruistic) interests that are foregrounded. The labelling of the logics reflects the different kinds of interests or needs that are foregrounded, and the headings (3.1-3.3) reflect how the logics position a business person.

3.1 Adapt to self-interest (in narrow terms)

The first role of a business person can in short be described as one who adapts to self-interest (understood in narrow terms) and is positioned by what I here have chosen to call the 'logic of self-interest'⁵ that was identified in three lessons with one teacher devoted to *analysing a business annual report*, which also included sustainability reporting (Appendix I, set 1). As



exemplified below, the rules and conditions of the logic relate to the assumption that every actor in an economy is driven by self-interest and that this has to be considered when making decisions.

The general message of the lessons was that ‘we ought to be a fair business’. This expression was used by the teacher in the introduction to the first lesson. A considerable amount of time was spent talking about what could be considered unsustainable. The teacher involved the students by asking them what they thought should be included in a business for sustainability. In these lessons, the teacher talked about sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR) as synonymous. Together, they concluded that this involved caring for the environment and the well-being of employees. When talking about what could be regarded as unsustainable the teacher used the example of mobile phones. In this context, unsustainable factors included harsh working conditions, child labour and the mining of heavy metals that affected the natural environment and the animals and humans living in it. The lessons were characterised by movements between graphic descriptions of ‘unsustainable situations’, which evoked strong emotional reactions⁶, and descriptions of self-interested motives and behaviour, i.e. the harsh realities of doing business.

The students gave the impression of being very engaged in these issues⁷ and appeared to be concentrated, serious and interested in the lesson. Quite spontaneously, they also said that they thought doing business sustainably by addressing environmental and social challenges was good.

In textboxes 1-3, three situations are described using quotes from the classroom dialogue to illuminate when and how the logic of self-interest came into play. The mainstream assumption that all actors (here customers, recycling-organisations and shareholders) are driven by self-interest (in a narrow sense) permeates these situations.

Textbox 1 – Customers driven by self-interest (in narrow terms)

The teacher asks the students whether they think that it is profitable for a business to work with sustainability (CSR).

Students: [searchingly] Yes

T1 (1.1.1): Why?

S: A customer chooses a business that cares rather than one that does not [... similar utterances from students]

T1 (1.1.2): ... it is not clear that they [businesses working with CSR] are making more money. One ought to be aware of this ... It is not at all clear that some people are prepared to pay a little extra for less impact on the environment ... so ... who is prepared to take this blow?

(Appendix I, 1.3-4)

Textbox 2 – Recycling organisations driven by self-interest

The students mention different organisations working with the certification of products and a student describes having seen posters in the subway about recycling cans and that this is linked to energy consumption. The teacher says:

T1 (2.1.1): ...why are recycling organisations making commercials, why are they doing this? [silence]

S: What did you say?⁸

T1 (2.1.2): Why are recycling organisations producing so many commercials?

S: [slowly and searchingly] They make money if we recycle things

T1 (2.1.3): Of course. They make more money the more people recycle...

(Appendix I, 1:9)

Textbox 3 – Self-interest - an obstacle to doing business sustainably

The teacher describes in great detail how a large Swedish-Finnish paper company has used young children to collect cardboard from a rubbish tip in a dangerous environment.

T1 (3.1.1): ... so, we have a Swedish company working very hard with this (environmental and social issues) in Sweden that has partners far away that in turn hire people to work for them. And then we come to the next issue. How far is it reasonable to extend this CSR responsibility? We have had this with H&M that were ‘hard hit’ by awful working conditions in their factories in Bangladesh. One of their factories collapsed and many lives were lost about a year ago. The question is: how far is it really reasonable for a business to oversee the environment and working conditions of the sub-contractors? What do you say? Should every tiny supplier be investigated?

S: [firmly] Yes

T1 (3.1.2): Why?

S: I think you have that responsibility if you say that you are environmentally friendly.

T1 (3.1.3): Yes, is that reasonable? [silence] Then, how much should it cost? ... How much is the customer prepared to pay for the control? ... What they talked about now before the election to the European Parliament was pig farming in Denmark, where they can hardly move, but it means that the meat can be sold for 20-25% less than in Sweden. Leading to Swedish pig farmers shutting down. Because most customers do not choose Swedish meat but the cheaper Danish, despite the fact that we know about the situation ... and this is what you must consider ... [...]⁹

T1 (3.1.4): (working out the financial performance indicators) I can see that it will be very low, can someone calculate this? [...] so the shareholders will not be happy and they will say that they need to do something about this because otherwise would be better to move their money elsewhere and make more. So, then, the question is: is CSR something we ought to pay more attention to, or should we pay less attention to it because it is costly?

(Appendix I, 1.11–18)

In short, the logic comes into play when a teacher, a) suggests that doing business sustainably is not profitable because customers may not want to pay more for the goods provided (1.1.2), b) challenges (3.1.2) a student's response that a business should take responsibility for the entire supply chain and argues that extra costs need to be taken into account and that the lack of demand for Swedish pork proves that customers are not prepared to pay more for its control (3.1.3), c) explains the motive of recycling organisations as self-interest (2.1.3), d) describes the problem of acting in a competitive market (3.1.3), e) explains that shareholders will invest elsewhere if the profits are too low (3.1.4), f) explains that financial performance indicators are used when making business decisions in order to avoid a lack of profit and in their individual assignments instructs the students to use financial indicators to determine whether or not the business should prioritise sustainability work (3.1.4). Taken together, these actions depict customers and owners as self-interested and as preventing sustainable business.

I have here exemplified how and in which situations the logic of self-interest comes into play. The movement between graphic descriptions of 'unsustainable' situations and the harsh realities of doing business are interpreted as a 'rule' that a business person must be neutral when it comes to sustainability. The logic thus positions a business person as someone who should *have control* of the business from a 'sustainability' point of view, but who at the same time must be prepared to *put personal feelings about sustainability aside when financial performance indicators 'say so'*.

3.2 Respond to customers' increasing interest in sustainable products

The second role of a business person can be described as responding to customers' interests in sustainable products and is positioned by what I have chosen to call the 'logic of conscious customers' that was identified in two sets of lessons given by two different teachers at different schools. One set of (seven) lessons was about running a business (Appendix I, set 2) and a further lesson concerned marketing (Appendix I, set 3). As exemplified below, the rules and conditions of the logic suggest that customers increasingly demand 'sustainable' products (in contrast to the description of customers within the logic of self-interest) and that businesses working for sustainability are more likely to succeed.

A common way for students (at upper secondary level in Sweden) to learn about running a business is to take part in the 'Company Programme' at the school. The examples presented in textbox 4 come from the students taking part in this programme. The programme is run by the organisation 'Junior Achievement' (2015), a non-profit organisation supported by government agencies and industry. The purpose of the programme is to promote students' entrepreneurial skills. When taking part in the programme, students identify a market need, write a business plan, set up a company, raise capital and market and sell their product(s). In other words, they run

a business for real for a period of one academic year. The organisation 'Junior Achievement' provides support counsellors and organises trade shows with competitions for students to take part in. In all the observed lessons the teacher included sustainable development in the work with business plans and preparations for an exhibition. When introducing the theme 'doing business sustainably', the teacher outlined what could be regarded as unsustainable, such as the depletion of natural resources, e-waste, harmful pesticides and harsh working conditions. Examples from a lesson about marketing that also included eco-labelling are also presented below.

In textboxes 4-6, different situations are described using quotes from the classroom dialogue in order to show when the logic of conscious customers came into play. The view that customers increasingly demand 'sustainable' products and that doing business is successful characterises all three situations.

Textbox 4 – Addressing external demands for sustainability

When working with the 'Company Programme' the teacher shows the class how to do a market survey, talks about what should be included in a business plan and explains the local interpretations of the grading criteria and the criteria for the competition 'Best business plan'.

T2 (4.2.1): ... there is no formal requirement to include a sustainability report, but from a competition point of view it is definitely worthwhile, so if you want to write something that you think is of interest for the competition 'Best business plan' it [sustainability] is definitely something to consider. But, it is also something that customers are increasingly asking for ...

[...]

T2 (4.2.2): ... in principle no [student] business stands a chance in these competitions if it does not include this [sustainability] aspect ... although there is little evidence at present, it can be regarded as indicating what is to come ... those businesses that do 'business sustainably' from the beginning are much more likely to succeed and survive ... so you can explore this for yourselves, especially by investigating your customers' preferences by including such [sustainability] questions in your [market] survey ... they might even consider paying more ...

[...]

The teacher gives advice to a group of students about the product they are planning to sell:

T2 (4.2.3) ... what people probably think about when buying a new product is its energy consumption, so if you can reassure them in some way ... it would be a way of responding to their concern ... that the product is not more unsustainable than other products, at least ... What happens in the life cycle of your product? From the cradle to the grave, there you have a sustainability perspective. What happens when you buy it, what happens after that and how are you to take care of it to the grave?

(Appendix I, 2.4-5, 7-8)

Textbox 5 – Sustainability sells

The teacher introduces a lesson about marketing:

T3 (5.3.1): We talked about sustainable development ... this autumn and now we will talk about how this affects marketing. Many businesses have discovered that sustainability sells. Environment and justice ... climate ... locally produced ... these kinds of sales arguments were not relevant in the past but are today and are very common, even if they are not important to everyone, many think these kinds of products are good.

(Appendix I, 3.1)

Textbox 6: Organic farmers are successful

The students have read a newspaper article about an investigation into pesticides in fruit. The teacher asks:

T3 (6.3.1): Do you think these kinds of alarm reports lead to more (people) buying organic fruit?

Students: [simultaneously yet cautiously] Yes ...

T3 (6.3.2): Yes, probably ... alarms like this lead to increased demand for organically grown foodstuffs, which leads to a growth in this kind of industry. Marketing and selling organic and sustainable products has become much more popular of late. So, in one way, yes, eating pesticide residues is not good, but those who gain from this are the organic farmers.

(Appendix I, 3.4-7)

The logic comes into play when a teacher, a) describes the external demands that the students (in this case responsible for running a business) have to consider (4.2.1-3), b) describes how students who have included sustainability aspects in their businesses have been rewarded and that 'sustainability is something that customers demand (4.2.1-2), c) encourages the students to reflect on the life-cycle of the product in order to address customers' concerns about energy consumption¹⁰ (4.2.3), d) describes businesses that 'do business sustainably' as being more likely to survive (4.2.2), e) introduces a lesson in marketing by saying that many businesses have discovered that 'sustainability sells' (5.3.1), f) confirms the students' suggestion that scares about pesticides in fruit (probably) lead to an increased demand for eco-labelled fruit and g) concludes that organic farmers benefit from this (6.3.2).

In the above textboxes, I have exemplified how and in which situations the conscious customer logic comes into play. The logic positions a business person as one who *should work for sustainability by meeting the demands of conscious customers*.

3.3 Be sensitive to the needs and interests of others

The third role of a business person can be described as being sensitive to the needs and interests of others and is positioned by what I have chosen to call the 'logic of others' interests' that was identified in three sets of lessons with two different teachers (4 and 5). One set of lessons involved discussing the social responsibilities of a business in different value-exercises (Appendix I, set 4) using different models (Appendix I, set 5), while another

two lessons involved branding (Appendix I, set 6). As exemplified below, the rules and conditions of the logic relate to the view that a business should be sensitive to the (at times diverging) needs and interests of other humans, animals and nature.

The lessons involved different student activities (a 'four-corner' value exercise, ranking stakeholders' influence, a management dilemma and economic and non-economic goals) and students working with an individual written assignment in which they had to assess how a business (of their own choice) took account of sustainability. The second set of (two) lessons covered branding (and a little marketing). The lessons involved the teacher giving a power-point presentation on the history of marketing and how marketing was used by businesses to develop brands for different target groups.

Both sets of lessons contained images of humans and animals suffering as a result of global production processes. The students were encouraged to explore their own feelings in discussions about business and sustainability and when suggesting how a business should deal with sustainability issues. For instance, this happened when they watched a documentary film about the negative effects of global trade. The film contained graphic pictures of environmental degradation and the harsh working conditions in many Asian countries, where factories produce goods like clothes, shoes and mobile telephones, all of which are purchased and used by the students in the classroom. The film emphasised that responsibility for sustainable development did not only lie with customers. A 'four-corners-exercise' was used to discuss the topics raised in the film. The value exercise involved the students taking a stand on different statements about business and sustainability. During the exercise, the teacher encouraged the students to feel and imagine different perspectives.

The lessons were characterised by movements between graphic descriptions of 'unsustainable situations' that evoked strong emotional reactions¹¹ and more or less explicit invitations or requests to suggest actions that reflected their feelings about sustainability. For instance, this happened when the teacher first described the controversial practice of mulesing¹² sheep and urging the students to consider the well-being of others (including animals) when making business decisions (10.5.1-2).

In the lessons, the role and characteristics of customers were described as complex. For example, they were portrayed as important change agents in a legislation process when protesting against mulesing *and* at times as not being very good about making specific demands. In this sense, they did not play the role of a 'self-interested' consumer in an open and free market.

In textboxes 7-10, different situations are described using quotes from the classroom dialogue in order to illustrate how, where and when the logic of others interests' came into play. The view that a business (person) should work for sustainability and be sensitive to the diverse interests of humans, animals and nature when making business decisions characterises these situations.

Textbox 7: Running a business more sustainably

The students have discussed a management dilemma based on a real case in which hundreds of employees in a factory producing garments for the multinational company H&M died when the building collapsed. The media highlighted how much the workers earned and how much profit was allocated to shareholders. The students were asked to suggest how they as managers would respond in such a situation. At the end of the discussion the teacher says:

T4 (7.4.1): ... 'We demand that our supplier double the wages and at the same time increase the prices in the shops. In connection with this we will launch a massive advertising campaign where we appear as 'the good company' that pays decent wages.' Would that be an option? ... Nobody has done this ... but, I think it might be an option.

(Appendix I: 4.10, 18, 20)

Textbox 8: Distributing profit in different ways

The students are reading a text about 'economic and non-economic goals' and answering questions formulated by the teacher. One of the students cannot find the answer to a question relating to only having profit as a goal and asks the teacher for help:

T4 (8.4.1): [points to a paragraph in the text] here it says 'some mean that profit indeed is [points at the text] how the profit is distributed, it is not only about profit but about how profit is distributed, thus how much goes to employees or to the society through taxes, so if you only look at profit, which they often do [inaudible-] so it is known how much profit they made a couple of years ago but at the same time it was reported that employees committed suicide in the factories due to the inhumane conditions ...

S: [interrupts the teacher] Well, when making big profits you ought to be able to ensure that the worker does not need to work so hard,

T4 (8.4.2): Yes, and here [points at a paragraph in the text] 'others mean that the profit is not a good measurement of value, the demand for profit might entail that investments benefitting society not are made' ... it's easy to see that investments in the environment cannot be made if the only focus is on profit.

(Appendix I: 5.11-13)

Textbox 9: Business owners with power to make changes for sustainability

The teacher describes the stakeholder model illustrating the different actors with an interest in a business operations (owners, customers, states, suppliers, political organizations, the media, employees and NGO's), and concludes by saying:

T4 (9.4.1): These stakeholders [...] the business cannot act independently but has to take what these stakeholders think about these different issues into account. It then becomes interesting. Which of these stakeholders has the most power and influence over aspects like child labour and environmental issues relating to the business? Which of these stakeholders must the business take into consideration most, and who has the least power?

(Appendix I: 5.2-3)

In groups the students present how they have ranked the different stakeholders with regard to their power and

influence in sustainability issues. The teacher asks clarifying questions and gives the students feedback:

T4 (9.4.2): Ok, number one, the owner of the business, give me a comment ...

S: The owner of the business, we thought that H&M, Persson, he can control things as he wants. If he wants sub-contractors to be well off he can fix it.

T4 (9.4.3): Then I want to ask you, if it was a business with a more dispersed ownership, like Clas Ohlsson that not only has one owner, would it change?

S: Yes, in that case. We thought there was one owner.

T4 (9.4.4): Ok, yes. I accept your reasoning.

(Appendix I: 5.6-7)

When concluding the exercise, the teacher again confirms the influence of business owners.

(Appendix I: 5.21)

Textbox 10: Act in accordance with your feelings relating to sustainability

The teacher describes how social media has changed how businesses control their brands by marketing, in that anyone using social media like Twitter or Facebook can spread messages widely and quickly. An example is given of a real case when the export of merino wool underwear (to Sweden) was stopped:

T5 (10.5.1): So here are the small fluffy sheep [shows a beautiful picture of a sheep], they do not exist in Sweden though, we find them in Australia and New Zealand and it is clear that one gets warm and cosy and that is how we like to see ourselves, go around feeling cosy in a sweater made of merino wool, but then when they look like that [shows a graphic picture of a sheep with bloody breech] before they come to us it is pretty awful.

The teacher then describes how, helped by people spreading pictures on social media, most of the export of merino wool clothing to Sweden stopped

[...]

T5 (10.5.2): ... you are a wearer of a brand but you are also co-creators of a brand ... do I need to consider whether the sheep have a bum or not? Yes, somehow you have to ... What you do today when you make consumption decisions matter ... and this will become even more important when you are working for a business and its brand, i.e. what does the brand, the business stand for?

(Appendix I: 6.2-7)

More specifically, the logic comes into play when a teacher, a) suggests ways in which business can be done sustainably (7.4.1), b) highlights the downsides of only having high profit as a goal (8.4.1-2), c) states that a business cannot act without considering different stakeholders' interests (9.4.1), d) confirms the students' suggestions that a business owner has the power to work for sustainability when ownership is concentrated (9.4.3-4), and e) encourages the students as future business people to act in accordance with their feelings for sustainability (10.5.2).

The above exemplifies how and which situations the logic of others' interests comes into play. The movements between graphic descriptions of 'unsustainable' situations evoking strong emotions and more or less explicit requests to respond to these situations are here interpreted as a 'rule' that business people should involve their own feelings about sustainability when making decisions. The logic positions a business person as someone who should *be sensitive to the needs or (at times diverging) interests of others and thereby work for sustainability* when making business decisions.

3.4 Three logics and three different business roles – a comparative analysis

The presentation of the results has so far illustrated that the teachers' actions in the different sets of lessons differ with regard to how the rules and conditions of doing business sustainably are depicted, which also reflects different assumptions relating to 'interests'. The empirical material shows that the teachers are consistent in their 'use' of a logic, which means that no change of logic is identified in any one lesson/set of lessons. These different ways are presented as the logic of self-interest, the logic of conscious customers' interests and the logic of others' interests. This section describes the differences between the three logics and how they position the role of a business person differently, which are then summarised in Table 1. Teachers being consistent in their 'use' of logic means that no 'movement' between the columns in Table 1 were identified in the lessons (this is further discussed in section 4).

The differences between the logics depend on how the rules and conditions of making business are depicted. In view of this, I will here clarify the differences between the logics by comparing how the teachers talked about customers (1), business owners (2), profit (3) and the role of a business person (4) in each lesson/set of lessons. The rules and conditions that are highlighted appear in the empirical material. Other important rules and conditions may exist, but are not discussed here because they were not mentioned in the lessons I observed. For instance, there was very little talk about *legislation*, which does not imply that legislation appeared less important. Rather, in all the lessons, the teachers stated or indicated that although legislation was in place, a business needed to do more than simply follow the law.

First, in the different sets of lessons the descriptions of *customers'* behaviour included: 'not being prepared to pay more for sustainable products' (logic of self-interest), 'demanding sustainable products more and more' (logic of conscious customers) and 'a stakeholder and a change agent among others that also could be poor at making demands' and thus poor to rely on as a moral compass (logic of others' interests). These descriptions were repeated several times and no contradictory description of customer behaviour was identified in any set of lessons. The logic of self-interest and the logic of conscious customers could be said to be based on the same market liberal *rule* – giving customers the 'political' role of 'creating change' – but are distinguished by different

descriptions of the *condition* 'customer behaviour'. In contrast to the logic of self-interest and the logic of conscious customers, the logic of others' interests implies a complex description of customers' behaviour and gives customers a less prominent 'political role' as change agents. With regard to the logic of self-interest and the logic of conscious customers, the different descriptions of customer behaviour imply a difference between a business person who either cannot or must take sustainability challenges into account when making business decisions.

Second, the appearance of *business owners* varies in the different sets of lessons. In the lessons dealing with the analysis of an annual business report, business owners are a condition that a business has to take into account when deciding whether or not to prioritise work related to sustainability. In the lessons about running a business, the students themselves *are* the business owners and are being taught that they need to respond to customers' demands, in this case the demand for 'sustainable' products. In the lessons relating to the social responsibilities of a business, business owners are talked about as the most powerful stakeholder when it comes to improving business operations and steering the business towards a more sustainable future (which opens up for the possibility of working for sustainability due to a personal conviction). In short, business owners are depicted as 'moving their money elsewhere when the profit is not high enough' (logic of self-interest), 'having to respond to the demands of conscious customers' (logic of conscious customers), or 'having the power to change towards a more sustainable future' (logic of others' interests). Third, the need for a business to make a *profit* was explicitly or implicitly made clear in all the sets of lessons. However, there was a difference with regard to how a business goal of making a profit was talked about in the lessons, e.g. as a need to respond to shareholders' demands for profit maximisation (logic of self-interest), that working for sustainability is profitable (logic of conscious customers) and that making profit is necessary but the net results could be distributed more or less equally between different stakeholders (logic of others' interests).

Finally, indications of what a business person ought to do in relation to environmental and social challenges, here called the *role of a business person*, were discerned when the teachers gave examples of issues that could be regarded as unsustainable. This involved describing environmental degradation and the suffering of humans and animals, which often evoked strong emotional reactions.

In the presentations of the logics there are two examples of strong emotional reactions among the students. In the example relating to the logic of self-interest, the teacher elaborates in depth on what kinds of things can be regarded as unsustainable: the violation of human rights, unemployment, poor working conditions, environmental pollution from e-waste, mining and industrial effluent. In the example concerning the logic of others' interests, the teacher shows a graphic image of sheep



suffering from the practice of mulesing. Both examples evoke emotional reactions, although the teachers' indications of what a business person ought to do differ between 'knowing when to put personal convictions aside' (logic of self-interest) or 'being sensitive to the needs of others' (logic of others' interests) when making business decisions. In contrast, when the logic of conscious customers comes into play, emotional reactions are comparatively absent. The absence of emotional reactions could be a coincidence, but could also be explained by the way customers' behaviour is depicted in the lessons. When describing customers as being willing to pay more for 'sustainable' products, there is no conflict between students' (or teachers') personal feelings or their commitment to sustainability and the position of a business person. When a business person responds to customers and acts in accordance with her or his personal convictions about sustainability there could also be room for personal feelings. Thus, when the logic of conscious customers comes into play, doing business sustainably becomes *harmonious*. In contrast, when the logic of self-interest and the logic of others' interests come into play, doing business sustainably becomes *conflictual*.

