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Editorial: Best Practice Performances of Model Curricula (Lehrkunst) and Lesson Study - Two Concepts and a Joint Venture in the Field of Subject Didactics?

"A few years ago we were involved in a lot of projects. Now, rather we concentrate on the improvement of everyday teaching."

(Motto of an unknown British school)

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1 Core Curriculum and/or Standards?

The touchstone of school development is the quality of everyday lessons. Japanese teachers claim, for example: "You can improve yourself each day a little bit". It is exactly this idea that the slogan of the unknown British school communicates to its staff. In school development (Schulentwicklung) the emphasis of reform efforts shifted from questions concerning organization (Organisationsentwicklung) to lesson development (Unterrichtsentwicklung). This means a shift from macro-systemical to micro-didactical questions. The point of recent international comparative studies like TIMSS or PISA is a didactical one: the quality of schools develops in its classrooms.

Because of the specific history of political education in Germany - the delayed development of democracy, the failure of the Weimar experiment, the Nazi trauma and the Holocaust, the re-education effort after 1945 - there are perhaps many more books written in the field of civics education in Germany than in other countries. Moreover, the practice of civics education doesn't correspond to the expanding academic demands and expectations of the public. Publications aren't observed by teachers and even academic professionals are said to ignore the latest publications of their colleagues in the scientific community. A way out of the often, somehow overtheorizing controversies concerning the subject of didactics in the field of civic education which often are apparently illusory - for example "democracy" versus "politics" as leading ideas (compare Fauser 2003, Breit 2003) - is to be open to the processes of lesson development, and a "renaissance of learning culture" (Renaissance der Lernkultur). However, in the didactics of civic education in Germany, criteria for lesson

development have been rarely systematically represented so far (compare Grammes 2000), although both the specialized didactical conceptions and empirical research contain an abundance of implicit conceptions which could constitute good practice.

How is political education in Germany prepared for this task? On one hand, the practice of political education looks like a petrified institution to many external observers. The corresponding academic discipline appears conceptionally obsolete. Academic reflection is not successful in answering new questions appropriately, like the gender question for example, or new media, or the need for internationalisation in the age of globalisation. On the other hand, instruction in the learning field of civics is characterized by a wide range of content and methodological ideas, by aliveness and innovative practice. Looking at American, Canadian or New Zealand journals and periodicals⁽¹⁾ or congress announcements of the large social studies teacher federations, one feels overwhelmed and quickly exhausted by a multicoloured potpourri of innovative instruction ideas that don't seem to have any connection. There is an event culture of project suggestions and curricular material offers which even experts can't keep sight of any longer. This variety can be considered as a charming trademark of political education among the range of school subjects on one hand but quickly giving an impression of vagueness and lacking substance on the other. Are there any standards remaining in this semi-professional or even amateurish grocery?

As far as school teachers are concerned, this variety becomes a professional handicap in times where due to public savings, working hours are extended and the required profiles are widened. Teachers experience this as an "extension" of their profession. The constantly changing topics, the so-called "topicality principle" (Aktualitätsprinzip), can be over demanding, because a civics teacher's work resembles a Sisyphian task. He or she "can never be over-qualified in his field of subject" (Reinhardt in Pohl 2003). It seems, the subject lacks a centre which concentrates on giving a profile and a trademark. On one hand the subject could rank high on the popularity scale among students. On the other hand the verdicts that civic lessons prattle on (Lagerunterricht) following the garlands of popular opinion (Meinungsgirlanden) are quickly given. For outside observers, parents or officials in the educational administration system the basic knowledge of adjacent subjects such as history or geography appears less vague. Therefore these subjects have a much better position in the struggle for lesson contingents in the range of school subjects, whilst civic education always had a claim on rhetorical Sunday speech and glossy brochures.

In this situation, how does educational research help the ordinary civics teacher? Let's test a prominent example. A teacher, looking at a publication with the promising title "Political education of the fourteen year-old in Germany", could learn the following:

"German adolescents deviate from the international sample in so far as within the context of conventional acting, political interest correlates somewhat more strongly with the fulfilment of democratic obligations rather than an active conventional participation. Whereas in other countries it correlates more strongly with active participation readiness." (Oesterreich 2002, 187).

How could this empirical statement be interpreted by a professional teacher? What sort of message is hiding behind such dummies as "conventional acting" in contrast to "active conventional participation"? It has never been revealed to me how this kind of empty phrase in international recommended empirical research could ever become successful; a sort of metaphysic in which a back door is always kept open - notice the formula "in so far a little bit", "somewhat more strongly" - each connection could be interpreted differently with respect to context aspects. How could this ever contribute to lesson development and the improvement of everyday practice? In any case, some money is spent on this kind of research and the data easily translated. The scales of achievement are competitive and highly noticed by the public, therefore working powerfully around the globe.

Findings of the "First educational report for Germany" (DIPF 2003) give the following as a reason for a deficit learning culture: In this country, co-operation of teachers is underdeveloped in particular. Two solutions to this problem which are presented in this volume, start exactly at this point:

- Lehrkunst - which is difficult to translate and means performance of a model curricular unit;
- Lesson Study (2).