Table 1: Three roles of a responsible business person – the rules and conditions of doing business depicted in classroom practice

	Adapt to self-interest	Respond to customers' increasing interest in sustainable products	Be sensitive to the (at times diverging) needs and interests of others
Positioned by	The 'logic of self-interest'	The 'logic of conscious customers' interests'	The 'logic of others' interests'
Customers	customers act out of self-interest (in a narrow sense)	customers demand 'sustainable' products	customers' behaviour is complex
Business owners	business owners want to maximise their profits	business owners need to address the demands of conscious customers	business owners have the power to change towards a more sustainable future
Profit	a business goal is to maximise profits	working for sustainability is profitable	profit is important but can be distributed differently
Expectations in relation to sustainability issues, including how to deal with personal feelings (for sustainability)	use financial performance indicators to assess whether a business ought to work for sustainability, personal feelings must be put aside	work for sustainability by meeting the demands of conscious customers, scope for personal feelings	contribute to sustainability and be sensitive to the diverging interests of others when making business decisions, involvement of personal feelings is necessary

In short, the logics position a business person differently, as someone who should: use financial indicators to assess whether a business ought to work for sustainability, work for sustainability by responding to the demands of conscious customers (both of which can be compared with what Schwartz and Saiia (2012) describe as a narrow CSR approach), or being sensitive to the needs and interests of others when making business decisions and thereby contributing to sustainability (which is similar to what Schwartz and Saiia (2012) describe as a broad CSR approach, what Porter and Kramer (2011) call 'creating shared value', or what Nelson (2006) refers to as the 'ethical capabilities of a business' (see also: Andersson & Öhman, 2016).

In relation to the 'homo economicus' assumption, it can be concluded that homo economicus is reproduced when the logic of self-interest comes into play, that homo economicus is challenged in the way that *customers'* altruistic interests are normalised when the logic of conscious customers comes into play, and that homo economicus is challenged in a more fundamental way when the logic of others' interests comes into play, in that *all* actors' interests are portrayed in a complex way.

4 Discussion

This paper has illuminated how the role of a responsible business person can be positioned (or 'socially constructed') in different ways when teaching business economics and talking about sustainability issues (see Table 1 in the previous section). These three different roles could be described as different companion meanings, 'collateral teaching' or what is sometimes referred to as the 'hidden curriculum'. The differences, which are dependent on different assumptions of human behaviour and differences in how rules and conditions of doing business are presented in educational practice, have different implications. Talking about 'homo economicus' as 'real' can *hinder*, talking about customers in altruistic terms can (discursively) *facilitate* and talking about the complexity of the diverging needs and interests of others can *suggest* ways of doing business (more) sustainably. The results illuminate how different aspects of the subject matter and/or particular classroom practices could open up for different roles with different interests in focus. In this study, 'accounts analysis' facilitates an adaptation to self-interest, 'marketing' and 'running a business' facilitate a response to customers' interests in sustainability, and 'branding' and 'the stakeholder model' facilitates a sensitiveness to the interests of others. Accordingly, accounts analysis discourages students from doing business sustainably, which is in line with the suspicion expressed by Wang et al. (2011). Marketing encourages students to think that doing business sustainably is possible and branding urge students to use their own judgement and to be sensitive to the needs of others when developing a business. In line with Pellizzoni's (2004) argument that 'being sensitive and receptive to others' needs' is necessary in order to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues, it can therefore be argued that (in this study) branding and the use of models



(e.g. the stakeholder model) offer better opportunities for this, whereas 'accounts analysis' discourages students from being sensitive and receptive to the needs of others when suggesting business decisions¹³. This illuminates how 'the logic of self-interest' can be problematic when it comes to addressing uncertain and complex sustainability issues. However, different aspects of the subject do not necessarily have to be tied to one logic. The results also indicate that teachers could be invested in specific logics.

4.1 Limitations and suggestions for further research

Although it may appear as though the teachers in this study were consistent in their 'use' of a logic¹⁴, the empirical material was limited in the sense that it did not capture the same teacher teaching different aspects of the subject (like accounts analysis *and* the stakeholder model). It is therefore not possible to draw any conclusions about whether these teachers would keep to the same logic, and thereby privilege the same business role, when teaching another aspect of the subject matter, or whether they would change the logic to be 'in line' with (discourses permeating) the specific subject matter. Research that involves teachers' reasoning about the roles of a business person that are privileged in educational practice and analyses of textbooks could therefore add further insights into how different teacher or author perspectives and aspects of the subject matter could open up for different business roles. Considering that 'accounts analysis' (in this study) discourages students from seeing possibilities in doing business 'sustainably', it would be important to explore how accounts analysis could make students qualified to work *for*, rather than *against*, the well-being of animals, nature and humans. Furthermore, it would be worth paying special attention to the advantages and disadvantages of 'making' the doing of business sustainably harmonious, rather than conflictual, by depicting customers as demanding sustainable products. It is hard to argue against making students believe in the possibility of doing business (more) sustainably, but which conflicts of interest could be disregarded?

By focusing on teaching in situ, this study contributes to previous research with a 'pre-post'-design that explores how (business) economics education may or may not promote egoistic behaviour. The strength of the approach is that it offers an opportunity to look into 'the black box', which could help us to better understand the mechanisms that may come into play in practice. However, the findings in this paper are limited to the subject content that is presented by any one teacher. We do not know which business roles are adopted by the students in the classroom or later as business people. Further research on students' meaning-making in situ would therefore be valuable, for example in combination with analyses of teacher-student-peer interactions. In sum, the results point to the opportunities and risks associated with the inclusion of 'sustainable development' across the curriculum (UNESCO, 2014). Further

research focusing on the implementation in classroom practice could therefore help to avoid the risks and make the most of the opportunities.

4.2 Implications for practice

In public debates about education, for instance following publications of international reports on students' performances (like PISA and TIMSS), teachers are often held responsible for declining results. It is therefore important to clarify that I am not suggesting that any teacher to be held responsible for 'creating homo economicus' or teaching 'un-sustainable business practices'. Classroom practice is situated in a wider societal context. This means that the analysis of the logics presented in this paper is both an analysis of the logics that are 'available' in this wider societal context and of the actions of individual teachers. In this way, the logics can be described as discursive resources that teachers had access to in the specific *situation*. On the other hand, logics could also be disrupted or challenged in social practices, for instance by a teacher in a classroom. In order to be able to *consciously* reproduce or challenge a logic, a teacher first needs to see (in detail) how and in which situations specific logics come into play. The detailed empirical examples (textboxes 1-10 and Appendix I) and the references to teachers' specific actions have therefore been provided with the aim of helping teachers to identify these aspects. Although the examples come from business economics lessons in upper secondary education in Sweden, the way of talking about business and sustainable development is likely to be similar in other social contexts. The examples could therefore also be useful for teachers in other countries, for teaching sustainable development in other subjects, and to sharpen teachers' professional visions. By 'seeing' the role (s) of a business person that is/are privileged in practice, the teachers can make (more) conscious decisions about which 'discursive resources' to use. However, making conscious decisions like this in the classroom is not easy. Logics and discourses usually go unnoticed because 'it is just how people usually talk' in a specific context. Consciously challenging a logic requires time to reflect on the logics that come into play and the ability to see how other logics could be articulated. I therefore hope that teachers and others involved in education will be given the time and the resources for this. By recognising that the metaphorical understanding of the economy as a machine (running on self-interest) is a figure of speech and only one of many possible metaphors, students could be provided with a larger 'toolbox' with which complex and uncertain sustainability issues can be better addressed.

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Endnotes

¹ What in Deweyian (1938/1997) terms could be described as potential ‘collateral learning’.

² Although material conditions need to be taken into account when making business decisions, there is nothing ‘natural’ about such decisions. Although it can be argued that a business is dependent on material resources and needs to make a profit, there is scope for different decisions to arise in the space between ‘enough’ and ‘maximum profit’, in the space of time, such as the profit foreseen in the next quarter or the next ten years, or with regard to the distribution of profit between different employees and owners. Any decision that is taken will have implications for the well-being of humans and the natural environment.

³ The metaphor ‘feelings factory’ is taken from [//johnvoris.com/featured-articles/difference-between-emotions-and-feelings/](http://johnvoris.com/featured-articles/difference-between-emotions-and-feelings/) [2015-12-07]

⁴ Well aware of the important distinction between the concept ‘sustainability’ and ‘sustainable development’ in international debates, I here use the concept ‘sustainable development’ since it is the Swedish translation to that concept (‘hållbar utveckling’) that is used in the syllabus.

⁵ I use the concept ‘self-interest’ in a narrow sense to mean financial or material gain, because broader definitions (which could include saving the environment) would not be *analytically* useful.

⁶ By emotional reactions I mean a change in the classroom with regard to the students’ behaviour and the ‘atmosphere’, e.g. from being lively and chatty to very still and quiet.

⁷ I had the same impression when I first introduced myself as a PhD student in environmental science and students spontaneously came up to me after the lesson to express appreciation for my interest in environmental issues and business.

⁸ As the teacher’s voice is loud and clear here, both the silence that ensues and the student asking the teacher to repeat the question are interpreted as signs that the students did not expect this particular turn and not that they could not hear what the teacher said.

⁹ Although beyond the scope of this paper I, considering the current nationalistic tendencies, find it important to note the potential accidental learning concerning ‘We-Swedes’ as morally superior that is at stake here.

¹⁰ Concern about energy consumption could also be explained by ‘self-interest’, but considering that the teacher raises the issue in the context of a product’s life-cycle and immediately prior to this utterance has talked about customers as increasingly concerned about sustainability issues, it is considered to be an example of customers being concerned about sustainability issues.

¹¹ The students’ emotional reactions were acknowledged by the teacher, who asked them whether to change slide.

¹² The practice of mulesing sheep involves carving skin off the backsides. The practice is performed to prevent flies laying eggs in the folds of the skin. Animal rights organisations such as PETA is fighting to end this practice: www.peta.org/issues/animals-used-for-clothing/wool-industry/mulesing/ [2018-02-20]

¹³ For further analysis drawing on Pellizzoni’s reasoning see Andersson, 2016.

¹⁴ Meaning that teachers described rules and conditions consistently and did not ‘move between the columns’ (in Table 1).

Appendix I – Teachers’ actions per set of lessons.

This appendix contains lists of five teachers’ (T1-5) actions in classroom practice when teaching business economics and including sustainability issues in the lessons. The lists of actions in chronological order provide a context for the examples (textboxes 1-10) presented in the article. The specific actions that reoccur in the textboxes are italicised. Repeated actions, such as when a teacher asks a different student a similar question, are excluded in order to provide dense lists of teachers’ actions for each set of lessons.

The lists of teachers’ actions are based on the transcripts (134 pages and 52,000 words) of video and audio recorded lessons in business economics at upper secondary education in Sweden from 2013-2014. For further details regarding the empirical material, including ethical considerations when collecting the material, see Andersson (2016).

Table 1 – Sets of lessons - overview

Aspect of subject-matter or teaching approach (sets of lessons)	Number of lessons ¹	Teacher	Textbox (in article)
1. Financial performance indicators and sustainability reporting	3	1	1-3
2. Young entrepreneurship	7	2	4
3. Marketing	1	3	5-6
4. Exploring sustainability through value exercises	3	4	8
5. Using models to discuss and assess a business	4	4	7, 9
6. Branding	2	5	10

1: Financial performance indicators and sustainability reporting (T1)

- 1.1 Introduces the concept of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) by stating that it basically implies that ‘we ought to be a fair business’. Asks an open question about what ought to be included in CSR.
- 1.2 Asks the students about the business motivation behind working for sustainability. Draws attention to a possible conflict as being costly.
- 1.3 *Asks whether the students believe that working for sustainability is profitable and asks them to motivate why.*
- 1.4 *Questions the assertion that a business work for sustainability is profitable.*
- 1.5 Explains the technical management principles of working for sustainability.
- 1.6 Asks what could be unsustainable and relevant to consider with regard to a mobile telephone.
- 1.7 Confirms with emphasis that it can be hard to change customer behaviour.
- 1.8 Recalls what the students remember with regard to the environmental impact of batteries.
- 1.9 *Asks why recycling organisations use commercials and confirm (with emphasis) when a student suggests that the reason is financial gain.*
- 1.10 Explains that as the business in question is not a manufacturing business, but is dependent on sub-suppliers, there is a need to have control of what is being bought and where it comes from.
- 1.11 *Describes a situation, in detail, where it was revealed in the media that the company Stora Enso was involved in a production chain in which children collected cardboard on a rubbish dump.*
- 1.12 *Asks how far it is reasonable for a business responsibility to extend.*
- 1.13 *Describes how the company H&M has been hard hit by harsh working conditions and an accident leading to hundreds of human deaths in ‘their’ factories in Bangladesh.*
- 1.14 *Restates the question ‘how far the responsibility extends’ by adding ‘do I need to check every little sub-supplier?’*
- 1.15 *Challenges the position taken by a student that a business ought to have control of the whole production chain and asks how much the control is allowed to cost.*
- 1.16 *Points out, with reference to the consumption of pork, that most customer do not choose ‘ethically’, with the consequence that pig farmers who are required to follow higher standards than competitors are going out of business.*
- 1.17 *Explains that shareholders will move their money elsewhere if the profit is not good enough.*
- 1.18 *Explains that performance indicators are (or should be) used to decide whether or not to prioritise work for sustainability*

2. Young entrepreneurship (T2)

- 2.1 Asks whether it is sustainable to import goods from Bangladesh.
- 2.2 Responds that there might not always be laws and regulations to follow, indicating that a business might need to do more.
- 2.3 Suggests that the students search for role-models and advisors in businesses working for sustainability.



- 2.4 *Informs about grading criteria and Young Entrepreneurship competition criteria and concludes that 'doing business sustainably' is more or less a necessity today.*
- 2.5 *Clarifies that the demand for 'sustainable products' is increasing.*
- 2.6 Shows how to conduct a market survey and ask questions about 'sustainability'.
- 2.7 *Informs that it seems as though 'sustainable businesses' are more successful, although the development seems to be so rapid that as yet there is no clear evidence.*
- 2.8 *Points out that customers might be willing to pay more for 'sustainable products'.*
- 2.9 Asks whether the students buy eco or fair trade products and about the differences in price of these products.
- 2.10 Reminds about what is unsustainable with regard to batteries and cotton production.
- 2.11 Elaborates on students' suggestions to recycle and talks about lifecycle assessments and following production chains from the cradle to the grave.
- 2.12 Asks students about 'their' product's life-cycles.
- 2.13 Challenges students' understanding of sustainability as a transport issue only.
- 2.14 Informs that customers might be worried about energy consumption (from a sustainability perspective) and suggests that a sales person with knowledge about the product's energy consumption could reassure these customers.
- 2.15 Asks questions that draw attention to how other businesses have solved 'recycling-problems' in creative ways.
- 2.16 Praises the students when they draw on other businesses' ideas creatively.

3. Marketing (T3)

- 3.1 Explains the relevance of 'sustainable development' in marketing and that many businesses have discovered that 'sustainability sells'.
- 3.2 Informs that 'sustainability' is sometimes misused in marketing and that there are laws that regulate this.
- 3.3 Shows examples of what is not legally allowed to be marketed as environmentally friendly.
- 3.4 *Instructs the students to read a newspaper article about an investigation revealing the presence of pesticides in fruit.*
- 3.5 *Explains that for health reasons a customer ought to buy eco-labelled fruit.*
- 3.6 *Asks the students whether they believe that alarming reports lead to more people buying more eco-labelled fruit and confirms their suggestion that people probably do so.*
- 3.7 *Explains how organic farmers gain when customers' behaviour changes in response to alarm reports.*

4: Exploring sustainability through value exercises (T4)

- 4.1 Confirms that customers impose limits on the behaviour of a business and adds that society can also impose limits on what is not acceptable.
- 4.2 Shows a documentary film illustrating environmental damage and harsh working conditions in the clothing and shoe industry in East Asia. Asks the students about their feelings and encourages them to 'feel, reflect and think'.
- 4.3 Provides different statements (about the causes of poverty, how gaps between rich and poor countries could be reduced, the pros and cons of global trade, what a better future involves and the responsibilities of consumers, governments and big businesses) for the students to take a stand to. Asks the students to reason about and motivate their standpoints.
- 4.4 Confirms that having and expressing different opinions is good. Takes a position that no student has chosen.
- 4.5 Asks the students to imagine a specific perspective - 'you are the Swedish Government and you propose growth' - and to reconsider their answers.
- 4.6 Confirms a student's position of trade as an end in itself and re-orientates from norm to description.
- 4.7 Asks a student about his feelings about prioritising profit and challenges his position that profit is the most important question for a business.
- 4.8 Summarises/interprets a student's response as 'reality shows that in order to become a big and rich business it is most important to prioritise profit'. Adds that it is a position shared by a famous economist.
- 4.9 Confirms that making profit is the most important question for a business, adding that there is not necessarily a clash between making profit and following laws and regulations.
- 4.10 *Gives the students a new assignment that involves suggesting how they would handle a problematic situation. They are part of the management of a big clothing company (H&M) and have been informed that a factory*

belonging to one of their sub-suppliers has burnt down with hundreds of deaths as a result. They are asked to respond to the situation, which also involves responding to the media.

- 4.11 Asks specifying follow-up questions in order to clarify the conditions of the situation, as not owning the factories.
- 4.12 Summarises what the students have suggested altogether (regret what happened, investigate what has gone wrong and improve the control), adding that it is similar to what the management did in reality as well.
- 4.13 Pictures another situation in which the media focuses on how a small portion of the business profits went to the workers' salaries compared to shareholders and requests the students to 'handle the situation'.
- 4.14 Reminds the students about the economic realities that makes it complicated for a single business to raise salaries.
- 4.15 Confirms that it is not a good option to withdraw production from the country in question, as that would imply a lot of people losing their jobs.
- 4.16 Accounts for how the problem was approached by the business in reality, which was similar to the students' suggestion to promise strengthened control and investment of money in schools and day-care.
- 4.17 Raises the issue of whether it is possible for a business to raise wages or if that needs to be done by the government. Concludes that it is not easy for a single business to raise wages.
- 4.18 *Asks the students to take a stand on whether the business ought to make demands on the sub-suppliers to raise the wages, raise the prices in the stores and make a commercial campaign where the business is portrayed as 'the good company'.*
- 4.19 Asks the students whether they would continue to buy clothes from H&M if it said it would raise salaries as well as the final products.
- 4.20 *Concludes that no-one has done this (4.18), but suggests that it could be an option.*

5. Using models to discuss and assess a business (T4)

- 5.1 Summarises the last lesson on the social responsibility of a business (economic responsibility, its responsibility for its employees, the working conditions and responsibility for the environment).
- 5.2 *Explains the stakeholder model and how it can and ought to be used to understand and discuss business responsibilities.*
- 5.3 *Gives the students a group assignment to imagine a big multinational business such as H&M and to discuss and rank stakeholders with regard to influence, 'which stakeholders must the management take most account of regarding the issues of working conditions and environmental impact'.*
- 5.4 Clarifies that the management must take into consideration who has the most influence in business decisions.
- 5.5 Points to that there are no correct answers.
- 5.6 *Summarises the groups' answers and asks the students to motivate their answers.*
- 5.7 *Asks whether the students' assertion that 'a business owner, like Persson of H&M, can make any decision he likes' would change if it was a business with a more scattered ownership. Confirms the group's assertion that the business owners have the most influence, taking into account that the ownership is not scattered in this case.*
- 5.8 Confirms the student group's low ranking of the influence of legislation due to the lack of compliance and their follow up work.
- 5.9 Confirms the group's suggestion that the suppliers have the least influence, as a business such as H&M could simply turn to another supplier.
- 5.10 Accounts for own ranking of influence: owners first, followed by the media, political organisations, NGOs, customers, states, suppliers, and last employees.
- 5.11 *Introduces a text about business goals. Informs that a business can have economic goals but now there are more goals added which a business needs to live up to.*
- 5.12 *Provides the students with questions to answer from reading the text, which for instance involves critique for only having profit as a purpose.*
- 5.13 *Guides the students to find 'critique of profit as goal' in the text. The critique involves how profit is distributed to shareholders, employees and to society through taxes. The teacher describes how businesses have made huge profits, while employees have committed suicide due to inhuman conditions in the factories.*
- 5.14 Confirms that a business needs to, apart from its economic responsibilities, be 'a creative business' also taking social and environmental responsibility.
- 5.15 Informs that there are different guidelines a business can use to make a sustainability report and that GRI is a common guideline.
- 5.16 Elaborates on the difficulties that could arise when working with sustainability. This involves how to measure sustainability and that balancing different goals could imply conflicts, for instance between saving species and people providing for themselves.

- 5.17 Clarifies that, according to the model 'Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility', economic responsibility is the foundation. On top of that is legal responsibility and if there is weak environmental legislation one can act beyond the law, and last a business can also engage in society by supporting good initiatives in society, e.g. working against drugs.
- 5.18 Gives the student individual assignments to investigate and assess how well a business (of their own choice) lives up to the increasing demands of running a business 'sustainably', by using the stakeholder model and/or the pyramid-model.
- 5.19 Points out that not all businesses misbehave but that many do. Asks the students to have a critical perspective when studying businesses' websites.
- 5.20 Suggests using the 'ethics barometer' on the Fair Trade Centre's website as a source.
- 5.21 Expresses the opinion that H&M has a lot to say and can make demands, even if it states on its website that it does not have any responsibility for the suppliers.

6. Branding (T5)

- 6.1 Describes how eco- and fair trade labelling emerges in the political spirit after the fall of the Berlin Wall and that it has become a matter of course today, although the focus is still on growth and trade as driving forces, which 'we continuously get to learn from those in power'.
- 6.2 *Explains how social media has changed businesses' control of their brands*
- 6.3 *Describes, in graphic detail, how animals suffer from industrial practices and how reactions in social media have led to consumer boycotts and eventually to changes in legislation.*
- 6.4 *Interprets a business decision to withdraw products as a response to reactions in social media.*
- 6.5 *Concludes that the students are wearer of brands as well as co-creators of businesses.*
- 6.6 *Encourages the students to consider who they want to be and that it also implies making customers' choices and taking social and ethical responsibilities into account.*
- 6.7 *Urges the students to feel and act as future business persons as they feel and act today as customer.*
- 6.8 Points out that customers are not very good at make demands and that in reality we do not really have a free market.

¹ The number of lessons for each aspect of subject matter varies for practical reasons (time constraints and the availability of teachers and students) when collecting the empirical material.



Julie A. Ødegaard Borge

“Am I a politics person?” A Qualitative Study of Students’ Perspectives on Mock Elections as Political Education

- The study explores how students interpret themselves as parts of a democratic community through the political identities they interact with in school.
- The findings reveal limits of political education efforts with regards to active learning experiences in school as a means of stimulating political participation among youth.
- Based on fieldwork in schools, three different analytical categories of identities of political participation are developed: *‘the politician’*, *‘the party member’* and *‘the voter’*.
- The findings in this study call for further research into political awareness among young people, their motivations for political participation, and political education classroom practices.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine mock elections as political education in school, taking the Norwegian case as an empirical example.

Methodology: This study’s qualitative content analysis is based on data collected through fieldwork in five upper secondary schools in the Western region of Norway, through observations and in 18 ordinary language interviews with 18-year-old students in the 3rd grade.

Findings and implications: In the mock elections at Norwegian schools, the students meet and interact with three different identities of political participation: *‘the politician’*, *‘the party member’* and *‘the voter’*. How do the students use the mock election (ME) to shape their conceptions of their political selves? The interview data shows that the students who are active members of political parties accept the three analytical categories of political identities, and the students who are not members of political parties, reject *‘the politician’*, but accept *‘the party member’* as part of their peer group. Finally, the MEs simulate an ordinary election and offer a norm of voting which the students accept as a school assignment. The students vote in the mock election because they are told to do so and generally do not view voting in the mock elections as a way of expressing the voice of their generation.

Keywords:

Political education- mock elections- political participation- youth- active learning

1 Introduction

The idea that political education is important for the whole of the political system is not new. Every political regime seeks to instill in young people values, beliefs, and behaviors consistent with the continuance of its own political order (Greenberg, 1970, p. 4). In political science research, this process is often referred to as part of political socialization (Hyman, 1959; Sigel, 1970), with the primary function of enabling system persistence (Easton, 1965). In this perspective, sustaining democratic traditions is key to upholding democratic regimes, and voter turnout is often considered as an indication of how “well” a democracy is doing. Thus, a sharp decline in voter turnout in Western established democracies in the last decades, especially among young people (Sloam, 2016), has encouraged broader attention from the media, scholars and politicians concerning what can be done to stimulate political participation among young people.

One of the education efforts that aim to promote political participation is holding mock elections at schools, an activity with varying policies and practices in

schools around the world. Although the scarce research that exists about mock elections at school has been dominated by an interest in young people’s political preferences (Aardal, 2011), motivated by predicting the future electorate or forthcoming election results, there is nevertheless a growing scholarly interest in mock elections as a form of political education. Lo (2015) analyses why mock elections and political simulations are effective democratic teaching tools, and argues that both simulation frequency and situational interest predict students’ commitment to vote in the future. In line with this, Borge’s (2016) quantitative study of mock elections as political education in Norwegian upper secondary schools revealed a strong and positive connection between voting in mock elections at school and students’ willingness to vote in the Norwegian parliamentary election of 2013. In a recent study by De Groot (2017) based on semi-structured interviews with teachers from eight schools in the Netherlands, she argues that mock election (ME) related education in the participating schools puts limited emphasis on advancing elements of critical democratic citizenship (CDC). De Groot (2017) further questions whether political simulations are primarily organized to stimulate meaningful learning about key objectives, or whether they merely function as a “side dish” (Parker and Lo, 2016) in the Dutch civics curriculum.

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The MEs are active learning experiences that tap into some of the “best practice” (Gibson and Levine, 2003) forms of project-based learning, either directly or indirectly. Mock elections in Norway provide an excellent case study of political education efforts in school because there is a long tradition of schools organizing mock elections and inviting youth politicians and party members to the school. The mock elections contain three elements of active learning (Borge, 2016b). First, a school debate, where members of political youth organizations visit the school and debate current issues, second, the election square, where the students can meet and interact with party members, and third, the ballot casting, where students vote for their party of preference.

This qualitative study sets out to explore students’ perspectives on mock elections as political education. The main research question is “Whether and how do mock elections as political education at school contribute to the creation of democratic citizens?” The role the school plays in creating democratic citizens is a main concern as schooling is a component of democratization. James G. March and Johan P. Olsen (2000) state that:

“During the twentieth century, political democracy and mass school-based education have attained extraordinary success. Democracy is virtually unchallenged as a legitimate form of governance, and formal schooling is widely recognized as an indispensable component of democratization and economic development” (p. 149).

The institutional perspective frames the current analysis, which evaluates how and whether mock elections at school as an institution of political education contribute to the creation of democratic citizens. The theoretical argument is based on March and Olsen (1995) and their concept of “democratic governance”. Democratic states are dependent on creating democratic citizens, and the institutions define and give meaning to participation. They are particularly concerned with the development of identities as an element that gives meaning to participation. March and Olsen (1995) argue that institutions “build and support identities, preferences and resources that make a polity possible” (p. 28). Moreover, they state that “individuals come to define themselves in terms of their identities and to accept the rules of appropriate behavior associated with those identities” (ibid., p. 50). Institutions give meaning to participation by building and supporting identities. There are limits to what can be accomplished by institutions in the creation of democratic citizens, because, from a constructivist perspective, young people approach political education in different ways based on their previous individual experiences. March and Olsen (1995) are vague about the individuals’ interpretations, and the institutional perspective is thus expanded with analytical tools found in the work of Pierre Bourdieu (1990).

The data was collected through fieldwork in five upper secondary schools in the western region of Norway during the 2013 Parliamentary election in Norway, and mainly consists of interviews with ten female students

and eight male students in the 3rd grade, each participating in general study programs with varying degrees of self-reported political interest.

In the following paragraphs, I will explain the context of the research, before I further define the concept of mock elections in Norwegian schools and show why the Norwegian case is an important research contribution to the currently limited knowledge on mock elections as political education. Further theoretical perspectives, methods, analysis and discussion follow the background sections.

2 Political education in school and the case of Norwegian mock elections

Political education may be defined as “the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for citizens to participate in the political process” (Borge, 2016a). This definition is distinct from citizenship education, which is treated in the literature in a broader manner; as the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable students “to participate in the communities of which they are a part, locally, nationally, and globally” (Arthur et al., 2008, p. 5). Whereas research on citizenship education can address a wide array of issues concerning how people live together in a community, political education is concerned with the relationship of individuals to the political system or their influence on governing. This distinction is a significant one. Lo (2015) argues that if the goal [of education] is to “create politically engaged citizens, it is important to gauge whether students would actually engage with the governmental system in the future, [or whether they would] skirt traditional political actions” (p. 245).

MEs at school are standard educational practices in many countries and are primarily designed to advance electoral participation. In Norway they have been integrated in school curricula since the Second World War as a way of promoting democratic participation, values and attitudes for the future (Storstein, 1946). MEs have expanded geographically throughout the country over the last 70 years and are now conducted in all Norwegian upper secondary schools every election year, i.e., every second year. Mock elections at school can be considered an institution in Norwegian political education (Børhaug, 2010a). The curriculum for compulsory school in Norway stresses the role school has played in the political education of young citizens since 1939 (Normalplanen, 1957). This emphasis has been further developed in the objective of social studies in the Norwegian curriculum: “The purpose of the social studies subject is to help create understanding and belief in fundamental human rights, democratic values and equality and to encourage the idea of active citizenship and democratic participation” (Udir, 2013).

The concept of mock elections at school in Norway encompasses three elements of political education: the school debate, the election square and the ballot casting.

First, the mock elections at school involve youth organizations from Norwegian political parties; these youth organizations visit schools and take part in political debates. Which parties are represented in the debate

can vary between school districts and counties, but the largest parties are generally present. As of the Parliamentary election of 2017 these are: The Progress Party [Fremskrittspartiet], The Conservative Party [Høyre], The Liberal Party [Venstre], The Christian Democratic Party [Kristelig Folkeparti], The Green Party [Miljøpartiet de Grønne], The Center Party [Senterpartiet], The Labor Party [Arbeiderpartiet], The Socialist Left Party [Sosialistisk Venstreparti], and Red [Rødt]. The debate usually lasts for about one and a half hours. The school debate has often been referred to in the media and these news stories typically report content that concerns humor, sexual issues and unrealistic political promises¹.

Second, since 2011 the mock elections have involved an election square. An election square is a market place where the students can meet and interact with party members from the political youth organizations. The youth party representatives set up party booths for the students to visit and the students can ask questions and pick up brochures and campaign material along with assorted merchandise such as balloons, candy and condoms². The election square takes place for a few hours following the debate.

Third, the students can vote in the mock election, which is conducted on either the same day or a few days after the politicians have visited the school. The ballots in the mock election do not elect politicians, but the results of the mock election are collected and presented in the news (such as VG, Aftenposten and Dagbladet³). These results are covered in the national newspapers and on television with the aim of revealing how local - and national election results might look, because mock election results have been shown to predict voting tendencies for the whole electorate (Aardal, 2011). Since the mock election is conducted about a week before Norway's official Election Day, it gives an indication of the outcome of the official election at a time when all eyes are directed towards the turnout and opinion polls. However, in general, the results of mock elections have been more radical than those of the official election. For example, according to the national mock elections result, the Pirate Party, advocating personal data protection, amongst other issues, would have gained eight representatives in the Norwegian Parliament in 2013, compared to none in the Parliamentary election⁴. Despite such irregularities, the results often predict the general tendencies of the outcome of the ordinary election.

3 Theoretical background

In order to study how students interpret the mock elections as political education, the institutional perspective is taken as a starting point. March and Olsen (2000) argue that identities can motivate action if the rules of political identity match the situation. According to their institutional perspective, individuals approach a situation by interpreting the situation in the light of their unique identity. In doing so, they ask questions such as "Who am I?" "What are appropriate actions for me to take?" before selecting the option that appears to be the most

appropriate to the situation. The assumption is that most of the time a political actor acts by asking "what does a person such as I do in a situation such as this?" Action requires matching the rules of that identity to a definition of a situation (p. 152). Thus, individuals define themselves as political subjects, "am I a politics person?", and construct their political identities through interaction with their environments.

A political identity may be broadly defined as "the extent to which being politically engaged is experienced as central to one's sense of self" (Beaumont et al., 2006, p. 255). Political identity has a double sense, both a social and a personal construction. At an individual level, the question becomes whether the *individual defines themselves as a political actor*. In this case, identity is defined by the individual, and identity construction is a personal matter attributed to oneself by the actor (Snow, 2001). At a collective level, political identities are tied to *joining a collective* or belonging to a group (Melucci, 1996). Identity may refer to a social category or a group with certain characteristics, fairly fixed by the institutions in which they are embedded, such as the political identities defined by the labor movement or other political movements that gradually mobilized the main groups of society politically (Rokkan, 1987), or else may be more fluid. The actions appropriate to the individual can be defined by the group and can vary according to the situation (March and Olsen, 2008).

Although March and Olsen (2000) observe that there are limits to what can be accomplished by influencing identities, and that there are variations in how identities are interpreted, they are vague about these restrictions. Pierre Bourdieu (2000) offers an approach through the concept of *habitus*, which can give insight into students' interpretations of mock elections as political education. Bourdieu defines habitus as "a product of a history, the instruments of construction of the social that it invests in practical knowledge of the world and in action are socially constructed, in other words structured by the world that they structure" (ibid., p. 148). Put differently, people construct their identities and selves through dynamic interactions with their environment based on the embodied dispositions, skills and ways of thinking about and acting in the world, that are constituted early in life. This set of socially learned dispositions is acquired through the activities and experiences of everyday life and are often taken for granted. When entering the different fields, the individual always brings their habitus along with resources (the capital). These resources can be economic capital, social capital and cultural capital, all of which are automatically transformed into symbolic capital when the individual enters the field (Bourdieu, 1997). Following this argument, the student comes to school with a habitus – or certain dispositions – that unconsciously or consciously make some choices more acceptable than others. It is a concept for revealing how the diversity in the dispositions the students bring to the school field generates a wide repertoire of possible action when shaping their conceptions of their political selves. As Crossley (2004) further explains (p. 108):

"The perceptual and linguistic schemas of the habitus shape the ways in which agents make sense or fail to make sense of each other's communications. This may mean that they find different meaning in communication to those that the authors of those communications identify in them. It may mean that they "miss the point" or just fail to make any sense of what is communicated."

Many researchers have argued that young people's political identities do not include formal politics such as voting, but rather other forms of political participation, such as demonstrations and social media campaigns, typically described as unconventional or informal modes of participation (Dalton, 2008; Ødegård, 2010; White, 2000; Taft, 2006). Consistent with this notion, Gordon and Taft (2011) find that young political activists criticize adult-led socialization because adults are more interested in socializing youth for the future rather than actually engaging youth in activism that matters in the present. From a top-down perspective, the mock election is a simulation of an ordinary election. From a bottom-up perspective, the students can express their political identities, which merge to form the current voice of youth. Thus, the students are faced with identities related to *future* and *present* political participation. In both cases, it is important to analyze how the students interpret and use the MEs to shape their conceptions of their political selves.

According to March and Olsen (1995), institutions give meaning to participation and provide a motivation to act by presenting political identities. Thus, political identity may motivate participation, but we do not know the role mock elections play in this process. The research question concerns whether and how mock elections as political education at school present identities that contribute to the creation of democratic citizens. To analyze this, the study focuses on the following questions:

- Which political identities do the MEs introduce to students?
- How do students interpret and use the MEs to shape their conceptions of their political selves?

4 Method and data

Data on the mock elections as political education was collected through fieldwork in schools, which included observation and interviews. In this way, it was possible to not only ask a respondent to talk about an issue, event, or set of behaviors but also directly observe the dynamics or behaviors of interest (MacLean, Kapiszewski and Read, 2015, p. 230). I attended and took extensive field notes at various school activities, including (1) the school debate, where young politicians visit the school and debate current issues onstage in an auditorium, (2) the election square, where the students can converse with the youth party representatives and visit the party booths, and (3) the mock election itself, where students cast a ballot. In order to organize my notes from the observations and interviews, I used a toolbox separating descriptive, analytical and personal reflections. In 2011, the field notes consisted of 120 A5 pages and 40 pages

on a journalist pad in handwriting. The field notes from 2013 consist of 97 A4 pages transcribed to the computer using Calibri 11 font and 18 photos. In addition to these field notes, there were a couple of notebooks filled with jottings from classroom visits that were not transcribed into extensive field notes as they were jotted down more for contextual rather than analytical purposes. In addition, party programs, flyers and merchandise handed out by the political parties were all collected to gain a deeper understanding of the issue. Finally, I recorded short videos and made several drawings (Emerson et al., 2011).

The fieldwork was conducted in five upper secondary schools in the western part of Norway, during the mock elections of 2011 and 2013⁵. The schools could choose between only two sequential dates when conducting mock elections, making it difficult to attend more than five schools, and also decreasing the possibility of extending the analysis to more than one regional area. I conducted fieldwork in both rural and urban areas. Schools were selected based on diversity of geography, size, private/public, education programs and turnout in mock elections. In 2009, there was a wide variety in turnout in the mock elections, ranging from 40% to over 80%, making it important to include schools with both a high and low turnout in the study. Schools A and D were chosen as examples of schools where turnout was lower than the other schools in the region.

In order to analyze how students interpret and shape their conceptions of their political selves in relation to (A) the debate, in which youth politicians discuss political issues; (B) the election square, in which the party members are available for questions; and finally (C) the casting of ballots by students, interviews with students were conducted. The sample is presented in the table below and consists of eight male students and ten female students, all of whom were 18 years old and in the 3rd grade in general studies in four upper secondary schools in rural and urban areas in the western region of Norway, except one who was an apprentice in fishing and forestry.

According to constructivism, individuals may interpret things differently based on their various previous experiences; therefore, it was important to include a variety of students with a range of experiences. School students are an identifiable group of people, but they are not homogenous. Therefore, I wanted to explore how students might relate to the identities in different ways. In addition to including students who attended vocational education programs or general education programs, it was important to interview politically active and non-politically active students, along with outgoing students and less talkative students. The principal at each school helped facilitate contact with relevant teachers, and the teachers helped in coordinating the interviews to ensure variation of these aspects. In one case, the students were selected randomly by drawing lots. All of the students also filled in a questionnaire developed by the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD), consisting of 58 items.

The investigated topics cover political attitudes and behavior, and very little on the mock election experience as political education. The students' responses on the item of "political interest", however, are reported in Table 1. The sample of students shows the diversity of the group in how they self-report on political interest. Political interest is one of the variables commonly included in research to explain variation in political participation. Based on national data from the School Election Surveys (SES) provided by the NSD in relation to the Norwegian local election of 2015, most young people are not very interested in politics and overall report a lower interest in politics than the rest of the population⁶.

6.8% reported being very interested compared to 18% in the rest of the population (NSD 2015). Three of the students interviewed in my study reported being very interested in politics; Kåre, William and Ingeborg.

According to data from the School Election Surveys (SES), 12.5% of students who are eligible to vote are members of political parties (NSD 2013, own analysis). Thus, I wanted to ensure that a part of the sample included students who were members of political parties. Two of the 18 students in the study were active members of a rightwing political party, Kåre and William. One of the students, Ingeborg, was a passive member of a political party on the left.

Table 1: Participating students in four upper secondary schools (N=18)

Student name	Gender	Education program	Self-reported political interest in survey	Party Member	School
Svein	Male	Music	Medium	No	E
Karianne	Female	Music	Low	No	E
Rune	Male	General – science	Medium	No	B
Amalie	Female	General – science	Low	No	B
Miriam	Female	General – science	Medium	No	B
Fridtjof	Male	General	Medium	No	E
Ingeborg	Female	General	High	<i>Sosialistisk Ungdom</i>	E
Kari	Female	General	Medium	No	E
William	Male	General	High	<i>Høyre</i>	A
Per Mikal	Male	Vocational (Fishing and forestry)	Medium	No	A
Peter	Male	General	Medium	No	C
Margrethe	Female	General	Medium	No	C
Hanna	Female	General – science	Medium	No	B
Knut	Male	General	Medium	No	B
Ada	Female	General	Medium	No	C
Kåre	Male	General	High	<i>Høyre</i>	C
Lise	Female	Music	Low	No	C
Lykke	Female	Music	Medium	No	C

The data analyzed here is part of a larger study on mock elections as political education in school. In 2011, students taking both general studies (including sports and physical education, music, dance and drama) and vocational education (building and construction, design, arts and crafts, electricity and electronics, agriculture, fishing and forestry, and technical and industrial production) participated in the study, but the data presented here is from 2013 because the school debate was not organized in 2011. After the 2011 Norway terror attacks in Oslo and at Utøya, where the Labor Party's youth organization, AUF, was having a summer camp, the debates were canceled out of respect for the loss of the lives of many young politicians. Instead, the politicians agreed to replace the school debate with an election square where the politicians would be available for questions. At the time of the second interviews in 2013, when the debate

returned, almost all the students from the vocational programs and school D (in 2011) had left school/started work/moved/or could not participate for other reasons.

Choosing to involve a broad variety of students at the outset is a bigger challenge when it comes to second interviews than, for instance, involving only people attending educational programs where they plan to stay put throughout school. What we see from the sample is that there was a high dropout rate for participants attending vocational school. There were no participants left from school D in 2013. A student from school D agreed on the phone to meet me, and I set up a meeting three times, but he never appeared. Second interviews, especially after an interval of two years, are always a risk when it comes to participant dropout rates (Bhavnani, 1991). What became apparent was that, once the students had left school to begin work, the school lost



contact with them and it became increasingly difficult for the researcher to conduct a second interview.

The approach was an ordinary language interview (Schaffer, 2013). I started out by drafting a list of questions, with many follow-up questions on hand to help elaborate the initial answers. This is a preferred method of ensuring the validity of the researcher’s interpretations during the interview. Although none of the findings will be generalizable to the whole student population, this in-depth study offers a unique opportunity to explore themes that derive from an understanding of the variations in students’ perspectives on political identities.

One way of ensuring validity in qualitative data is to allow the participants to read the transcripts or the quotes to be used in the text or even the whole analysis in the finished work. This process is called member checking (Creswell, 2013, p. 252). The participants in the study received the article draft and were encouraged to comment on the accuracy of the direct quotes used. How the material is used, however, is entirely up to the author. For this purpose, the participants chose their own alias names so that they could identify themselves when reading the text. Using an alias name is favorable for this type of work for three reasons. First, the participants usually enjoy selecting an alias name, and it creates a good atmosphere in the interview setting. Second, the participants feel a sense of ownership of the project, and when they receive the text for perusal, they feel they are more than just a statistic. Third, the data presentation benefits from the use of aliases because aliases make it easier to tell a story rather than report numbers.

Reliability issues were addressed by a good-quality recording device. Transcriptions of the semi-structured, ordinary language interviews lasting between 35 minutes and 90 minutes, and of the field notes, were organized into descriptive, analytical and personal reflections that were all processed and structured using NVivo 10. The research was approved by the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD).

5 Findings

The students met youth politicians at school through a political debate, interacted with young party members at an election square, and cast a ballot in a ballot box. Thus, findings from the fieldwork show that there are at least three identities of a “politics” person which the students can engage with in the mock elections: (1) the politician, (2) the party member and (3) the voter. See Table 2. These identities are not exhaustive or mutually exclusive, and the following identities of political participation will serve as analytical categories.

Table 2: Political identities at the mock elections in school

THE SCHOOL DEBATE	The politician
THE ELECTION SQUARE	The party member
THE MOCK ELECTION	The voter

The identities of (1) “the politician” at the school debate, (2) “the party member” at the election square and (3) “the voter” will be discussed in turn, along with the students’ perspectives on the three analytical categories.

5.1 The politician

The politicians in the school debate are sent from the youth party to represent each party’s politics. The parties represented at the school debates at the four schools that conducted debates in 2013 were *Høyre*, *Sosialistisk Venstreparti*, *Fremskrittspartiet*, *Kristelig Folkeparti*, *Venstre*, *Arbeiderpartiet*, *Senterpartiet*, *Rødt* and *Miljøpartiet de Grønne*. With the exception of the two latter parties, these parties were all represented in the Norwegian Parliament, *Stortinget*, prior to the election. In the election of 2013, one representative of *Miljøpartiet de Grønne (MDG)* was elected to *Stortinget*. As a rule, the smaller parties have fewer resources in terms of people and training. Thus, while some of the youth politicians are recruited after a process of training at the youth organization’s summer camps, others are chosen more randomly based on availability. The politicians in the four debates had an average age of 22.3 years. The youngest representatives were two girls representing *MDG* and *Rødt*, both of whom were 18 years old. The oldest, 33 years old, was from the Progress Party and was a municipal mayor. The age gap between the representatives and the students, however, was one factor the students commented on repeatedly. Svein, a music student from a rural area, said the following:

“I think they were a little older than me. The center people, [referring to *Senterungdommens Landsforbund*, the *Senterpartiet* youth organization] were even older than that. I don’t know, I don’t think there was anyone my age. I think they were all older than me.”

This age difference matters because it affects the ability of students to identify with the politicians in the debate. Students in upper secondary school in Norway are mostly 16-18 years old. The youth politicians are students or workers and even though they are young, the interviewees actively distanced themselves from the “older” politicians in the debate. The students noticed and commented on the age differences. The students perceived themselves as younger in relation to the political identities presented in the debate, and an implication from this might be that the debate reinforces the image of politicians and formal politics as something that “older” people engage in.

Another main theme was that the politicians in the debate were more politically interested than the students themselves and were interested in different political issues to those the students considered themselves interested in. Karianne, a music student and active member of a Christian youth organization, said, “They don’t really speak to me. I am not interested enough to participate in great debates. So I feel they are more devoted to their issues and activities [than I am].” She

argues that the politicians in the debate were more interested in politics than she was, and consequently she could not identify with them. Kari, an opinionated and talkative 18-year-old girl from a rural area, helped shed light on this issue: “And then they talked about things that don’t engage us or matter to us, for instance, they talked for around half an hour about whether Norway should be a part of Schengen. And those are things we really don’t think about, so they should know their audience better”. Because the youth politicians talked about issues which she considered irrelevant to her, she could not identify with them. In her eyes, the politicians in the debate had no idea about what engages young people, what types of issues matter to them, and, as Kari says, continue talking for a long time about international agreements that are far removed from the everyday lives of the teenagers. The students did not share political interests with the politicians.

Many of the students also stated that the politicians in the school debate did not fit the *image* they had of politicians. Ada states: “those who debated were kind of against each other” or “It was like a duel. All the time they tried to say something negative about each other”. Adding to this, Ingeborg, who is a party member, but not an active member, said: “The ones debating were kind of against each other, in a way. They were speaking to each other, not to us. It was like they all knew each other from before.” Karianne argues: “In politics I think people should behave more professionally and address issues and not people, and in the debate I felt like it was about people, not politics.” In the students’ eyes, the way the politicians behaved in the school debate was both unprofessional and personal and, according to them, not the correct behavior of a politician. The teenagers in this study have a clear picture of what a politician should be; Kari describes politicians as “Men in gray suits and a tie”. The politicians who visited the school, however, were not representative of this image. The students’ rejection of the politicians in the debate is thus twofold. The politicians were neither like the students, nor like politicians. The school debate presented an identity of “the politician” that the students distanced themselves from.

However, young people, like other age groups, are not homogeneous and may experience politicians differently. Kåre is one of the few students who is a member of a political party. He is an active member of *Unge Høyre* [the Norwegian Young Conservatives], the second largest youth political party in Norway in 2011, with more than 4,000 registered members (Ødegård, 2014). “Active” in this context refers to being active in relation to the mock election. Kåre spent every day working on the school campaign and travelling from school to school, visiting more than ten schools and spending hours, days and weeks at election squares and debates. Kåre was opinionated and had been so since he started reading about party programs as a part of a school project during the local election in 2007 at the age of twelve: “I’ve been walking around with an opinion ever since seventh grade”. He explains:

“If we can show youth that they [the politicians in the debate] are ordinary young people who just have a burning devotion for politics. They are just like you, they don’t feel like they are better than you, they just want to make a change in society. I think that’s important, that teenagers think that this is just someone like me, who just wants to do something. It is not a pompous guy in the Parliament thinking he is much better than everyone else [...] they think it’s pretty neat that we bring the Parliament candidates with us. They think it’s kind of neat that its people in their 20s; you can identify with a student [at the university level] even if you’re in upper secondary school (2013).”

In the quote above, Kåre refers to one of the candidates who, in addition to participating in the school debate, was also a candidate for the parliamentary election. This candidate was young, a 23-year-old man from his local area. Kåre argues that it is a strategy to send young politicians to the debate. As an active party member, Kåre strongly identifies with the politicians in the debate who are people in their 20s and in college. They are equal; the age difference does not matter. Kåre is like them, the politicians in the debate, thus leading to acceptance of the identities presented. All of the other students, who were not active members of political parties, rejected the identity of the politician present at the debate.

5.2 The party member

The interviewees overall shared a strong sense of their own ability to be like the young party representatives at the election square. The people at the election square were not the same as the ones present at the debate, but were younger members of a political party, often recruited to visit the schools they themselves had attended. Rune says about the party members at the election square in 2013:

“I thought “that could be me”. I would like to join a political party, but I just haven’t found the time. I promoted my sports club from a stand myself; why become a member and be active in sports. It’s clear I could have done the same myself.”

The party members at the election square were considered the same age as the students and spoke the same language and cared about the same issues as the students. Svein says: “the party members were the same age as me. I met someone who used to go to my class in the music program”. Amalie emphasizes: “the people standing there were mostly young people; some of them were my friends”. The students were able to *relate to* the political identities at the election square in school, in part because the party representatives were peers; they were students themselves. Thus, they spoke the same language as the other teenagers. As Knut describes: “They talk like buddies [...] we speak the same language and understand each other”. Lise adds: “We could ask about issues [we care about]”. Asking the students about the issues they care about is an important way of getting to “know their audience better”, as Kari highlighted in her criticism of the political debate.



The two active party members, Kåre and William, said they were eager to join the collective when they saw the party representatives at the election square. They both joined after the mock election in 2011. Kåre says:

“I felt [it was] missing in my life. [...] They were part of a small community. It was fun to talk to other youth politicians whom I don’t agree with, but talk with them and not just the people in my class who do not care about politics. Most people are like yeah. Whatever. Don’t talk about that [politics].”

At the election square in 2011 Kåre met people he could have a discussion with. The young people at the election square presented identities corresponding with how he viewed himself, and he wanted to become a part of that community of likeminded people. He makes a distinction between himself and the other students in his class. He signals his wish to belong to a community of people he can discuss politics with while simultaneously signaling his distinction from the others who “don’t talk about that”. The rejection of others as “not interested”, not like him, contributes to the separation of “them” and “me”.

William received the right to vote at the age of 16 as part of a trial project in twenty municipalities in Norway, but even at a younger age he already knew he wanted to be involved.

“I knew in tenth grade. [...] I joined *Unge Høyre* (The Conservatives youth organization) at the election square [...]. Of course it can’t be a hundred percent after talking to them for only half an hour, but it turned out to be right for me to choose *Høyre*, because it only fits me better and better. I am a *Høyre* person.”

Both Kåre and William saw the party members at the election square and were eager to join. They had both decided that they wanted to join parties before they were presented with the ‘party member’ identity at the election square.

5.3 The voter

The main finding when it comes to the casting of ballots is that the students accepted voting as a school assignment. In Ingeborg’s school, the students went to the gym, where the student inspector and some older students in third grade had set up voting booths and there was a registration area to present their IDs before placing their ballots in a box. Ingeborg says “it is a school thing. The teacher (Norwegian subject teacher) says ok, let’s go and vote for ten minutes. So then there are a few people who choose to stay in the classroom”.

Knut, a science student at the private school, voted in his own classroom and other students were in charge of organizing the election. Talking about the election he explains:

“You have to stand there. If you go away then you are suddenly alone. However, I think everyone felt like they had to follow the group. It seemed like it. They called your

name so... you kind of had to go in when you had your name called.”

In the students’ view, they did not feel they had any alternative to voting. Rune explains:

“I was just supposed to do it. [...] It was mostly because I had to. That’s what was going on that day; we were supposed to vote. The day started out as usual, and then later that day, we were to go downstairs to our classroom, and then we got ballots, and then we each chose a party. Then, we put them in a box.”

However, there is one exception. In one of the five schools, the election was less of a mandatory activity. The organizing teacher had placed voting booths together with a few students in the hall, and the students were able to drop by during recess or mid break to cast a ballot. They were not followed to the ballot box by the teacher, and they were not given time off from class to vote. This was not the case for the other mock election activities, the school debate and the election square. The “less mandatory” school was also the school with the lowest turnout in the mock election, 60% in 2011 compared to 80-90% in the other schools. Two of the six students interviewed at this school, Ada and Peter, reported that they did not even know the election had occurred until after it was conducted. Ada says: “There was no notice about it, or at least I wasn’t aware of it [the mock election]. Many people didn’t go. I think approximately 7 people voted [in her class].” When not considered a school assignment, the turnout rate decreases.

Overall, the students did not pay attention to the results of the mock elections. The results were published online (itslearning.no), but the students did not talk with their friends or in class about the results. However, again there was a difference between the students who were active party members and the students who were not. The two party members expressed the importance of the results of the mock election because, as Kåre explains, “[the result] gives us an indication of what youth want [their future] to be like”. He further argues that a win in the mock elections at school fuels the rest of the Parliamentary election campaign.

“[It] is all about motivation, both for the youth parties and the parties in general. The result comes out 3-4 days before Election Day [...] I used that to show how important voting in the mock election is... [We can] do a better job campaigning after the mock election in the last days before the Parliamentary election.”

For him, winning the mock elections at school is about showing the voice of youth and it provides motivation to get the votes that count in the Parliamentary election.

6 Discussion

In the MEs at Norwegian schools, the students meet and interact with three different identities of political participation: 1) *the politician*, 2) *the party member* and

3) *the voter*. How do students interpret and use the MEs to shape their conceptions of their political selves?

In summary, the students who were active members of political parties accepted the three analytical categories of identities. However, the students who were not members of political parties, as is the case for most young people, rejected the identity of “the politician”, but accepted “the party members” as peers. Overall, the students accepted “the voter” as a school assignment.

When interviewing the students it became evident that the politicians in the debate were considered older than the youth themselves, more engaged, talking a different language and addressing issues other than those the students were interested in. A quantitative study on the impact of mock elections revealed that participating in the school debate or the election square had no significant effect on students’ willingness to vote in the Parliamentary elections (Borge, 2016a). The findings presented here may shed light on this lack of effect. When the politicians in the debate were considered older than the students themselves, more engaged, talking a different language and addressing uninteresting issues, this is important because it influenced the students’ ability to identify with the identities presented – it resulted in a rejection of the political identities presented during the debate, both because the politicians were different from the students and because they were not what the students described as “real politicians”. They were unprofessional, and an image unfit for what the students thought of what politicians *should* be like and how they *should* behave.

The interview data indicated that, in many ways, the election square communicated better with the students than the school debate; and a possible explanation might be that the students and the party members at the election square shared a common language and interest in issues (Crossley, 2004). However, the party members are accepted more as “peers” than party members. The students did not share the party-members range of political engagement.

The meaning students found in political identities differed. Both of the two active party members described a craving to join a fellowship in order to discuss politics when introduced to the “party member” identity at the mock election. In a Bourdieuan light, individuals will participate if participation has become internalized as a part of their habitus (Bourdieu, 1990). Bourdieu writes, “He feels at home in the world because the world is also in him, in the form of habitus” (Bourdieu, 2000, p.143). Put differently, if the world presented to him is the world *in* him, it will lead to immediate adoption. According to Bourdieu, these dispositions may remain unnoticed until they appear in action (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 140). In the interview referred to above, Kåre explained how he wanted to become part of a community of likeminded people, and that his classmates “didn’t care about politics” as opposed to himself and the party members. William said that he had known for a while that he wanted to be involved in a political party and during the election square he spent his time deciding which party he

should join, not whether he should join or not. We can perhaps relate these findings to a “political habitus” since the teenagers who were already political, were the ones who accepted the political identities of the MEs. Habitus describes who you are today, through embodied dispositions, based on the people and situations that have influenced you while growing up. Further studies may benefit from exploring in greater detail the effects of political education at home, as the family is one institution in which such a “political habitus” might originate.

The findings strongly indicate support for mock elections as top-down political education. They simulate an ordinary election in order to socialize youth for the future and promote political participation by simulating an election in school in order to ensure that all students have the practical skills to participate in elections. The findings add to the limits of socialization for the future rather than engaging youth in activism that matters in the present (Gordon and Taft, 2011). The students accept “the voter” identity as an assignment in school. Albeit with a few exceptions, the students do not view voting in the mock elections as a way of expressing the voice of youth today, a trait of bottom-up political education. Comparing the findings to other studies of Norwegian civic education classes, an overall trend in political education is a strong focus on voting or what Børhaug (2005) has labeled “voter education”. He further states that (2014):

“There is only one discourse to be found about the political system, and within it only one understanding of the system is articulated: the political system is a flawless representative democracy. [...] Those who are being criticized are those who do not endorse the Norwegian political system, i.e., those who do not vote” (p. 437, p. 439).

The textbooks present the Norwegian political system as fully democratic, and one way the citizens can show support of the democratic system is by voting. As a simulation, mock elections become a part of the “curriculum”, a school assignment for the students, but also for the teachers who interrupt the classroom routine to make time for voting. When the students partake in the election, they observe other students casting ballots and the teachers encouraging them to do so. Thus, voting at school becomes a means of promoting voting as the norm. In this regard, the findings indicate that mock elections offer norms as a motivation where voting is about participating, and not political preferences. The students generally do not view voting in the mock elections as a way of expressing the voice of youth today, or pay attention to the outcome of the mock elections. Rather the students I interviewed described voting in the mock election as a school assignment. Previous studies (Borge, 2016a) show a strong and positive connection between voting in mock elections at school and students’ willingness to vote in Parliamentary elections. This might indicate that they accept the norm of voting presented to them in the mock election. It is an activity, which

interrupts the daily routine, and “everyone” participates in it. Political education can nurture norms as a motivation for participation, by presenting all students with a voter identity. However, norms do not in themselves necessarily justify participation. It is not a given that the students will actually participate even if they say they are willing to do so. In addition, norms operate at a collective level and motivate action in part because there might be sanctions from society, school, friends, and family etc. if the norms are violated. Will the young people who have participated in MEs in school also vote in the Parliamentary elections where there might be no sanctions or where the fear of being sanctioned disappears? There is always a struggle between “laissez faire” and comprehensive political indoctrination (March and Olsen, 2000, p.149). The mock elections convey to teenagers that they should vote because they are told to do so. If getting more young voters to the voting booth on Election Day is a democratic goal, somehow, students must be taught how such participation is meaningful and worthwhile (Børhaug, 2010a), and what motivates political participation may vary (Børhaug, 2010b). Further research should examine whether promoting these norms in school has a lasting impact on actual turnout in national and local elections.

7 Conclusive remarks

The question of how MEs contribute in creating democratic citizens is underscored by increasing concerns that the youth of today are withdrawing from traditional forms of political participation. The MEs in upper secondary schools in Norway erase the conventional divisions between “the ordinary world” and “the school world” by inviting politicians and political parties to school for a few days each election year. This in-depth study explores mock elections as a form of political education, as well as examining the active learning experience in school when youth political parties and students meet and interact. Further studies should explore these findings in other international and social contexts.

Given the qualitative nature of this study, it is not my intention to generalize the behavior and attitudes of Norwegian students or youth in general. This fieldwork lays the foundation for conducting further quantitative research into mock elections in school and students’ perspectives on political education. Qualitative studies are also needed to explore general daily political education at all school levels. Further studies would benefit from exploring in particular how the teachers perceive the mock elections as political education.

Whether and how school contributes to the creation of democratic citizens are questions that may be applied to political education as a whole and not just mock elections. Thus, educators, curriculum developers and school stakeholders in general may benefit from a deeper awareness of the political identities made available for students to interact and engage with. Also, the school is but one institution that young people construct their political identities in relation to. Individuals define

themselves as political subjects and construct their political identities through interaction with their environments while engaging with various identities and alternatives. Youth organizations, the family, sports clubs and pop culture icons are some political socialization arenas promoting identities and alternatives that may contribute to the creation of democratic citizens.

Creating democratic citizens is a balance between supporting democratic values and encouraging critical perspectives. At any time, the majority of school students do not yet have the right to vote. Through political education, the school is an arena that justifies political participation for students. Like age groups in the rest of the population, however, youth are not necessarily a homogenous group where the same justifications may motivate voting. Scholars should explore what motivates young people to participate in politics, in order to create meaningful political education programs for the citizens still in school.

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Endnotes

¹ Romerike Blad, August 31, 2015.
Bergensavisen, September 2, 2015.
Nordlys, August 26, 2013.

² Østlendingen, August 28, 2015.

³ VG, September 8, 2015.

Aftenposten, September 8, 2015.

Dagbladet, September 8, 2015.

⁴ NRK, September 4, 2013.

⁵ Every four years in September, the Parliament, *Stortinget*, is elected through a proportional system (2013). There is also a local election for the 428 municipalities and 19 counties of Norway every fourth year, occurring between the Storting elections (2011).

⁶ The following question was asked: “How interested would you say you are in politics?”

Nora Elise Hesby Mathé, Eyvind Elstad

Students' Perceptions of Citizenship Preparation in Social Studies: The Role of Instruction and Students' Interests

- Enjoying social studies is strongly associated with perceptions of citizenship preparation.
- Aspects of students' perceptions of the teachers' instruction are significant factors.
- Building on students' interests may have positive implications for citizenship preparation.

Purpose: The main purpose of this study is to explore how 16- to 17-year-old students' experiences within the social studies classroom and their online political communication are related to their perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies.

Design/methodology/approach: To meet the purpose of this study, regression analyses were executed based on a survey of 264 Norwegian students aged 16–17. The dependent variable was the students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies.

Findings: The analyses indicated that enjoying social studies was strongly associated with students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. The teacher's contributions, discussing democracy and politics in social studies lessons, and students' online political communication were also significantly associated with students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies.

Research limitations/implications: Some limitations exist in the instrument and in internal and external validity. Future research could add more content to improve the model's explanatory adequacy. More nuanced explanatory factors from outside school are needed to study factors indirectly influencing students' perceptions of citizenship preparation.

Practical implications: These results indicate that focusing on students' interests and quality instruction have positive implications for students' perceived value of the subject when it comes to preparing them for civic and political engagement.

Keywords:

Citizenship education, social studies, 16- to 17- year- old students, teaching

1 Introduction

A politically competent and engaged citizenry is of vital importance for the political sustainability of Western democracies (Dahl, 1998). Both school education and experiences with politics outside school prepare young people for political participation as youths, as democratic citizenship is not restricted to legal and adult citizenship (Stokke, 2017), and later in life. Therefore, the importance of preparing and motivating young people to participate in local, national, and global contexts is widely recognised (Onken & Lange, 2014; Reichert, 2014). This is not limited to participation in working life and democratic decision-making. It also entails a broader concept of participation, including the ability and the desire to be updated and to reflect on social, political, economic, and cultural developments, as well as to engage in the public discussion of such developments. That is, democratic citizenship includes feeling a sense of belonging to society and exercising one's opportunities to improve it. The

quality of citizenship education in school has critical implications for the long-term well-being of a democratic society (Niemi & Junn, 1998), as 'what happens in classrooms can have a significant impact on students' commitments to civic participation' (Kahne & Spote, 2008, p. 754). In Europe, a substantial part of this kind of citizenship preparation has been assigned to the educational systems, and objectives pertaining to citizenship or civic education can be identified both in general curricula and, more specifically, in social studies or citizenship curricula (Eurydice, 2017). Barton and Avery (2016) noted that 'teaching these subjects contributes to students' ability to participate responsibly in the public sphere, and to their desire to do so' (p. 986), and Whiteley (2005) asserted that 'exposure to and perceptions of citizenship education, are robust predictors of participation' (p. 51). However, democratic politics is not a static condition (Biesta, 2011), and theories of political opportunity structure (e.g. Meyer, 2004; Vráblíková, 2014), propose that different political landscapes influence people's mobilisation and participation. One implication of this is that it is never possible to foresee what characterises the political spaces students will be a part of when they leave school. Subsequently, the concept and content of citizenship education needs to be sufficiently open and dynamic to be able to prepare for the unknown, while providing some firm ground on which to scaffold political curiosity, interest, and reflection.

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Research on social studies and citizenship education is a growing field. Large-scale studies, such as the International Civic and Citizenship Education study [ICCS] (e.g., Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Losito, & Agrusti, 2017), have documented the importance of students' perceptions of an open classroom climate and room for discussion in school, and several studies have investigated the increasingly important role of social media in young people's political engagement and participation (e.g., Banaji & Buckingham, 2013; Ekström & Shehata, 2016). Few studies, however, have taken an in-depth look at social studies teaching, students' perceptions of this teaching, or the subject's aims and contents. This paper investigates antecedents of 16- to 17-year-old Norwegian students' perceptions of the value of social studies in preparing them for citizenship. In European countries, these young people are often school learners who are on their way towards adulthood and positions as fully legal and responsible citizens. By focusing on 16- to 17-year-olds, this study investigates young people's perceptions of citizenship preparation in the transition from formal education to formal enactment. The main question addressed in this study is: Which factors are related to students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies?

Based on the premise that healthy democracies depend on an alert and engaged citizenry (Behrouzi, 2005; Dahl, 1998), the main purpose of this study is to explore factors that are related to students' perceptions of the role that social studies education plays in contributing to their engagement in civic participation. That is, this study examines how students' attitudes towards social studies, their experiences within the social studies classroom, and their participation in online political activities relate to their assessment of the subject's success in providing them with the knowledge and skills that enable and motivate them to reflect on, understand, and engage in various ways in society. This study contributes to the field of citizenship education by providing new insights into the role of subjects such as social studies in preparing young people for democratic citizenship through the perceptions of 16- to 17-year-old students. A secondary purpose of this study is to develop adequate measures of citizenship preparation, students' attitudes towards social studies, and quality aspects of social studies teaching. First, we present some of the central concepts in the study as well as previous research in the field of citizenship education in schools and the study's hypotheses. Second, following a short description of the educational context, we provide an outline of the research design and the methodology for a cross-sectional investigation. Third, we present the results of our study. Fourth, we discuss our findings, avenues for further research, and implications for practice, followed by our concluding remarks.

2 Central concepts

Democracy, politics, and citizenship education are central concepts in this study. These are, however, not concrete or agreed-upon concepts. In this paper, democracy is

understood as more than a form of government and form of political organisation (Biesta, 2011); specifically, democracy includes the processes, activities, and institutions related to democratic politics. We conceive of politics and the political as having to do with conflict and pluralism, particularly in or related to the public sphere or to society, although politics most certainly involves, influences, and is shaped by individuals (e.g., Mouffe, 2005). Citizenship education is meant to improve students' capabilities and interest in being a part of democratic politics, and includes values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills (Johnson & Morris, 2010; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Citizenship is, however, a problematic concept (Biesta, 2011; Hung, 2012). According to Hung (2012), a main problem is that the concept of *citizen* excludes those who for some reason are not legal members of a given society. Stokke (2017) proposed four key interconnected and mutually constitutive dimensions of citizenship to address such challenges: Citizenship as (1) legal status; (2) rights; (3) membership; and (4) participation. This conception of citizenship is sensitive to people's feelings of belonging to various communities, as highlighted by Osler and Starkey (2006), and we adhere to this understanding in this paper. However, the opportunities to practice citizenship are often greatly reduced for people who are not citizens of a nation-state, for example immigrants, and for young people below the legal age. These young people are excluded from certain rights and responsibilities, such as voting in elections, and are sometimes referred to as 'not yet citizens' or 'citizens-in-waiting' (Biesta, 2011, p. 13).

The goal of citizenship education for young people is to foster their capacity to participate in various aspects of civic and political life both as youths and adults; however, the goal should not be to foster *certain kinds of good* citizens (Biesta, 2011). Broadly speaking, it is important that 'people are educated to engage in reflective thought and to contribute to collective action' (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004, p. 270). In this sense, participation includes reflecting on and discussing issues, as well as making changes in one's own life or in some form reaching out to others to effect change. Thus, schools should prepare their students for citizenship, but citizenship education is an elusive construct (Steiner-Khamsi, Torney-Purta, & Schwille, 2002). Although many scholars agree on the wider aims of citizenship education described above, several studies have focused on a narrower outcome, namely expected future participation, as the dependent variable (e.g., Reichert & Print, 2017). However, Wood (2012) found that young people's liminal status before coming into voting age might lead to marginalisation and alienation from politics. We argue, therefore, that a concept of citizenship in an educational context needs to be meaningful for young people not yet eligible to vote. An important aspect of citizenship or social studies education in this respect is to demonstrate and provide opportunities for students to experience how it is very possible to influence political processes through informal channels of participation, for example through social movements (Satell & Popovic, 2017). In



this study, citizenship preparation is understood as how young people can use what they learn in social studies in everyday life, and how the subject challenges them to think, helps them understand the global and social world, makes them curious about the world around them, and prepares them to and makes them want to get engaged in society. In short, citizenship preparation in schools should facilitate students to cultivate interest and participate in society (Keating & Janmaat, 2015). Because it is important to learn more about what inspires young people to engage in social and political issues, students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies is the dependent variable of the theoretical framework. By examining these perceptions, we are able to access students' perspectives in and on the process of preparing for current and future citizenship.

3 Citizenship education in Norway

According to the most recent Eurydice report, Norway, the context for the present study, has a combined cross-curricular and integrated approach to citizenship education in school (Eurydice, 2017). In Norway, the core curriculum (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [UDIR], 2017) states that all school subjects should prepare students for participation in society. This aim is clearly expressed through the inclusion of "democracy and citizenship" as one of three new cross-curricular themes. However, the mandatory subject of social studies is responsible for topics concerning politics and democracy. In Norway, grades 1–10 are mandatory, while grades 11–13 are optional, and approximately 98% of students continue directly from lower- to upper-secondary school (UDIR, 2016). Since social studies is a mandatory subject from grade 1 in primary school (age 6) through grade 11 in upper- secondary school (age 16–17), most Norwegian students study political issues and democracy for 11 years before entering higher education or starting to work. In primary and lower- secondary school, social studies comprises social science, history, and geography, which may be considered an integrated approach to citizenship education. This study focuses on students in upper- secondary school. In year 11 of general and year 12 of vocational education, the subject is still called social studies, but consists only of topics from the social sciences (political science, sociology and social anthropology, and some law and economics) and is studied for three hours each week. The subject consists of five main areas of study: (1) the Researcher; (2) the Individual, society and culture; (3) Work and commercial life; (4) Politics and democracy; and (5) International affairs. Although all these main areas deal with the relationship between individuals and society, 'Politics and democracy' is the area that is most directly focused on citizenship education. Politics and democracy learning outcomes in upper- secondary social studies focus on understanding political parties and institutions, opportunities for participation, pluralism and the rights of minorities, and challenges for democracy (UDIR, 2013). Desired outcomes also include central democratic skills, like discussing and analysing.

4 Citizenship education in school and the present study

To investigate possible antecedents of students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies, we present some previous research on citizenship education in schools, focusing on aspects of instruction and students' engagement in politics.

The basic educational model is that teachers aim to influence students' academic work by communicating learning objectives and expectations, explaining the subject content, and facilitating seatwork and group processes among peers (Hopmann, 2007). This study draws on instructional theory focusing on the learner as an active constructor of knowledge. Broadly speaking, this viewpoint implies that quality instruction facilitates learning experiences where the constructions students make as they try to make sense of their worlds are sensible ones (Resnick, 2017). The independent variables contribute to this underlying concept, as exploring and discussing ideas with peers is instrumental for students' understanding of social and political concepts and processes (Torney-Purta, 1994). Existing research has shown that raising the quality of educators' work can be instrumental in improving students' goal achievement (Rockoff, 2004). A premise in this study is that high-quality teaching is favourable for student learning, also when it comes to aspects of education for democratic citizenship.

Previous research has demonstrated that students' interest in a subject is associated with their perceptions of it. For example, studies have shown that liking a subject is related to academic performance and confidence in learning (Winheller, Hattie, & Brown, 2013) and interest is related to enjoyment, effort, and learning (Wade, 2001). In addition, large-scale studies have documented significant effects of student enjoyment both on achievement (Kaarstein & Nilsen, 2016; Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Arora, 2012) and students' interest in continued engagement with the topics under study (Ainley & Ainley, 2011). Therefore, we expect that how well students like the subject, of which a substantial bulk is devoted to politics and democracy, is associated with their evaluation of how well the subject prepares them for democratic citizenship. The first hypothesis is as follows (H1):

H1: There is a positive relationship between the level of students' social studies enjoyment and their perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies.

Many school subjects might contribute to citizenship education. However, subjects such as social studies in upper-secondary school have a clear responsibility for adolescents' citizenship preparation within an often-mandatory syllabus (Eurydice, 2017). Therefore, teachers in social studies play a vital role in schools' efforts to reach goals of citizenship preparation. We discern two important aspects of teaching which are of interest to our research endeavour: facilitating discussions on the topics of democracy and politics in social studies; and teachers' instruction in social studies. First, an open classroom climate for discussion is associated with



positive student outcomes, such as higher knowledge, more positive attitudes, and interest in civic and political issues (Barton & Avery, 2016; Schulz et al., 2017). Classroom discussions are therefore seen as an arena for practicing competencies relevant for citizenship. According to Reichert (2014), such competencies include the ability to analyse and judge political problems and incidents, and to formulate and advocate one's own opinions and convictions. Accordingly, social studies' teachers are expected to carefully facilitate and manage political discussions among classmates. Carefully facilitating discussions includes avoiding manipulation, for example by consciously presenting skewed information or assuming an authoritarian role in the classroom (Freire, 2014). This implies, for example, for teachers not to impose their political preferences on their students. The teachers' task is to constructively channel disagreements between students, which is an important feature of democracy (Leighton, 2012). Further, researchers have found that discussion about topical aspects of politics and democracy to engage students in truly challenging issues that matter to them contributes strongly to commitments to civic participation (Kahne & Sporte, 2008); as a result, students in social studies education should be given ample opportunities to voice opinions about political issues (Jahr, Hempel, & Heinz, 2016). From research on young people's perceptions of democracy and politics, we know that these concepts are often related to formal institutions, such as elections and government, but also to ideas of shaping society and making a difference (e.g., Mathé, 2016, 2017; O'Toole, 2003; Sloam, 2007; White, Bruce, & Ritchie, 2000). As discussions of political issues are important in social studies and citizenship education (Jahr et al., 2016; Kahne & Sporte, 2008), we formulate this hypothesis (H2) on facilitating discussion:

H2: There is a positive relationship between discussing the topics of democracy and politics in the classroom and students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies.

Second, according to Rowe (2007), teachers and teaching are important factors in students' experiences of and outcomes in school. The quality of the teacher's presentation and facilitation of instructional content, including engaging students in instructional activities, is arguably an important factor for students' perceptions of the value of the subject (Fauth, Decristan, Rieser, Klieme, & Büttner, 2014; Reimers, Ortega, Cardenas, Estrada, & Garza, 2014). For example, students' perceptions of teaching quality have been linked to their subject-related interest (Fauth et al., 2014) and a study by Sohl and Arensmeier (2015) linked students' report of engaged teaching to political efficacy. Another study reported that instructional factors have a significant effect on students' reported quality of experience, and that the participants reported high levels of engagement in the subject of social studies (Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Schneider, & Shernoff, 2003). The quality of the teacher's presentation and facilitation of instructional content, including

engaging students in instructional activities, is arguably an important factor for students' perceptions of the value of the subject (Fauth et al., 2014; Reimers et al., 2014). We deduce this hypothesis (H3):

H3: There is a positive relationship between students' perceptions of the teacher's contribution in social studies and their perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies.

Citizenship preparation does not only take place within the school setting, and many young people are engaged in different ways in civic and political issues (Kahne, Crow, & Lee, 2013; Sloam, 2014). For example, young people increasingly use social media for political purposes, and they may act upon their political interests in social media. Although, as Keating and Melis (2017) discovered, this certainly does not apply to all young people. While social media might facilitate political discussions for some, these platforms may also constrain political debates (Ekström & Shehata, 2016; Mathé, 2017). Nonetheless, social media are important because formal political activities are only a part of young people's political engagement (Keating & Melis, 2017). In other words, political engagement could be more broadly defined to include participation in informal, horizontal networks. Based on this previous research, we expect that students' use of the Internet for political purposes is related to their perceptions of citizenship preparation (H4):

H4: There is a positive relationship between students' interest in online political communication and their perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies.

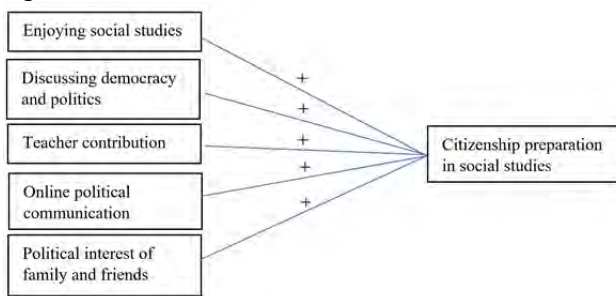
Finally, previous research makes it reasonable to assume that family and friends are important for young people's development of political interest and as role models for civic behaviour (Andolina, Jenkins, Zukin, & Keeter, 2003; Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2009; Kahne & Sporte, 2008; Quintelier, 2015). For example, Andolina et al. (2003) found that 'young adults who grow up amid regular political discussions are much more involved in a host of activities' (p. 277), and Quintelier (2015) concluded that students' discussions with peers and family are much more important for political participation than school factors. Therefore, we formulate this final hypothesis (H5):

H5: There is a positive relationship between students' perceptions of the political interests of and discussions with friends and family and their perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies.

To summarise, although previous research has shed light on many aspects of citizenship education and young people's engagement, there are many mechanisms we do not yet understand (e.g., Keating & Melis, 2017). In this study, we investigate some in- and out-of-school factors that may influence young people's civic and political interest, engagement, and perceptions of their education. Based on the research and hypotheses presented

above, Figure 1 illustrates the theoretical model of the present study.

Figure 1: Theoretical model



5 Methods

5.1 Sample

This study represents the first effort conducted as part of a long-term research endeavour on citizenship preparation among young people today. Data were collected through a 111-item paper-and-pencil questionnaire distributed in person by one of the authors and a research assistant at 11 upper-secondary schools in Eastern Norway. To recruit participants, the heads of the social studies departments at 21 schools in the region were contacted and asked for access to a class of students in the mandatory social studies subject whose teacher would be willing to allow us to use a social studies lesson. We received positive responses from 11 teachers who granted us access to their social studies classrooms, and we ended up with a total of 264 students (43,7% boys and 56,3% girls) in 11 classes (one class at each school). No students declined to participate in the study. The students were 16 or 17 years old when completing the questionnaire. The schools represented in the sample were located in both urban and rural areas in three different municipal counties, and the schools reported having students from mixed to high socio-economic status backgrounds.

5.2 Research ethics

We applied a set of ethical standards required by the National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (2016). First, the study's participants were fully informed of the project's aims and scope. Second, informed consent was obtained from each participant. In addition, the students were informed that they could pass on ticking the boxes in the questionnaire or withdraw from the study at any time. Third, the participants' privacy and confidentiality were assured since no personal or identifiable information was collected. The code key for the names of the schools was stored in a separate document. All contact prior to data collection happened only between one of the authors and the contact person at each school. As a result, the respondents were assured that their anonymity was guaranteed.

5.3 Measures

A lack of adequate measurements has plagued those who have sought to study antecedents of schools'

citizenship preparation. Therefore, by using professional standards of multi-item constructs (Haladyna & Rodriguez, 2013), this reported instrumentation is the first phase of a long-term research endeavour to measure perceptions of democracy and politics; perceptions of social studies; leisure time; and background questions. The variables (i.e., citizenship preparation in social studies, enjoying social studies, discussing democracy and politics, teacher contribution, online political communication, and political interest among family and friends) are indices based on 2–6 items developed on the basis of previous theoretical and empirical materials presented above (sections 2 and 4). All the included measures in this paper were scored on a 7-point Likert scale, on which 4 was a neutral value. Therefore, all the variables are assumed to be on an approximate interval level.

Citizenship preparation in social studies is aimed at measuring how students perceive the value of social studies in preparing them for democratic citizenship. We adapted three items from the measure developed by Tuan, Chin, and Shieh (2005) directed at science education. We created the three remaining items to tap into central aspects of social studies and citizenship education (sample item: Social studies helps me understand the world around me).

Enjoying social studies aims at measuring the degree to which students enjoy social studies lessons. The variable consists of three items focusing on learning activities in the subject (sample item: I very much enjoy participating in discussions in social studies).

Discussing democracy and politics was included due to the centrality of the concepts of democracy and politics in social studies and education for democratic citizenship. While the open classroom climate variable in the ICCS study measures how often certain things occur during discussions of politics and civic issues, our variable aims at measuring how frequently students report actually discussing the topics of democracy and politics in social studies lessons. *Discussing democracy and politics* is made up of two items (sample item: We often discuss the topic *politics* in social studies). In hindsight, we acknowledge that this measure could have been developed further to include broader and more nuanced conceptions of democracy and politics.

Teacher contribution is aimed at measuring students' perceptions of aspects of the teaching practices in social studies. The six items focus on the teacher's demonstration of passion for the subject, quality of explanations, and on the inclusion of multiple perspectives (sample item: The social studies teacher is very good at explaining complex concepts).

Online political communication aims to measure aspects of students' politics-related communication online, with a focus on political discussions. The variable consists of three items (sample item: I like participating in political discussion online).

Political interest of family and friends is aimed at measuring how students perceive the political interest of their family and friends, and to what extent they

participate in political discussions with these two groups. The variable consists of four items (sample item: I often discuss political issues with my friends).

The instrument, which was entirely in Norwegian, was piloted and discussed with a group of twenty 16-year-old students in social studies, which resulted in some changes to wording. The constructs and items can be found in the appendices. The items were written in Norwegian and later translated to English for this article. Table 1 presents bivariate correlations, descriptive statistics, and Cronbach's alpha (α) for each construct. The reliabilities are quite satisfactory.

5.4 Analyses

Initially, descriptive item statistics were explored using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences [SPSS]. The item scores were approximately normally distributed in all variables. Then, dimensionalities were cross-checked using exploratory factor analysis, which resulted in the deletion of some items due to their poor psychometric properties. The items in each variable emerged in the same factor in the exploratory factor analyses (see Appendix 1). The items included in the construct *citizenship preparation in social studies* were found to account for 60,1% of the variance, the items in *enjoying social studies* for 70,8%, the items in *discussing democracy and politics* for 83,4%, the items in *teacher contribution* for 58,4%, the items in *online political communication* for 64,5%, and, finally, the items in *political interest of family and friends* accounted for 63,1% of the variance.

The hypothesised model (Figure 1) was tested using two linear multiple regression analyses in SPSS. The assessment of the regression models is based on the adjusted R^2 . The adjusted R^2 is a modified version of the fraction of the sample variance of the dependent variable that is explained by the regressors.¹ The dependent variable is the variable to be explained in the regression analysis. We conducted two ordinary least squares regressions to analyse the relationships between the variables. The first analysis was based on a parsimonious model (Model 1), while the second analysis was based on an extended model (Model 2). The aim of the analyses was to confirm or reject the study's five hypotheses concerning the strength and significance of the relationships between the independent and the dependent variables.

5.5 Reliability and validity

We used Cronbach's alpha, which captures the breadth of the construct, to assess the indicators' measurement reliability for each of the scales (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The measures of alphas are satisfactory (see Appendix 1). Cronbach's alpha is influenced by the number of items in a test and satisfactory level of reliability depends on how a measure is used (Eisinga, Grotenhuis, & Pelzer, 2013). Our variable *discussing democracy and politics* consists of only two distinct items, and the high factor

loadings indicate that the items measure almost the same thing, i.e. that students seem to respond very similarly to the two items. However, because we believe they are substantially interesting, we have kept both items. Although we acknowledge the need to develop further the instrument *discussing democracy and politics*, we consider these two indicators' measurement reliability acceptable at this stage of research.

Internal validity concerns the issue of causation. Although the relationships within the theoretical models were theory-generated, suggesting that the estimated regression coefficients may reveal causal relationships, the identified causal directions may be ambiguous because this study offers only a snapshot of empirical associations. Longitudinal designs or experimental approaches are needed to enable researchers to draw strong causal inferences. Regarding external validity, we make no claims regarding generalisability. We do not suspect selectivity bias to be a clear validity threat because no students refused to participate in our investigation. However, we cannot be sure that the sample is representative of 16- to 17-year-old students in Norway. Except for a small group of four students, all the participants were recruited from the general study programme. A larger sample might improve the validity of the statistical conclusions (Cook & Campbell, 1979), and so might adding control variables such as gender and socio-economic status. In sum, we acknowledge these shortcomings and argue that they can serve as the foundation for future research.

6 Results

This section presents descriptive statistics for the variables and the results of the regression analyses.

6.1 Preliminary analyses

Distribution percentages show that the students in this sample to a large extent evaluated the role of social studies very positively when it came to preparing them for engagement and participation in society (see Appendix 2). Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alpha for each construct, as well as the bivariate correlations between the variables.

Most notable is the high correlation between enjoying

Table 1. Descriptive statistics, reliabilities and bivariate correlations.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Citizenship preparation						
2 Enjoying social studies	.558**					
3 Discussing democracy and politics	.348**	.348**				
4 Teacher contribution	.450**	.560**	.512**			
5 Online political communication	.264**	.276**	.117	.113		
6 Political interest of family, friends	.242**	.290**	.287**	.100	.512**	
Reliability	.852 ¹	.771 ¹	.801 ¹	.856 ¹	.720 ¹	.805 ¹
Means	5.23	4.69	5.04	4.91	2.90	4.01
Standard deviation	.998	1.28	1.16	1.12	1.42	1.42

Note: ** $p < .01$, ¹ Cronbach's α

social studies on the one hand and teacher contribution and citizenship preparation in social studies on the other. Second, Table 1 shows that students' online political

communication is highly correlated with their perception of the political interest of and discussions with family and friends, suggesting that the two variables may be associated and that there may be an underlying, mediating variable accounting for some of the correlation. Third, it is also worth noting that the variables not directly pertaining to social studies lessons (*online political communication* and *political interest of family and friends*) are only weakly to moderately related to the variables pertaining to social studies.

6.2 Results of hypothesis testing

Table 2 presents the unstandardized (B) and the standardised (β) beta coefficients, as well as the standard error for the B, from the ordinary least squares regressions of the parsimonious and the extended model with students' perceptions of *citizenship preparation in social studies* as a dependent variable. These estimators minimise the sum of squared residuals. The analyses indicate that enjoying social studies is the most important predictor of students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. We also found that discussing democracy and politics, teacher contribution, and online political communication are significantly associated with students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. Table 2 presents the results of the regression analyses.

Table 2. Summary of regression analyses for variables predicting students' perceptions of 'citizenship preparation in social studies'.

Variables	Model 1			Model 2		
	B	SE B	β	B	SE B	β
1 Enjoying social studies	0.396	0.063	0.395***	0.390	0.064	0.389***
2 Disc. democracy and politics	0.118	0.058	0.118*	0.109	0.060	0.109
3 Teacher contribution	0.156	0.066	0.156*	0.162	0.067	0.162*
4 Online political communication	0.121	0.052	0.120*	0.106	0.059	0.106
5 Political interest of family, friends				0.033	0.062	0.033
Adjusted R ²			.354			.352

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 2 shows that hypotheses 1–4 are supported in Model 1. Adding the independent variable *political interest of family and friends* to the regression model (Model 2) slightly reduces the strength of the associations between variables 1, 2, and 4 and *citizenship preparation in social studies*, while the association between *teacher contribution* and the dependent variable is slightly strengthened. The variable *political interest of friends and family* is not found significantly associated with the dependent variable, and hypothesis 5 is consequently rejected.

The results of the regression analyses nuance the pattern found in the correlations between the variables, notably in support of hypothesis 4, indicating that there is a moderate association between students' political communication online and their perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. We tested the regression models for multicollinearity but found no indication of multicollinearity being a problem in the analyses (Variance Inflation Factor [VIF] values under 2). The

findings reported in Table 2 are discussed in light of previous research in the following section.

7 Discussion

The main purpose of this study was to explore the antecedents of 16- to 17-year-old students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. This research purpose is important because social studies contributes to citizenship education.

First, as expected, we found a strong, positive relation between students' reported enjoyment of social studies lessons and their perception of the subject's contribution to citizenship preparation. It is not surprising that students who are able to work with and discuss issues that are perceived as relevant to them and who experience a classroom climate that allows for such discussions also see the value of the subject in helping them making sense of these issues and in preparing them to participate in society. Students who score lower on enjoying social studies to a lesser extent report seeing this value in the subject. In this case the subject may function to strengthen already existing motivations for civic participation but fail to reach out to students who for various reasons do not look forward to social studies lessons and discussions. We would, however, like to point out that this does not necessarily reflect a permanent situation: There are, arguably, steps that can be taken on policy,

school, and classroom levels to include and inspire students who dislike or feel left out of social studies. Between the elusiveness of the concept of citizenship education and the changing nature of the political landscape, it seems like students' interests in socially and politically topical issues can provide a footing for citizenship preparation in school. Because allowing space for different voices and experiences are essential

features of citizenship education (Leighton, 2012), future research could, for example, investigate the importance of student–teacher relations for students' sense of belonging in and contributing to the social studies classroom community.

The degree to which students reported discussing democracy and politics frequently in social studies was only modestly related to the dependent variable. Students' interpretation of the questions asked may influence their responses. And, as Wilen (2004) has pointed out, researchers might categorise social studies discussions differently than students (and many teachers) do. Since classroom opportunities with an explicitly civic dimension have been found to develop students' civic identity (Kahne & Sporte, 2008), a more comprehensive and valid measure might provide different results. If students perceive of democracy and politics in a narrow sense (Mathé, 2016; Munck, 2014), simply equating these concepts with government and elections, discussions of this sort may be perceived as less

inspirational and useful, and hence not be strongly associated with perceptions of citizenship preparation. Another interpretation could be that there simply are other factors that matter more, and that it is not the frequency of discussions, but rather the perceived quality and relevance of these that influence students' perception of the value of social studies in preparing for active membership in society (Wilén, 2004). We acknowledge that our instrument is not adequate for tapping into this latent variable. This shortcoming is surely an avenue for further research.

Third, we found that the *teacher contribution* was moderately and significantly associated with students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. If this association reflects causal processes, this finding might underpin our beliefs in the importance of quality instruction in social studies. For example, presenting and discussing different perspectives are arguably the kinds of activities that contribute to critical thinking and analytical skills (Eurydice, 2017) and reflective thought (Olssen et al., 2004). Conversely, some previous research has found that more general academic support, such as perceived teacher support, did not appear to be an important factor in fostering civic outcomes (Kahne & Sporte, 2008). It seems key, therefore, to encourage teachers to incorporate civic practices in everyday instructional activities. The *teacher contribution* construct is quite broadly defined in this study, and the items tap into different aspects of quality teaching in social studies. A further development could be to discern distinct aspects of social studies teaching, such as teacher explanation, instructional presentation, and classroom management to involve all students in discussions better to understand the mechanisms of high-quality teaching and learning processes in the subject. This endeavour could go in tandem with qualitative approaches, such as observations of teaching sessions, to better understand the fine-grained mechanisms of teaching and learning. Therefore, the next phase of instrument development could tap into more nuanced aspects.

The fourth independent variable in the parsimonious model, *online political communication*, was also found to be moderately related to students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. This out-of-school construct is an indication of students' interest in using the Internet to communicate about political issues. The fact that this is only somewhat related to the perceived value of social studies could indicate that it is not the students' interest in politics that influences whether they consider social studies as valuable in preparing them for civic participation. One explanation for this may be that social media might strengthen the engagement of young people who are already interested, but are less apt to appeal to those who only consume the political news that pops up in their Facebook feed (Ekström & Shehata, 2016; Keating & Melis, 2017). If so, this could mean that social studies in this context is successful in reaching out to a broader student group. This is also interesting when compared to the stronger impact of *enjoying social studies* because it could give reason to believe that enjoying

the subject is more important than political interest, which we would argue could be seen as a positive finding. The students in this sample overall reported higher scores for enjoying the subject than for enjoying engaging with politics online. This could be an argument for the importance of social studies in including and engaging more students than those who report being interested in civic and political life, although the cross-sectional design of this study does not allow for causal inferences.

Finally, peer and parental influence is generally thought to be an important feature of young people's development of academic and political interests (Andolina et al., 2003; Jennings et al., 2009; Kahne & Sporte, 2008). Interestingly, the association between the students' perceptions of the political interests of and discussions with friends and family and perceptions of citizenship preparation was not found substantial or significant. This unusual finding is, however, in line with Jennings et al.'s (2009) finding that youth political interest could not be predicted by the interest of their parents, even when parent attributes were important factors for other aspects of political socialisation. Although we recognise that this finding could to some extent be caused by weaknesses in the instrument, we believe it strengthens the above findings of the salience of variables pertaining to social studies in relation to the dependent variable. That is, there is reason to argue that the social and academic setting in the classroom can be important for the development of students' engagement.

A secondary purpose of this study was to develop adequate measures of citizenship preparation as well as perceptions of social studies, quality aspects of social studies teaching, and out-of-school factors. We acknowledge that we have a way to go to better measure these aspects. What stands out most from our results is the strong association between students' enjoyment of social studies and their perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. Students' enjoyment of social studies lessons has the potential to affect their motivation and persistence to study social studies. This finding should be validated in contexts where students might not be as motivated to study social studies. The factor loadings of the enjoyment of social studies construct are quite satisfactory (see Appendix 1), but the measure should be developed further and explore broader aspects. An interesting question is: How is enjoyment of social studies lessons related to motivation constructs and volition constructs? This is surely an avenue for further research. As Rapoport (1959) suggested, 'if the fundamentals have been captured, the work has started and can go on. Variables can be added, relations modified, and results interpreted in other contexts' (p. 371). In the next phase of our research endeavour, we will add more nuances of students' preferences and beliefs relevant for social studies, as well as background variables such as gender and socio-economic status, into our research model. Including multi-stage analysis to address contextual factors is also an avenue for future research.



8 Implications for instructional practice

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 show that the students participating in this study to a large extent saw social studies as valuable in terms of preparing and motivating them for participation in society. To build on the importance of students' interests and enjoyment of social studies lessons, we consider some implications for instructional practice.

To various degrees, teaching is focused on and constrained by the curriculum. Therefore, the freedom teachers enjoy in choosing the aims and content of their instruction will vary from country to country. In this study, students' enjoyment of the subject was the most important antecedent of their perceptions of citizenship preparation. This could indicate that focusing on students' interests in civic and political issues, for example through incorporating big questions and current events, has positive implications for their perceived value of the subject when it comes to preparing them for civic and political engagement. Second, the importance of the teacher's contribution via quality explanations, incorporation of different perspectives, and passion for the subject suggests that quality teaching is associated with the success of the subject in preparing and engaging students. We argue that social studies or similar subjects, if incorporating explicitly civics-related activities (Kahne & Sporte, 2008), can play an important role in democratic citizenship education. Finally, while the students in this sample only moderately reported liking engaging in online political communication, the analyses indicate that using social media to allow students to communicate about politics could be one way to engage students in the political, for example through discussion groups or the opportunity to create groups and campaigns for issues they care about. We note, however, that not even social media can inspire all young people to engage in consuming political information or producing political content (Ekström & Shehata, 2016; Keating & Melis, 2017). According to Biesta (2011), engagement in democratic politics is 'a process in which new political identities and subjectivities come into existence' (p. 151). Although social studies and citizenship education concern more than democracy and politics, contributing to students' various 'modes of political engagement' (Ekström & Shehata, 2016) is certainly at the core of the subject.

9 Conclusion

Despite its limitations, this study contributes to our understanding of factors influencing students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. However, the study showed that it was somewhat difficult to measure adequately the antecedents of citizenship preparation in social studies. Previous studies have provided an empirical basis for suggesting that both school-inherent factors and external factors are important for young peoples' political competencies. However, citizenship preparation in schools can be considered a precondition for involvement in politics (Galston, 2001). Therefore, students' attitudes towards social studies are of the

utmost importance. Enjoyment in social studies lessons, as studied in this investigation, is only one aspect of favourable conditions for school learning. More research is needed on students' motivation, volitional processes, and experiences of the teaching of social studies. We have also shown that teachers' instruction is associated with students' perceptions of citizenship preparation in social studies. In other words, we conclude that the school subject social studies can have valuable contributions to citizenship education.

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Endnote

¹ Adjusted r2 is a better measure than R2 because adjusted R2 does not necessarily increase when a new regressor is included.

Appendix 1

Factors		
Constructs	Factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha
Citizenship preparation in social studies		,852
54. I think social studies is important because I can use what I learn in everyday life	,741	
55. I think social studies is important because it challenges me to think	,771	
57. Social studies helps me understand the world around me	,794	
58. Social studies makes me curious about the world around me	,804	
59. Social studies prepares students to participate actively in society	,727	
60. Social studies makes me want to get engaged in society	,770	
Enjoying social studies		,771
48. I very much look forward to every social studies lesson	,809	
50. I very much enjoy participating in discussions in social studies	,746	
52. I enjoy most of the work in social studies lessons	,871	
Discussing democracy and politics		,801
40. We often discuss the topic <i>democracy</i> in social studies	,913	
41. We often discuss the topic <i>politics</i> in social studies	,913	
Teacher contribution		,856
34. My social studies teacher usually shows a lot of passion for the subject	,749	
37. My social studies teacher presents several views on an issue in his/her explanations	,775	
39. When the social studies teacher has gone through the teaching materials, I understand much more than I did before	,781	
42. The social studies teacher is very good at explaining complex concepts	,847	
46. The social studies teacher is very concerned with students really understanding the concepts	,719	
47. In social studies we often discuss different ways of understanding a concept	,673	
Online political communication		,720
91. I like reading blogs with political content	,807	
92. I like participating in political discussions online	,785	
93. I like reading political discussions online	,817	
Political interest of family and friends		,805
87. I often discuss political issues with my family	,813	
88. My parents encourage me to pay attention to politics	,789	
89. I have several friends who are very interested in politics	,763	
90. I often discuss political issues with my friends	,814	

Appendix 2

Constructs

Constructs	Mean values	Std.dev	Skewness/kurtosis
Citizenship preparation in social studies			
54. I think social studies is important because I can use what I learn in everyday life	5,27	1,287	-,480/,338
55. I think social studies is important because it challenges me to think	5,26	1,165	-,232/-,113
57. Social studies helps me understand the world around me	5,61	1,184	-,645/,078
58. Social studies makes me curious about the world around me	5,35	1,333	-,652/,235
59. Social studies prepares students to participate actively in society	5,23	1,320	-,745/,736
60. Social studies makes me want to get engaged in society	4,66	1,479	-,335/-,102
Enjoying social studies			
48. I very much look forward to every social studies lesson	4,22	1,450	-,245/,099
50. I very much enjoy participating in discussions in social studies	5,08	1,783	-,662/-,510
52. I enjoy most of the work in social studies lessons	4,79	1,384	-,463/,230
Discussing democracy and politics			
40. We often discuss the topic <i>democracy</i> in social studies	5,08	1,258	-,170/-,558
41. We often discuss the topic <i>politics</i> in social studies	5,01	1,288	-,240/-,289
Teacher contribution			
34. My social studies teacher usually shows a lot of passion for the subject	5,42	1,393	-,835/,664
37. My social studies teacher presents several views on an issue in his/her explanations	5,06	1,433	-,577/,171
39. When the social studies teacher has gone through the teaching materials, I understand much more than I did before	4,97	1,515	-,656/,110
42. The social studies teacher is very good at explaining complex concepts	4,79	1,558	-,403/-,270
46. The social studies teacher is very concerned with students really understanding the concepts	5,34	1,375	-,579/,092
47. In social studies we often discuss different ways of understanding a concept	3,90	1,582	-,051/-,591
Online political communication			
91. I like reading blogs with political content	2,63	1,641	,898/,157
92. I like participating in political discussions online	2,39	1,623	1,149/,565
93. I like reading political discussions online	3,69	2,053	,106/-1,242
Political interest of family and friends			
87. I often discuss political issues with my family	4,27	1,807	-,280/-,763
88. My parents encourage me to pay attention to politics	4,20	1,860	-,189/-,846
89. I have several friends who are very interested in politics	3,93	1,662	,034/-,535
90. I often discuss political issues with my friends	3,65	1,834	,060/-,992

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Assessing the Effect of Social Science Education on Punitive Attitudes

- Education generally reduces punitiveness.
- Social science students are relatively less punitive than non-social science students.
- The liberalization effect of higher education is conditional on the type of education.
- Criminal justice majors are atypical relative to other social science students.
- Social science education can be a powerful agent of social change.

Purpose: One of the most consistent predictors of punitiveness is education, with more educated individuals expressing less punitive sentiments. While much of the earlier research focused on the level of education, some researchers have recently begun to look more closely at the nature of that education such as examining the effect of specific majors on punitiveness. This paper goes even further by also analyzing more broadly the effect of a social science education on punitive attitudes.

Methods: This article presents results from an online survey of 4,000 undergraduate students attending a United States' university. Ordinary least squares analysis is used to examine the effect of majoring in the social sciences on support for punitive criminal justice policies, while controlling for a number of theoretically relevant variables.

Findings: We find that more educated students and those majoring in social science disciplines are generally less punitive than their counterparts. If we are to unburden ourselves of the intricately intermingled economic and social costs of mass incarceration, it will require a re-visioning of how we do justice in America. Social scientists can play a crucial role in this regard through focused research and in educating young people to be critical thinkers and thoughtful citizens.

Keywords:

Punitive attitudes, social science, education, criminal justice policy

1 Introduction

How people come to formulate their attitudes about crime and punishment is currently an important issue as the United States struggles with ever-mounting budgetary pressures that result from an overreliance on

incarceration as the primary means for addressing violent and nonviolent offenders. Over the past forty years, there has been unprecedented growth in incarceration rates with a 500 percent increase in the number of individuals serving sentences in state and federal institutions (Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), 1982; BJS, 2016). As a result, the United States leads the world in incarceration rates, with over two million individuals currently behind bars in local jails, state penitentiaries, or federal prisons¹ (Council of Economic Advisors, 2016).

While the most recent statistics on crime data did indicate an increase (3.9 percent) in the number of violent crimes perpetrated in 2015 compared to the previous year (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2016), this rise should not overshadow the significant decreases in both violent and property crime rates since 2008, with declines of approximately 19-26 percent and 22-23 percent respectively (Pew Research Center, 2016).

Nonetheless, crime appeared to resonate with voters in the 2016 presidential election. According to a public opinion poll conducted after the election, the majority (57 percent) of all voters believed crime has worsened since 2008, with an overwhelming percent (78 percent) of those who voted for Mr. Trump expressing such beliefs (Pew Research Center, 2016). Despite the considerable decreases in violent and property crimes since 2008, the percentage of Americans who worry about crime has reached a 15-year high, with an estimated 53 percent expressing 'a great deal' of concern (David, 2016) and approximately 70 percent believing crime has increased from the level it was a year ago (Swift, 2016).

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These data highlight the importance of understanding the role specific types of education may play in shaping punitive attitudes. Over the last several decades, the United States has largely abandoned rehabilitation as a principal objective of penal policy. Instead, policies steeped in the goals of retribution, deterrence and incapacitation have gained unprecedented popularity. This, however, has come at tremendous social and economic costs. While there is some question as to the extent that public opinion informs public policy, research has suggested that its impact is substantial, particularly for publically salient issues (Burstein, 2003; Monroe, 1998). Thus, if we are to stem this punitive tide and replace it with policies that promote lower crime rates and safer communities, we will need to better understand how and why individuals come to support some crime control strategies rather than others. The university setting is a relevant context for exploring the formulation of personal attitudes and how and to what extent these attitudes may change in response to the unique experiences one is exposed to while in college. Following the lead of previous researchers (Falco & Martin 2012; Mackey & Courtright, 2000; Payne, Time, and Gainey, 2006; Tsoudis, 2000), our research goes beyond simply examining the effect of the level of education and more closely studies how the nature of the education one receives can impact support for punitive sanctions.

2 The context of punitiveness

Financially, the United States has witnessed a 324 percent increase (from \$17 billion to \$71 billion) in state and local correctional expenditures within the relatively short span of approximately thirty years (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). These expenditures include non-institutional (i.e., probation, parole, training of correctional employees, and the administration of correctional agencies) as well as institutional corrections for both adults and juveniles, though institutional operations account for the vast majority (73 percent to 80 percent) of these costs (Vera Institute of Justice, 2012). Additionally, from 1980 to 2016, the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) experienced a substantial increase in annual appropriations (\$330 million to almost \$7.5 billion) and the size of its inmate population, which increased 700 percent (24,640 to almost 200,000) (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2016). Significant monetary costs at both the federal and state levels are leaving comparatively less funds for such things as crime prevention, economic assistance, educational support, vocational training and other proactive programs that can potentially prevent crime before it occurs rather than reactive approaches that simply respond to crime after the harm has already been inflicted. In fact, in addition to being costly, reactive approaches such as institutionalization are ineffective (at least in terms of changing behavior) as is evidenced by five-year recidivism (reoffending) rates that hover around 75 percent (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014).

For some, the financial costs associated with punishing criminal offenders is disturbing under the best of

economic circumstances, however, in the shadow of the recent economic recession and the financial uncertainties that still loom, they are arguably even more problematic. Several states, including California, Illinois, New York and New Jersey, have prison expenditures that exceed one billion dollars (Vera Institute of Justice, 2018). Substantial debt obligations (\$118.17 billion, \$35.55 billion, \$58.32 billion and \$41.84 billion respectively) (Norcross & Gonzalez, 2016) render these costs unsustainable and necessitate a search for more efficient and cost-effective ways of dealing with criminal offenders.

In addition to the monetary costs of what Austin and Irwin (2012) aptly call our 'imprisonment binge,' society has been burdened with hefty social costs associated with punitive criminal justice policies focused on incarceration and characterized by high recidivism rates. These costs have not been equally shared however, as our criminal justice policies have tended to disparately and negatively impact racial minorities and those from lower socioeconomic classes (Alexander, 2010; Reiman & Leighton, 2012). For instance, Blacks and Hispanics are disproportionately represented in the criminal justice system, accounting for 50 percent of the incarcerated population, yet comprising approximately 30 percent of the general population (Council of Economic Advisors, 2016). With escalating incarceration rates, poorer communities have experienced increases in the number of single, female-headed households and an influx of young, mostly minority, males who return from jail or prison stigmatized and with little or no employment opportunities and for whom crime may be a viable alternative (Western & Pettit, 2010).

The number of people in jails and prisons, however, is only one indicator of a punitive justice system. And, there is some evidence that the over-reliance on mass incarceration as the primary strategy for addressing criminality is on the decline, as both the federal government and individual states are now looking for more cost-effective ways of addressing criminal behavior. In fact, since 2007 over half of the U.S. states have developed policies that are aimed at reducing the prison population by reserving prison space for violent and career criminals while relying on alternative correctional strategies (e.g. pretrial release, probation) for less serious offenders. As a result, in 2014 the U.S. experienced the first simultaneous decline in both state and federal prison populations since 1978, reducing the inmate population by 15,000 inmates and bringing the current prison population to its lowest level since 2005 (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2015). Other salient measures of system punitiveness include sentence length, the availability of rehabilitation programs within prison, the existence, use and scope of the death penalty and punishing juvenile offenders as adults. And by all these measures, it is clear that the U.S. criminal justice system still exhibits a great deal of punitiveness.

Due to recent budgetary constraints that have affected federal, state and local governments and the various social costs associated with our current criminal justice policies, the time, then, may be ripe for finding less ex-

pensive and more effective ways of administering punishment within the United States. To do so, however, it will be necessary to overcome public resistance to what will undoubtedly be portrayed and politicized by some as a coddling of criminal offenders. In fact, results from public opinion polls suggest that a majority of Americans support harsher criminal justice practices and are arguably willing to invest more resources in doing so. For example, data from the most recent General Social Survey demonstrate that 56 percent of Americans believe that local court systems are not implementing harsh enough sentences to offenders. Additionally, citizens perceive inadequate spending on criminal justice resources, with approximately 66 percent of Americans believing that the U.S. is not spending enough money on decreasing or stopping rising crime rates and 53 percent indicating that the nation spends 'too little' on law enforcement (Smith, Marsden, Hout, & Kim, 2016). Furthermore, both the Gallup Poll and the General Social Survey found that a majority of Americans (60 and 58 percent, respectively) still support capital punishment (Jones, 2016; Smith et al., 2016). What is not clear from such statistics is whether this support for imposing more severe punishments are rooted in accurate knowledge of current criminal justice practices or whether these positions are formulated in response to sensationalized and stereotypical media representations, political rhetoric or other sources of criminological myths. Social science education, thus, can play a critical role in ensuring that perceptions of crime are rooted in empirical evidence rather than these unreliable sources.

3 Review of the literature

Extant research examining punitive attitudes has focused on the effect of a variety of theoretically derived variables such as media consumption, fear of crime, criminal victimization, racial prejudice, and economic insecurity, as well as numerous demographic variables either as primary predictors or control variables (Butter, Hermanns & Menger, 2013; Roberts & Indermaur, 2007; Roche, Pickett & Gertz, 2016; Steiner, Sarat & Bowers, 1999; Van Kersteren, 2009). Of these demographic variables, education is a consistent predictor of punitiveness. Specifically, those with more education regularly demonstrate less punitiveness than those with lower levels of educational attainment (Kohm, Waid-Lindberg, Weinrath, Shelley & Dobbs, 2012; Shelley, Waid & Dobbs, 2011). While much of the earlier research focused on the *level* of education, generally measured either in years or highest academic degree achieved, more recently some researchers have begun to look more closely at the nature of that education. Specifically, a number of studies have examined whether majoring in criminal justice influences the level of punitiveness an individual expresses. Unfortunately, a clear-cut answer does not emerge from the current literature examining this relationship. For instance, while several studies found that criminology and criminal justice (CCJ) majors were less punitive than non-criminal justice majors (Falco & Martin, 2012; Payne, et al., 2006; Tsoudis, 2000), others

found CCJ majors to be more punitive (Mackey & Courtright, 2000; Shelley et al., 2011). We build upon this latter body of literature by not only looking at differences in punitiveness between CCJ majors and non-CCJ majors but also more broadly examining the effect of education by assessing the influence of the six specific academic colleges within which those majors are located within the university. Specifically, we test whether those who are further along in their education, those studying within the college of social and behavioral sciences, and those majoring in CCJ are less punitive than their counterparts.

This research seeks to address some of the methodological issues that have plagued previous studies. First, many studies in this area have relied on nonrandom samples (i.e., Mackey & Courtright, 2000; Shelley et al., 2011; Tajalli, De Soto & Dozier 2013; Tsoudis, 2000). Nonprobability samples are prone to several weaknesses including sampling bias. In other words, it is unclear that the students who participated in these studies are truly representative of the larger population from which they are drawn. As such, the use of a probability sample in our study intends to significantly improve upon prior research and reduce bias, leading to a sample that is more likely to be representative of the population it is drawn from, and allowing for increased precision in statistical analyses (Alreck & Settle, 2007; Maxfield & Babbie, 2015). Moreover, the use of a probability sample combined with a large sample size ($n=760$) allows us to carry out analyses that are statistically more sound than those conducted in some of the prior research and thereby improving the generalizability of the study results.

Furthermore, the current research improves upon the measurements used to assess punitiveness in prior studies. For instance, several studies have grouped attitudes toward policies concerning adult and juvenile offenders into a single scale (Selke, 1980; Shelley et al., 2011) when real differences may exist in regards to how we punish them (Tsoudis, 2000). The current research addresses this issue by creating two separate indices in order to independently assess attitudes toward adult and juvenile offenders. Furthermore, previous aggregate measures of punitiveness have consisted of a range of issues that may obfuscate genuine levels of punitiveness. For instance, Shelley et al., (2011) used an 11-item scale, which included asking respondents to indicate their level of support for the use of chemical castration for sex offenders. The inclusion of such items in a scale may be problematic as past research demonstrates that different types of offenders and crimes (e.g. child molestation and sexual offenders) tend to elicit exaggerated punitive responses (De Soto & Tajalli, 2016; Rogers & Ferguson, 2011). On the other hand, some respondents may possess a relatively punitive disposition but are uncomfortable declaring such support on a survey, regardless of promises of anonymity or confidentiality. Either way, the nature of this statement may limit the ability to draw any firm conclusions. The current study seeks to overcome this issue through the use of a more general index absent of measures that may arouse extreme sentiments.

Finally, when examining the relationship between majoring in CCJ and punitive attitudes, several studies have failed to identify the specific majors included in the classification of 'non-CCJ majors,' while others have relied on a sample of students drawn from closely related majors or enrolled in courses within the social sciences (i.e. psychology and sociology) and liberal studies (Falco & Martin, 2012; Shelley et al., 2011; Selke, 1980; Tsoudis, 2000). While the argument that, as elective requirements, sampling from these courses may provide representation of diverse majors, analyses limited solely to the dichotomization of 'CCJ' majors and 'non-CCJ' majors, without taking into account the primary educational focus of these 'non-CCJ' majors, does little to expose the relationship between the nature of education and its influence on punitive attitudes. For instance, does education in the 'hard sciences' or STEM programs have a similar effect on punitive attitudes as does an education based on the social sciences? By examining the influence of the different university, academic colleges, we hope to provide more insight into the relationship between punitiveness and the type of education an individual receives. More focused analysis could further demonstrate that the presumed 'liberalizing effect' of education is at least partly conditional on the nature of that education, which would be a significant contribution to the current body of research that examines the relationship between education and punitiveness.

4 Theoretical framework: Education and punitiveness

In a seminal article on the relationship between moral panics and ideology, Chiricos (1996) argues that moral panics are often initiated and sustained by the promulgation of negative ideology. That is, in an effort to mobilize public action in the furtherance of some particular interest, public discourse about the perceived problem misunderstands, misperceives, or distorts the nature and severity of the problem. In fact, Larrain (1983) argued that all ideology is necessarily negative in that in the very least it distorts or exaggerates the universality of the problem. That is, to mobilize public action it is imperative to demonstrate that the problem at hand is salient to many. This tends to be the case when addressing the issue of crime. The media, politicians and other pundits often provide descriptions of the crime problem in the United States that are inaccurate or distorted. Whether it is to advance one's political aspirations by claiming to be the 'law and order' candidate, or whether it is to increase viewership or readership of certain news outlets, representations of crime are not always predicated on empirical evidence. Such representations tend to suggest, explicitly or implicitly, that crime is more widespread than what may actually be true for most people. In the absence of more empirically sound knowledge, it is likely that such portrayals of crime are accepted uncritically and unconditionally by many.

While education has been established as a consistent predictor of punitive attitudes, only recently have scholars began to assess the influence specific majors may have on such sentiments. It is reasonable to expect

that those who are more educated, more informed about social justice issues, and who are encouraged to think about these issues more critically may be less likely to rely on sensationalized and stereotypical media representations of crime and punishment, political rhetoric and other sources of criminological myths and folklore. Criminology majors and other social science majors are believed to have greater knowledge of crime, its prevalence, and its myriad of potential causes, while others may simply rely on individualistic explanations that tend to see crime as little more than a choice that can be deterred by simply increasing the severity of punishment.

While we suspect that CCJ and SBS majors demonstrate less punitiveness due specifically to their increased knowledge on the topic, we also suspect that education, generally, produces less punitiveness. The latter is generally referred to as the 'liberalization effect' of education and suggests that education broadly makes people less conservative in their social and political views (see Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Hyman & Wright, 1979; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991 & 2005; Selzincik & Steiberg, 1969).

5 Methodology

Given the reviewed literature and the above theoretical considerations, in this study we test three primary hypotheses:

- 1) Seniors will demonstrate less punitiveness than non-seniors².
- 2) Those whose major is located within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences will be less punitive than students majoring within other colleges.
- 3) Declared criminology and criminal justice (CCJ) majors will be less punitive than non-CCJ majors.

Each hypothesis is derived from the theoretical expectation that those with more education, measured by the student's academic level and status as a 'senior', and those with greater exposure to and knowledge of criminal and social justice related issues, measured by student's college and major, are less punitive than those who may be less knowledgeable. If true, it seems reasonable to expect seniors, those majoring in social and behavioral sciences' programs and CCJ majors to be more knowledgeable and thus less punitive. The first hypothesis is based on the liberalization effect. Some have suggested the university/college experience generally engenders more liberal attitudes, regardless of the nature of education one receives (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969; Hyman & Wright, 1979; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991 & 2005; Selzincik & Steiberg, 1969). In regards to punitiveness specifically, the hypothesis is derived from extensive prior research that has found higher educated individuals to have significantly less punitive attitudes than those with less education (Falco & Martin, 2012; Mackey & Courtright, 2000). As for the second hypothesis, we argue that those who have declared majors in more social science based disciplines like socio-



logy, political science, psychology and criminology have greater exposure to and a better understanding of social justice related topics and are therefore less punitive than those in the physical sciences, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) programs and those majoring in business, who generally do not have the same level of engagement with social science content. Regarding the third hypothesis, while consistent with our theoretical framework, it bears reiterating that prior research has found mixed results regarding this relationship, with some studies finding greater punitiveness among criminology students (e.g., Mackey & Courtright, 2000; Shelley et al., 2011) while others finding them to be less punitive (e.g., Falco & Martin, 2012; Payne, et al., 2006; Tsoudis, 2000).

The data for this study were generated by an online survey sent to a random sample of 4,000 undergraduate students who were attending a Southwestern university in the fall of 2013. The 4,000 names were randomly selected from the names of all undergraduate students who were enrolled as full-time, on-campus students (approximately 16,000 students). The randomly selected students were contacted through their university email addresses and were asked to participate in an online survey concerning important societal issues. Subsequently, we received 760 completed surveys, resulting in a completion rate of approximately 19 percent. As is typical in survey research (Lavrakas, 1987; Shelley et al., 2011), females and whites were overrepresented in our sample as were freshmen.

5.1 Dependent variables: Punitiveness

In an attempt to build upon the current body of literature, we also address pointed criticisms of previous research that have employed punitive indices that aggregate attitudes toward criminal justice policies aimed at adults with juvenile specific policies. It is certainly reasonable that individuals may possess substantially different attitudes depending on the target population of the policy. In fact, Tsoudis (2000) found that CCJ majors demonstrate greater punitiveness toward adults than they did toward juveniles. Therefore, in an effort to better disentangle these potential differences, we have two distinct outcome measures: a general measure of punitiveness and a juvenile specific measure. For both measures, respondents were asked to indicate on a scale of one to ten, with one (1) being the least support and ten (10) being most support, how much would you support each of the following proposals. The first, (GENPUN), is an index with a range of 5-50 (Chronbach alpha = 0.74), consisting of the five policies that did *not* explicitly address juveniles:

- 1) Put more police on the streets, even if it means higher taxes
- 2) Make sentences more severe for all crimes
- 3) Limit appeals to death sentences
- 4) Make prisoners work on chain gangs
- 5) Take away television and recreational privileges from prisoners

The second measure (JUV-PUN) is a three-item index with a range of 3-30 (Chronbach alpha = 0.76), which indicates the degree of support for three juvenile specific policies:

- 1) Locking up more juvenile offenders
- 2) Sending repeat juvenile offenders to adult court
- 3) Death penalty for juveniles who murder

5.2 Primary independent variables: Education

We examine the effect of three primary independent variables: (1) student's level of education, (2) student's college, and (3) whether the respondent was a CCJ major. Official institutional data were used for each of these three independent variables. Finally, academic level was determined by the number of academic unit hours completed: freshman (0 - 29 units), sophomores (30 - 59 units), juniors (60 - 89 units), and seniors (90 or more units). We then created a dichotomized variable SENIOR (senior = 1; non-seniors = 0). There are 91 different academic majors housed in six academic colleges at the university under study. College of study was determined by which academic college the respondent's declared major was housed. The six colleges within the university are: the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS), the College of Arts and Letters (CAL), the College of Education (COE), the College of Engineering, Forestry, and Natural Sciences (CEFNS), the College of Health and Human Services (CHHS), and the College of Business (FCB). For Ordinary Least Square (OLS) regression models, we created dummy variables for each college. In respect to CCJ majors, because we were only interested in specifically comparing CCJ majors with those who are majoring in other fields, we created a dichotomized variable (CCJMAJOR) simply identifying whether the respondent was a declared CCJ major (CCJ major = 1; non-CCJ major = 0).

5.3 Control variables

We also control for a number of relevant demographic variables as identified in prior literature as predictors of punitiveness, including sex, age, race/ethnicity, political ideology as well as two dimensions of crime salience: concern about crime and prior household victimization. Sex is a dichotomized variable, FEMALE (1= female), AGE is a continuous variable measured in years, and RACE/ETHNICITY is based on how the student participants self-identified at the time of their enrollment in the university. For inferential analysis, race/ethnicity was recoded into a number of dummy variables for whites, blacks, Hispanic/Latinos, and 'others.' Based on prior research, we expect females will be less punitive than males and blacks and Hispanics/Latinos will possess less punitive attitudes than whites (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Gramsick and McGill, 1994; Rossi and Berk, 1997).

Political conservatism has been identified as one of the primary architects of today's 'culture of control' (Garland, 2001) and prior research has consistently shown conservatives to demonstrate significantly more punitive attitudes than more liberal leaning individuals



(Chiricos et al., 2004; Costelloe, Chiricos & Gertz, 2009, Mackey & Courtright, 2000; Tajalli, et al., 2013). Therefore, we include a measure of political party identification (CONSERVATIVE) as a control variable, which was measured by asking participants if they considered themselves to be: (1) a 'Strong Democrat,' (2) 'Not so strong Democrat,' (3) 'Independent leaning Democrat,' (4) 'Independent,' (5) 'Independent leaning Republican,' (6) 'Not so strong Republican,' or (7) 'Strong Republican.' Higher scores on this measure indicate a more conservative disposition. The authors recognize the limitations of asking respondents to self-identify political party and/or political leanings (conservative/ liberal) as young survey respondents may not necessarily share a common sense of what the various labels mean. Best practice in this regard is to ask respondents to indicate their opinion on a variety of social issues that tend to have traditional conservative/liberal associations (i.e. welfare/public assistance for the poor, health care and the military). However, because the survey was administered just months prior to the 2016 presidential election year, we believed that party identification as a Republican, Inde-

pendent or Democrat was relatively more salient at the time.

Because prior research shows that crime salience is an important predictor of punitive attitudes (Costelloe et al., 2009), we include three measures of crime salience. Two measures pertained to a respondent's concern about crime and one measure assessed prior household victimization. Concern was measured by asking respondents to specify 'On a scale from one (1) to ten (10), with one (1) being NOT AT ALL CONCERNED and ten (10) being VERY CONCERNED, how concerned are you about crime in the U.S (CONCERNUS) and how concerned are you about crime in this state (CONCERNST). Prior household victimization (VICTIM) is a dichotomous variable measured by asking respondents whether they or anyone in their household had been the victim of a crime in the past year (1 = yes).

Table 1 provides a description of each of the variables used in the analyses along with their means, standard deviations and bivariate correlations with the dependent variable, GENPUN.

Table 1: Description of Variables

Variable	Mean	S.D.	<i>r</i> GENPUN		Description
PUNITIVE	36.00	15.40	1.00		R's punitive attitude score (index, alpha = 0.83)
AGE	20.32	3.24	-0.037		R's age
FEMALE	0.65	0.48	0.004		R is female
WHITE	0.69	0.46	0.006		R is white
BLACK	0.03	0.17	-0.065	*	R is black
HISPANIC	0.15	0.36	-0.003		R is Hispanic
OTHER	0.12	0.20	-0.002		R is other race/ethnicity
CONSERVATIVE	4.68	2.41	0.149	**	R's conservatism
CONCERNST	5.92	2.31	0.308	**	R's concern about crime in state
CONCERNUS	6.09	2.17	0.333	**	R's concern about crime in U.S.
VICTIMIZATION	0.31	0.46	0.013		R experienced a household victimization
CCJMAJOR	0.06	0.24	-0.012		R's is CCJ major
SBS	0.27	0.44	-0.137	**	R is in the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences
COLLEGE OF ED	0.25	0.16	-0.040		R is in College of Education
ARTS/ LETTERS	0.12	0.32			R is in College of Arts & Letters
ENGINEERING/FOREST/ NATSCI	0.34	0.47	0.082	*	R is in College of Engineering, Forestry and Natural Sciences
BUSINESS	0.12	0.32	0.096	*	R is in College of Business
HEATH SCIENCE	0.06	0.25	0.095	**	R is in College of Health Sciences
SENIOR	0.22	0.42	-0.075	*	R is a senior

p* < 0.05 *p* < 0.01

6 Analysis and research results

The data are analyzed using ordinary least squares (OLS) regression and the results of the multivariate regression for punitive attitudes toward crime are found in Table 2. Here we present both the unstandardized (*b*) and standardized coefficients (β) for the full sample and for both dependent variables. Looking first at our general measure of punitiveness and examining the demographic variables, we find that among these respondents, age is not statistically significant. However, blacks, and non-

Hispanic 'others' were significantly less punitive than whites. Consistent with the prior literature, conservative students express significantly more punitive attitudes than those who consider themselves more liberal. As for crime salience, concern about crime in the study state and in the United States are both predictive of punitiveness, with those who are more concerned supporting more punitive policies. Prior household victimization was not significantly related to harboring punitive attitudes.



Table 2: Full Sample: OLS regression of general punitiveness and juvenile specific punitiveness on education and control measures

Variable	GENPUN			PUNJUV		
	<i>b</i>	β		<i>b</i>	β	
AGE	-0.09	-0.03		-0.10	-0.05	
FEMALE	-1.63	-0.08	**	-1.18	-0.08	**
ETHNICITY (dummy variable, white)						
BLACK	-5.14	-0.08	**	-2.90	-0.07	**
HISPANIC	-1.21	-0.04		0.38	0.02	
OTHER	-2.01	-0.06	*	1.11	0.05	*
CONSERVATIVE	0.49	0.11	***	0.39	0.14	***
CONCERNST	0.55	0.12	**	0.35	0.12	**
CONCERNUS	1.30	0.26	***	0.52	0.16	***
VICTIMIZATION	0.59	0.03		0.21	0.02	
CCJMAJOR	4.78	0.11	***	-1.32	-0.04	
COLLEGE (dummy variable; SBS)						
EDUCATION	1.01	0.02		-1.30	-0.03	
ARTS AND LETTERS	1.39	0.04		0.03	0.00	
ENGINEERING/FOREST/NATSCI FORESTRY	4.16	0.19	***	1.87	0.13	***
BUSINESS	4.94	0.16	***	3.35	0.16	***
HEALTH SCIENCE	5.39	0.13	***	2.79	0.10	***
SENIOR	-2.03	-0.08	**	-0.59		
Constant	8.70			8.11		
Adjusted R-Square	0.16			0.12		
N	619			622		

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Regarding our primary independent variables, we begin by noting that consistent with hypothesis one, seniors are significantly less punitive than non-seniors while controlling for other key predictors. When examining the other two dimensions of education (college and majoring in CCJ), we also find educational effects on punitiveness, though only one in the direction that was hypothesized. First, looking at the effect of the college where a respondent's major is located, we find that individuals majoring in programs located in engineering, forestry and natural sciences, health sciences and business are significantly more punitive than those majoring in SBS programs, which is consistent with hypothesis two. In fact, when we examine the standard coefficients, we see that they are among the strongest predictors of support for punitive policies, with concern about crime in the United States the only predictor that had a stronger effect. However, it should also be noted that those who are majoring in education and arts and letters were no different in terms of their punitiveness relative to SBS students, which was inconsistent with what hypothesis two predicted. Finally, we find that contrary to hypothesis three, students majoring in criminology and criminal justice are not less punitive than non-majors, and are, in fact, significantly more punitive than non-CCJ majors.

When examining the juvenile-specific dependent variable, we see that there are two notable differences compared to the findings above. First, there is no statistically meaningful difference in punitiveness towards juvenile offenders. Also, CCJ majors are no more supportive of punitive policies when those policies are directed toward juveniles than are non-CCJ majors, which was

somewhat surprising in light of the above result that that indicated that CCJ majors are actually more punitive toward adult offenders. However, when examining the dummy variables for college, those in engineering/forestry, business and health sciences once again proved to be more punitive than their SBS counterparts.

Table 3 summarizes the regression estimates for the effect of education on punitive attitudes for a subsample of seniors only. Theoretically, we should expect attitudes of SBS and CCJ seniors to be noticeably different than their respective counterparts if increased exposure to justice related issues tempers support for punitive policies. However, in regards to non-juvenile specific policies, we find different effects for SBS seniors generally compared to CCJ seniors, specifically. The effect of college is consistent with what was found for the full sample, in that SBS seniors are less punitive than seniors in engineering/forestry, business and health sciences and are not significantly different than their peers in education and arts and letters. Criminology and Criminal Justice seniors were not statistically more punitive than non-CCJ seniors at the .05 alpha level but does reach significance at a more liberal significance level of .10. However, while not statistically significant at the traditional .05 alpha level, there is some reason to believe that this may simply be due to a small sample size of criminology and criminal justice seniors ($n = 48$). When sample sizes are small, only very large effects tend to achieve statistical significance. Therefore, we are careful not to speculate too much about this result. Finally, the effect of education on punitiveness toward juveniles is limited to the finding that business seniors are more punitive than SBS seniors.



Table 3: Seniors Only: OLS Regression of General Punitiveness and Juvenile Specific Punitiveness on Education and Control Measures

Variable	GENPUN			PUNJUV		
	<i>b</i>	β		<i>b</i>	β	
AGE	-0.24	-0.10		-0.10	-0.07	
FEMALE	-2.53	-0.12		-.43	-0.03	
ETHNICITY (dummy variable, white)						
BLACK	-17.17	-0.14	*	-7.03	-0.09	
HISPANIC	-1.31	-0.04		3.79	0.17	*
OTHER	-1.61	-0.04		-.03	0.00	
CONSERVATIVE	0.70	0.16	**	0.66	0.23	*
CONCERNST	1.27	0.28	*	0.26	0.09	
CONCERNUS	.729	0.16		0.48	0.16	
VICTIMIZATION	3.57	0.17	**	1.93	0.14	*
CCJMAJOR	7.09	0.14	*	-1.66	-0.04	
COLLEGE (dummy variable; SBS)						
EDUCATION	-.35	-0.01		-3.29	-0.07	
ARTS AND LETTERS	2.77	0.09		1.43	0.07	
ENGINEERING/FOREST/NATSCI	3.86	0.17	**	.09	0.01	
BUSINESS	7.65	0.24	***	4.72	0.23	*
HEALTH SCIENCE	8.07	0.19	**	-1.13	-0.41	*
Constant	2.37			3.54		
Adjusted R-Square	0.21			0.13		
N	137			139		

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

7 Discussion and conclusion

Previous research has found education to be a strong and consistent predictor of social and political attitudes (Kohm et al., 2012; Shelley et al., 2011). The results of this study do little to dispel this general conclusion, particularly when examining non-juvenile specific policies. In fact, this study finds that the effect of education varies depending on the actual policies that are presented. Namely, the impact of education on punitive attitudes is more evident and consistent when examining non-juvenile specific policies, while there is less consistency, and thus less clarity, regarding juvenile specific policies. Because of this, we largely limit further discussion of the effect of education on punitive policies specific to adult offenders. In regards to attitudes toward adult offenders, then, the results presented above support the following conclusions in terms of our three hypotheses:

- 1) Education, generally conceived, has a liberalization effect when assessing punitiveness toward adults.
- 2) The effect of education on punitiveness is conditioned by the type of education one receives.
- 3) CCJ majors are atypical relative to other social science students when assessing the effect of increased knowledge of criminal and social issues on support for criminal justice policies.

That more educated people are less punitive is generally a valid statement when simply assessing the

effect of the *level* of education on punitiveness. There are two plausible explanations for the correlation between education and punitiveness. The first explanation focuses on what can be termed as an importation effect. This suggests that people who come to higher education already possess a fairly well-developed set of relatively liberal political and social attitudes, which does not change much over the course of their college or university careers. The second explanation looks to the socializing effect of higher education, and suggests that attitudes do indeed change over time due to exposure to education. This is generally referred to as the liberalization effect as described earlier in this paper. The dominant explanation for why students become more liberal with increased exposure to higher education tends to focus on the critical thinking skills that college students are trained to develop and use. With more education and greater knowledge, it may become increasingly untenable for individuals to retain simplistic ideas about the social world. They are encouraged to consider whether such beliefs as 'all welfare recipients are lazy' or 'all criminals are evil' are simply convenient overgeneralizations. Moreover, students are taught to assess such ideas in light of empirical evidence and social theorizing rather than simply whether it comfortably coincides with their own worldview.

However, there is no reason to believe that these two primary explanations, importation and liberalizing, are mutually exclusive as they can both certainly be true. Those who enter higher education can be more liberal



when compared to their non-university attending counterparts, yet still become even more so throughout their educational careers. Due to the lack of a comparison group, we are unable, however, to make any determination about the possibility of a general importation effect. The current study, though, does lend support to the notion of a generalized liberalization effect in that as our first hypothesis suggested it found seniors less punitive than non-seniors, while controlling for academic discipline.

While seniors were less punitive, we would be mistaken to presume that all seniors experience university instruction in the same way. As put forth in hypotheses two and three, we believe that the kind of education one receives is also important. To investigate this more thoroughly, then we examined the effect of education among a sample of seniors only (see table 3). By doing so, we are better able to test whether type of education, above and beyond merely the level of education, is also predictive of punitive attitudes. To put another way, we examine whether the effect of the level of education interacts with the type of education in elevating or decreasing punitiveness.

When more closely scrutinizing the impact of the *nature* of education, an even more nuanced understanding of the impact of education emerges. In fact, we find that seniors, like all respondents have different attitudes toward criminal justice policies, depending on what type of education they are actually receiving. Specifically, those majoring in the social sciences, arts and letters, and education demonstrate less support for more severe policies at least when it comes to non-juvenile offenders. On the other hand, those who major in what can be described as STEM programs (engineering, forestry, and natural sciences and health sciences) as well as business and CCJ majors were more supportive of punitive justice policies. Such findings support the contention that the nature of education is as important, and maybe even more important, than the level of education.

There are generally two prevailing thoughts about the relationship between education and social attitudes. The first argues that this relationship is explained by a process of self-selection. That is, people will be drawn to those disciplines that more closely match their ideological dispositions (Ma-Kellams, Ruiz, Lee & Madu, 2014). The second explanation for the discipline-attitudes link centers on the socialization process that accompanies specific areas of study. That is, different academic disciplines are founded upon a distinct set of domain assumptions, and students within these disciplines will gradually become more oriented toward those value and beliefs (Paz-y-Mino & Espinosa, 2009). One way to better disentangle the relative contributions of self-selection from discipline-specific socialization effects of higher education for a cross-sectional study is to examine differences in the levels of punitiveness for each group across and within academic levels (i.e., freshmen versus seniors). For example, if there is a self-selection effect, in that people with particular beliefs are attracted

to particular types of majors (i.e., more liberal students are attracted to the social sciences), we should find different levels of support for punitive policies among freshmen across the various academic colleges of their chosen majors. An analysis of variance found that besides one notable exception there are no statistical differences in mean level of punitive attitudes across different majors when examining freshmen students, exclusively. In other words, it appears that freshmen come to this university with relatively similar attitudes toward justice related policies and there is no evidence of a process of self-selection, at least among freshmen. The one glaring exception to this result was that freshmen who are majoring in CCJ were significantly more punitive than non-CCJ freshmen. Therefore, that there are few differences among freshmen but clear variation among seniors by academic college suggests that the results of this study are better explained by socialization effects and indicates that the nature of education may be an important determinate of the degree to which individuals will harbor and express punitive sentiments. Contrary to hypothesis three, those majoring in CCJ were not significantly less punitive than those who are majoring in other fields; in fact, when looking at policies aimed at adults, they were even more punitive. While CCJ majors prove to be atypical relative to other SBS students in demonstrating greater levels of punitiveness, it is not altogether surprising in light of prior research that has also found no effect or has found them to be even more punitive than others (Mackey & Courtright, 2000; Shelley et al., 2011). Common explanations for CCJ majors possessing greater support for punitive policies focus on the characteristics of the type of students who are attracted to the criminal justice field. Students who wish to pursue a career in law enforcement, corrections or courts may come to the university possessing a more conservative disposition or may simply support a stringent 'law and order' approach when it comes to addressing criminal offenders. Moreover, a number of previous studies have found CCJ students are not only more punitive but also more ideologically rigid and more authoritarian (Austin & O'Neill, 1985; Lambert, 2004). As just previously noted, the only significant difference in the mean level of punitiveness was that CCJ freshmen were significantly more supportive of more stringent policies than non-CCJ freshmen. This result, then, is consistent with the self-selection hypotheses. In the absence of more informed knowledge of the discipline or the vast variation in CCJ programs, it would be reasonable to presume that many come to such programs believing that they will be receiving an education that is founded on values, beliefs and assumptions about crime and justice that are similar to their own. It is likely a rare situation when a student enters a CCJ program fully aware of the diverse perspectives that inform the study of crime and justice.

That CCJ students potentially come to CCJ programs with more punitive attitudes does not necessarily negate the possibility that CCJ students also become less punitive over time as they become more knowledgeable



about justice issues. To test this possibility fully would require longitudinal data. In the absence of that, we thus examine mean differences between CCJ freshmen and CCJ seniors, finding that the mean level of punitiveness for seniors was 13 points less than freshmen, though the difference was not significant ($p = .07$). The failure to achieve statistical significance at the more traditional level of 0.05, thus, could be due to the small number of CCJ majors in our sample ($n = 48$).

When examining both dependent variables, we are able to see more clearly the relationship between CCJ majors and punitiveness. Here, we found that while there were no significant differences between CCJ majors and others when examining attitudes toward juvenile offenders, CCJ majors were significantly more punitive when exclusively considering non-juvenile specific policies. This finding suggests that the differences in punitive attitudes between CCJ majors and others lie not in their overall punitiveness but specifically in terms of punitiveness towards adults. This is supportive of Tsoudis' (2000) contention that CCJ majors seem to make a clear distinction between punishing adults and punishing juveniles.

That Criminology and Criminal Justice studies is located in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences is not an inconsequential fact. Because CCJ majors at this university are seemingly different when compared to other social science students in terms of their attitudes toward criminal justice policies, we must then conclude that hypothesis two is only conditionally supported and hypothesis three is not only fully rejected, but it appears that the opposite is true.

In the end, we suggest that these findings are supportive of the notion that higher education, *generally*, tempers attitudes toward criminal justice policies, while majoring in social sciences and other non-STEM programs, *specifically*, results in less punitiveness. In other words, while there seems to be some fairly strong evidence of a liberalizing effect when looking at the level of one's education, it is more precise to say that this effect is conditional on the type of education one receives. Those in what could be considered more 'hard science' disciplines—disciplines that focus less on social justice related issues—demonstrate greater punitiveness relative to those who major in the social and behavioral sciences, while controlling for level of education. We argue that one possible explanation for this finding is that those who are less exposed to criminal and social justice related issues may be more likely to formulate attitudes based on popular images of crime and criminals rather than images supported by empirical evidence. It is also possible, however, that those who possess a more conservative outlook, transfer to other programs or even universities, thereby, reducing the overall punitiveness score of those majoring in the social sciences by attrition rather than by the kind of education they have received.

While the results of this study cannot be generalized beyond the study population, it does contribute to the previous literature by expanding the discourse that examines the effect of education on punitive attitudes by

going beyond simply examining the level of education or simply assessing the punitiveness of CCJ majors relative to all non-CCJ majors. When aggregating the attitudes of all non-CCJ majors, it is possible that important differences are obscured. The current study, therefore, attempted to also assess variations in punitiveness across various academic colleges within the university as well as between CCJ majors and non-majors. In doing so, we are able to discover a more nuanced effect of education on punitiveness.

This study suffers from some notable limitations. First, a 19 percent completion rate is low and thus the possibility of non-response bias is present. We want to emphasize, however, that non-response rates and non-response bias are not synonymous (Groves, 2006; Groves & Peytcheva, 2008). For instance, Groves (2006) conducted a meta-analysis of research estimating non-response bias in thirty studies and concluded that non-response rate, on its own, was a poor predictor of the magnitude of bias. Furthermore, the primary objective of our study is to assess the impact of our independent variables (various measures of education) on individual attitudes toward crime policies. We do not claim to infer specific population values and are thus more concerned with internal validity rather than generalizability.

We are also unable to determine the extent to which the composition of certain cohorts change over time with some students transferring to other majors, academic colleges and/or universities and the degree to which changes are due to the nature of education they were receiving. Future studies would benefit from examining the relationship between the liberalizing effects of education and the content of that education, meaning they should seek to be more discipline specific, and to study levels of punitiveness longitudinally in order to ascertain how these attitudes change over time.

In the end, if we are to unburden ourselves of the intricately intermingled economic and social costs of mass incarceration, it will require a re-visioning of how we do justice in America. This will be no easy task as it will require a change in how we frame the crime problem in the United States, from one that over-emphasizes crime as a matter of choice and individual accountability to a broader framework that also acknowledges the wide range of social, psychological and biological causes of criminal behavior. If successful, however, we will begin to be able to create just criminal justice policies that are effective in protecting communities from criminal behavior. As the results of this study demonstrate, criminologists and other social scientists can play a crucial role in this regard, not only through focused research but also in educating young people to be critical thinkers and thoughtful citizens.

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Endnotes

¹ In the United States, jails hold about 727,000 inmates who are generally either awaiting trial or who have been convicted of less serious offenses and are serving sentences of one year or less, while those in state (about 1.5 million) and federal prisons (about 188,000) are serving longer sentences after being convicted of more serious state or federal crimes (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016).

² The category of "senior" is reserved for those students who have earned 90 or more credit hours; the equivalent of approximately 30 classes. Seniors typically graduate within one year of earning the designation of "senior." Non-seniors, therefore, are all students who have earned less than 90 credit hours and thus have less education than the "senior" category.

Ezinne O. Idika, Joseph C. Onuoha

Influence of Economics Teachers' Personality on Secondary School Students' Classroom Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State

- There was no significant difference between the mean classroom performance scores of students when taught by male and female Economics teachers
- Teaching experience of the teachers influenced the students' classroom performance in Economics
- The teachers' qualifications significantly influenced the students' classroom performance in Economics
- The teachers' interpersonal relationship with students significantly influenced the students' classroom performance in Economics
- The knowledge of the subject matter by the teachers significantly influenced the students' classroom performance in Economics.

Purpose: The study investigated the influence of Economics teachers' personality on students' classroom performance in Public Secondary Schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria.

Design: The study adopted Ex-post facto research design. The sample consisted of 19 teachers randomly selected out of thirty one and their SS2 Economics students numbering 326. An observational schedule titled Economics teachers' personality test (ETP) was the instrument for data collection. The academic records (grades) of the Students were collected from the 19 teachers. One research questions was answered using mean and standard deviation and four null hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance using t- test and ANOVA.

Findings: The findings revealed that teachers' gender had no effect on the classroom performance of the students. However, teachers teaching experience, qualifications, interpersonal relationship with students, knowledge of subject matter, and attitude of the teacher had influence on students' classroom performance. It was recommended that only teachers with relevant teaching qualifications in Economics should be employed to teach the course in Secondary schools. Also, teachers should be given proper incentives that will make them remain in their job so as to gain experience as they grow in the profession.

Keywords:

Teacher's personality, subject matter knowledge, classroom Performance

1 Introduction

As air is an indispensable factor for the survival of humans, so are teachers indispensable in achieving any educational goal. Therefore, teachers' effectiveness is undoubtedly one of the most important factors shaping the learning and growth of Students (Fenstermacher & Richardson, 2005). Contributing to teachers' effectiveness is teacher's intrinsic personality attributes among other factors such as teaching experience and qualifications (Akinsolu, 2010). The prevailing conditions of these factors would definitely have a negative or positive influence on the instructional quality in schools, which may translate to either good or poor academic performance of secondary school students.

A teacher's personality is a major factor affecting how he or she relates, communicates and deals with students, which are translated into students' classroom performance. There are two basic determinants of personality, namely, heredity and past interactions with the environment (Pierce & Gardner, 2003). Traits such as teacher's

attitude (behaviour), teacher's relationship with the students are often hereditary whereas other traits such as knowledge of the subject matter, years of experiences, qualification come as a result of interaction (education) with the environment. These traits have either negative or positive influence on students' classroom performance.

Poor academic performance of students has been reported in literature and linked to poor teachers' performance in terms of accomplishing the teaching task, negative attitude to work and poor teaching habits. Report on the trends of Economics students' performance in WAEC in Enugu State stated that the percentage of the students that made D, E and F between 2012 and 2016 were above 60% whereas less than 40 % of the students made grade C and above in Economics. The West African Examination Council Chief Examiner's report (WAEC, 2015) also noted that poor performance in Economics has continued to linger from year to year.

A focus on Economics teacher's personality could be a good effort in identifying factors that could influence their classroom performance. Therefore, this study was designed to investigate the influence of teacher's personality attributes, on the Secondary school students' academic performance in Economics in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State.

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1.1 Theoretical significance

This study is based on Bandura's social cognitive theory of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to organize and execute the sources of action required to manage prospective situations (Bandura, 1986). It can be seen as the capacity to produce a desired effect. Bandura emphasized that self-efficacy is the very foundation of human motivations and achievement. Bandura's social cognitive theory of self-efficacy was offered in order to improve the current classroom practices (McLeod, 2011). In this study, Bandura's theory provided the framework to apply teachers' personality traits and classroom performance by learners.

1.2 Conceptual and empirical framework

Teacher's personality is organized set of characteristics possessed by a teacher, which uniquely influences the cognition, motivation and behaviour of the teacher in various situations (McKenny, 2008). According to Khan, Shah, Khan and Gul (2012), the teachers' personality has a significant role in the success or failure of students. If a teacher exhibits positive personality traits, which support students' learning, share knowledge in multiple ways, create an environment of learning and cooperation, and encourage the students to come forward and show participation in the class activities, then the students will learn more. Their skills and competencies will increase and students' level of confidence on the teacher will be enhanced and vice versa (Garcia, Kupczynski, & Holland, 2011). The teacher with pervasive authoritarian characteristics, for example, is likely to reflect these traits/attributes in his or her relationships with students and in the techniques he uses in his instruction (Morrison & McIntyre, 2005). Usually when we talk about someone's personality, we are talking about what makes that person different from other people, perhaps even unique. This aspect of personality is the basis of individual differences. These theories often spend considerable attention on things like types and traits and tests with which we can categorize or compare people: Some people are neurotic, others are not; some people are more introverted, others more extroverted; and so on (Boeree, 2006). People who have different backgrounds have different attitudes, values and norms. Some people have strong personalities such that they can influence others to act and do things.

A study carried out by Ezeamuzie, Ogbonna and Uba (2013) on the influence of Economics teacher's personality on students' academic achievement in Igbo-Eze South local Government Area of Enugu state showed that teachers' good look, sympathy, good rapport with students, knowledge of the subject matter, sense of humour, good motivator etc. promote students classroom performance. The study also demonstrated that where good relationship exists between the teacher and students, the students will be active in the classroom and such will positively boost their classroom performance. On the other hand, talkativeness, cruelty, verbal abuse etc inhibits a child's classroom performance. This work relates to the present work as it indicates among other

factors, teachers' attitude and inter-personal relationship with the students among other factors that may affect students' classroom performance positively or negatively.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Economics is one of the most popular elective subjects offered in secondary schools. However, despite the popularity, reports have shown persistent poor performance of students in the subject. Poor academic performance of students in Economics in Nigeria as reported in literatures has been linked to factors such as poor teachers' performance in terms of accomplishing the teaching task, and teacher's negative classroom attitude. Personality attributes that form the behaviors and attitudes of the teachers which directly influence students' performance has become a topical issue in the field of education for the realization of objectives of any discipline including economics. This is because the teacher occupies a paramount position in any teaching and learning situation. More so, no education can rise above the quality of its teachers. The present study is therefore designed to investigate the influence of Economics teachers' personality on students' classroom performance in Secondary schools' in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria.

1.4 Research question

The following research question guided the study:

What is the influence of Economics teacher-students relationship on the classroom performance of the students?

Research hypotheses:

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

HO₁: There is no significant influence of teacher's teaching experience on the Economics students' classroom performance

HO₂: Economics teachers' interpersonal relationship with the students does not significantly affect students' classroom performance.

HO₃: There is no significant influence of teacher's Knowledge of the subject matter and Economics students' classroom performance.

HO₄: There is no significant influence of teacher's attitude and students' classroom performance.

2 Research design and methodology

2.1 Area of study

The study was carried out in Nsukka Local government Area of Enugu State Nigeria. Nsukka has an area of 1,810 Km² and a population of 309,633 by the 2006 Census (NPC, 2006). There are thirty one(31) public Secondary schools in Nsukka Local Government Area, for 2014/2015 academic session (PPSMB, 2014). One of Nigeria's foremost Universities, the University of Nigeria is located in Nsukka. The choice of Nsukka Local government Area, is borne of the persistent report of poor performance of students in the area (Onuoha, 2015).

2.2 Design of the study/sample and sampling technique

The study adopted Ex-post facto research design. According to Nworgu (2014), this design deals with non-manipulative independent variables such as sex, socio-economic status etc. in which the researcher only attempts to link some already existing effects or observations to some variables as causative agents. Thus the researcher deemed it appropriate to use this design to determine how such independent variables as teachers' years of teaching experience, interpersonal skills among others influence students' classroom performance. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 19 Economics teachers randomly selected out of 31 public secondary schools in Nsukka Local government Area of Enugu State and their SS2 Economics students numbering 326. The SS2 students were selected because they are the only students who had spent at least one complete academic Session with their teachers and do have a complete Session results, namely 1st, 2nd and 3rd term results at the end of the academic year. An observational guide titled Economics Teachers' Personality Test (ETPT) items, developed by the researcher, was used for data collection. The instrument consisted of 35 items divided into sections A and B. Section A elicited information on the teachers' school, gender, qualification and years of experience. Section B had three clusters. Cluster one, elicited information on the influence of teachers' interpersonal relationship with the students; Cluster 2 sought information on how Economics teacher's knowledge of the subject matter affects students' classroom performance. Cluster 3 sought information on how Economics teachers' classroom attitudes influence students' classroom Performance. The teachers were scored with the instrument as either 'Yes' or 'No' against each of the items in every cluster and the percentage of 'Yes' and 'No' in each cluster determined proportionally. In each cluster, a teacher is then marked as 'Good' if the number of entries the teacher scored 'Yes' were up to 50 % & above and 'Poor' if the number were less than 50%.

2.3 Validation and reliability of the instrument

The instrument was validated by six (6) experts in various fields in the Faculty of Education, namely, Educational Psychology (3), Guidance and Counseling (1), Economics Education (1) and Science Education (1). After validation, the instrument was subjected to trial testing by administering it to 13 Economics teachers in 5 schools in Igbo-Eze North local government area of Enugu State and their students' continuous assessment collected. These schools were outside the study area, but shared the same characteristics with the sample schools. The reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach Alpha and internal consistencies of 0.80, 0.85 and 0.88 for the three clusters and an overall reliability of 0.924 was found.

2.4 Data analysis

Mean and Standard Deviation were used in answering the research questions while independent sample student t-test and Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were

used in testing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

3 Results

Results are presented in tables (1-6) according to research hypotheses outlined above

The result of the influence of teachers' teaching experience on the students academic performance as depicted in Table 1, showed that the mean scores of students taught by teachers with 1 to 5 years teaching experience was 47.48 with an SD of 26.38. Students taught by teachers who had 6 to 10 years of experience, 11-15 years and above 15years had mean scores of 55.16, 56.46 and 55.66 respectively. The study identified a strong relationship between teachers teaching experience and students' academic performance.

Data in Table 2 indicate that the exact probability level of '0.497' is less than the already set alpha level of 0.05 at 3 degrees of freedom. This means that teaching experience of Economics teachers had a significant effect on the students' classroom performance. Therefore, the Null hypothesis that the Economics teachers' teaching experience has no significant influence on the classroom performance of students was rejected.

Out of the 19 Economics teachers sampled, 5 were ranked low in their interpersonal relationship by the students while 14 were ranked high on interpersonal relationship. The results as presented in Table 3 showed that students taught by teachers who were scored low in interpersonal relationship with students had a mean score of 40.3 and an SD of 8.81 while those taught by teachers with high interpersonal relationship had a mean score of 54.63 and SD of 13.7. This implies that interpersonal relationship between Economics teachers and their students influenced classroom performance. This finding was further verified by hypothesis two. Table 6 indicates that the probability level of 0.014 is less than the already set alpha level of 0.05 at 17 degrees of freedom. Hence, the Null hypothesis of no significant difference between Economics teachers' interpersonal relationship with the students and students' classroom performance is therefore rejected. This means that the interpersonal relationship of the Economics teachers with the students significantly influenced the students' classroom performance.

Data in table 4 shows that eleven out of nineteen (19) sampled Economics teachers demonstrated a low knowledge of the subject matter while eight (8) teachers had a high knowledge of the subject matter. The results showed that students taught by Economics teachers with a low knowledge of the subject matter had mean scores of 44.01 and an SD of 9.11 while teachers that had a high knowledge of subject matter had students mean classroom performance score of 56.19 and an SD of 15.28. This implies that a teachers' knowledge of subject matter influences students' classroom performance. To further verify the finding, hypothesis three were tested. Table 6 indicates that the probability level of 0.028 is less than the already set alpha level of 0.05 at 17 degrees of freedom. This means that Economics teachers' knowledge of

the subject significantly influences the students' classroom performance.

Table 5 shows that 5 out of the 19 sampled Economics teachers demonstrated were scored low in attitude while 14 teachers scored high in classroom attitudes to student. The results also showed that students taught by Economics teachers that were rated high in classroom attitude had mean scores of 57.31 and SD of 15.22 which was above the mean score of students taught by teachers' with low score in classroom attitude. This means that Economics teachers' classroom attitude had an influence on the classroom performance of their students. Table 6 indicates that the obtained probability level of 0.04 is lesser than the already set alpha level of 0.05 at 17 degrees of freedom. Hence, the Null hypothesis of no significant influence of Economics teachers' classroom attitude on the students' classroom performance was rejected.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores of Economics teachers' experience in Public Secondary Schools in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State

Teaching experience	Number/Frequency	Mean score of students	Standard deviation
1 to 5 years	2	47.48	26.38
6 to 10 years	7	55.16	13.89
11 to 15 years	5	56.46	13.71
Above 15 years	5	55.66	13.38

Table 2: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the Economics teachers' scores based on their teaching experience

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	118.99	3	39.67	0.196	0.049	Significant
Within Groups	3028.06	16	201.87			
Total	3147.06	19				

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation scores of teachers' interpersonal relationship with the students

Teacher-students relationship	Number of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation
Low	5	40.30	8.81
High	14	54.63	13.79

Table 4: Mean and Standard deviation scores of teachers' knowledge of subject

Teacher's Knowledge of the subject matter	Number of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation
Low	11	44.01	9.11
High	8	56.19	15.28

Table 5: Mean and standard deviation scores of Economics teachers' classroom attitude

Teachers attitude	Number of teachers	Mean score of students	Standard deviation
Low	5	41.14	8.54
High	14	57.31	15.22

Table 6: t-test of Economics teachers' scores based on their personality characteristics

t- test for equality of means	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision
Teacher-students relationship	-2.7	17	0.014	Significant
Teacher's knowledge of the subject matter	-2.36	17	0.028	Significant
Teachers' attitude	-1.92	17	0.04	Significant

2.5 Discussion of findings

The results obtained in this study indicate that years of teaching experience of the teachers did significantly influence the students' performance in Economics. A test of the corresponding hypothesis showed that students taught by teachers with up to 6 years of teaching experience and above performed significantly higher than those taught by teachers with 1 to 5 years of experience. This suggests that teaching experience of up to 6 years and above is necessary to acquire the required skills and experiences needed to adapt instruction to students' understanding and high academic performance. Classrooms are dynamic and so adaptations are sometimes more desirable than a well-written lesson plan (Stronge, 2007; Kini and Podolsky 2016). Teachers develop adaptability through experience and awareness. Therefore, the longer a teacher stays on a teaching job, the more likely he or she is to demonstrate adaptability compared to beginners. Kini and Podolski (2016) noted that as teachers gain experience, their students not only learn more as measured by standardized tests, they also more likely to do better on other measures of success such as attendance. The authors further observed that teachers effectiveness increase at a greater rate when they teach in a supportive and collegial working environment, and when they accumulate experience in the same grade level, subject or district. The more a teacher lasts in a



teaching profession, the more he/she masters the art of teaching and becomes more effective in handling pedagogical challenges. Consequently with the passage of time, teachers get more command of their subjects and become more competent in the art of teaching through experience.

The result presented in table 3 showed that students taught by teachers with good students-teachers interpersonal relationship as measured by the observational guide, Economics Teachers Personality Test (ETPT), were found to perform significantly higher than those taught by teachers with low interpersonal relationship. This suggests that healthy teachers' relationship with the students has substantial influence on the classroom performance of the students. This is in agreement with the reports of Landsford, Antonucci, Akiyama and Takahashi (2005) and Martin (2014) that interpersonal relationships have profound effects on quality of life and performance of students academically. Similarly, in a study to identify the relationship between teacher-students' interpersonal relationships and students' academic achievements in Social Studies, Fan (2012) concluded that a significant positive correlation exist.

As regards the influence of the teachers' knowledge of the subject matter on the students' classroom performance, results presented in Table 4 showed that students whose teachers had good knowledge of the subject matter as measured by the ETPT performed significantly higher than those taught by teachers with low knowledge of the subject matter. This result is in agreement with Taylor (2011) who found that, when combined with time on task, teacher knowledge leads to substantial gains in student learning. Similarly, two case studies in the Gauteng by Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor, (2010) and the NorthWest provinces of South Africa by Carnoy and Arends (2012) have also provided evidence of a positive relationship between teacher's knowledge and learner's performance. Economics is perceived as a difficult Subject, a problem which had generated much controversy over the teaching of economics in secondary schools (Yusuf, 2009; Mises, 2012). Hence, teaching of Economics to secondary schools students whose power of deduction and abstract reasoning are not well developed requires teachers with good knowledge of the subject matter for high academic performance by students.

The results of this study as presented in Table 5 showed that the mean score of students taught by teachers with good attitude was higher than those taught by teachers who scored low in attitude as measured by the ETPT. Analysis of results as shown by t-test for equality of means showed that the mean score of students whose teachers have good classroom attitude was significantly higher than those whose teachers had poor classroom attitude. This implies that Economics teacher's classroom attitude can influence the classroom performance of the students. A good classroom attitude exhibited by the teacher provides a healthy environment for learning. Wirth and Perkins (2013) observed that the teacher's attitude contributes significantly to students' attention in

classrooms. The results of this study also agree with the report of Ulug, Yildirim and Erilmaz (2011) who demonstrated that teachers' positive attitude have a positive influence on students' personality as well as their life performance.

3 Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed a number of Economics teachers' personality related factors that significantly influence classroom performance of the students. Based on the findings, it was concluded that the teachers' interpersonal relationship with the students and their classroom attitudes have significant influence on the classroom performance of the students in Economics. Also, the study, revealed that the teachers' years of teaching experience and the knowledge of Economics content correlated positively with the students' classroom performance.

4 Recommendation

Sequel to the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made to improve the classroom performance of students in Economics in Secondary schools. Only teachers with relevant teaching qualification in Economics should be employed to teach the subject in Secondary schools. Teachers including those that teach Economics should be well remunerated and be given proper incentives that will make them remain on their job so as to gain experience as they grow in the profession. It is recommended that stakeholders in the education industry should organize periodic seminars and workshops for teachers on the need to create a positive school environment that engenders a healthy classroom attitude and interpersonal relationships. Economics teachers should be encouraged to develop good classroom attitude and interpersonal relationship with their students.

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