Both concepts place the co-operation of teachers in organized advanced training workshops, in the centre of school reform. Both work as bottom-up strategies: in teacher teams mature lesson models are developed and disseminated by means of a multiplicator system (snowball effect). Both deal with making one thing consistent instead of dissipating energy and rely on their strengths - these are two well-known basic rules of personal training and institutional development in general.

The two concepts originally come from different learning cultures. The concept of Lehrkunst is embodied in the German (3) tradition of "Bildungstheorie" (educational theory); the concept of Lesson Study originates from the Japanese learning culture and is taken up in the American reform discussion which is lively at present. So, in some sense, this volume deals with a didactical "import-export-project" - a scientific joint venture.

Both concepts make an innovative, and at the same time critical, contribution to the recent renaissance of curriculum debate. The public debate puts reform hopes on either

- input management and control (Steuerung): core curricula (Tenorth 2001, 2004) and/or
- output management and control: education standards and disposition/competence (Kompetenzen) (Klieme 2003).

The concepts which can be presented here belong to the strategy by means of core curricula; they intend to give an answer to the question about the canon (Kanon) of general education (general literacy). The rediscovering of the content question in education is striking in the international debate regarding the field of didactics, instructional research and curriculum reflection (Hopmann, Riquarts 1995). Didactics react to the central problem each knowledge society (Wissensgesellschaft) has to cope with: Only a content-wise defined canon as a minimum (Minimum) of shared learning

experiences guarantees an intersection within the plurality of social experiences in the recent generation, and therefore secures the public discussion ability among members of society. This common language can't be limited, in order to remain in the picture, to a shared syntax - a list of key terms and grammar rules. It must include exemplary semantics (narratives) and developed pragmatics (models of performance). Didactic dramas make available high-quality and verifiable samples for lesson practice and teacher training. They want to help to secure a common existence of experiences and knowledge for the students. They are school form-spreading.

Let's look at the concepts in detail.

2 Lehrkunst

The concept of Lehrkunst has been developed and steadily promoted particularly by Hans Christoph Berg (Marburg) in cooperation with Theodor Schulze (Bielefeld), both university teachers in the field of general didactics and school pedagogy. The basic book is Berg/Schulze 1995. It is based on the tradition of educational theory (Bildungstheorie) that started with Comenius, Diesterweg, and Willmann as well as the contemporary models of Martin Wagenschein (genetic teaching) and Gottfried Hausmann (dramaturgical didactics). More recently, Germany's most famous and influential current didactic, Wolfgang Klafki (Marburg), at least expresses sympathy for the movement.

What is meant by a didactic drama? It must be a lesson unit which contributes to general education. It must contain "central questions" and "generative issues" (Gardner, Boix Mansilla 1994). The basic didactical form is the opening and discovery of a fastidious topic by the students themselves: a key problem; a question of mankind (Menschheitsthema); a great moment of mankind (Sternstunde der Menschheit (4)) in the stream of cultural tradition (Berg, Schulze 1995, 39ff.). Such a Lehrkunst-unit usually covers ten to 25 lessons and represents a several-times tested "example of highly qualified lesson culture" (Klafki).

In the metaphorical strong language of Lehrkunst, the curriculum of a good school is often compared with the repertoire of a theatre.

Lehrkunst means further teacher training (Lehrerweiterbildung) by regular teaching art workshops (Lehrkunstwerkstätten). A teaching art workshop is an innovative learning environment, where experienced teachers of different subjects (!) and members of the different stages of teacher training gather, in order to develop didactic dramas over a longer period of time. These units are tested, optimized and documented in repeated passages in different school forms and grades as plays that are open to variation (variationsoffene Mitspielstuecke (5)). At present there are workshops in Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland. Lehrkunst is a didactical movement which "primarily spreads over the common work of teachers and less over theoretical reflections " (Bonati 2003, 68). According to the philosophy of science, there is a requirement for both the "science of

teaching and the learning practice in schools" (Klafki 1997, 33).

Lehrkunst requires a concrete content-orientated didactic (Inhaltsdidaktik) while the concept of Lesson Study focuses on a learning problem that the pupils have or, in addition, a special teaching strategy. Compared to the situation in Germany, and perhaps Austria, Switzerland is more advanced in concrete lesson development in the context of school development (see Dick 1994 and Altrichter/Posch 1993). The contribution of Hans Christoph Berg (Marburg) comes directly from the nation-spreading co-operation of this teacher reform-movement. More than 600 teachers participated at the pivotal "Lucerne Congress on lesson development in 2003". The keynote speech was a first trial balance; an interim report of the concept's development Christoph Berg drew up in collaboration with Wolfgang Klafki.

The list of the accomplished lesson projects reveals that in the field of civics (society/politics/economy) a white mark still exists concerning the repertoire list (see Berg in this volume chap. 4). This is amazing, in so far as Wolfgang Klafki presents a masterpiece of general didactics which he had already promoted in the 80s with its concept of key problems (Schlüsselprobleme), (see Berg in this volume chap. 2). From the point of view of subject didactics, civic education started from the very beginning in periodicals and more strikingly, by the use of new media such as the filming of lesson practice (Unterrichtsmitschau). They were sponsored by the Federal Agency of Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung) and the regional agencies of the German laender (Landeszentralen für politische Bildung) to promote and professionalize by means of lesson models and best practice examples made during the establishment of the new learning field in the 60s. In order to make standards possible and secure teacher training in the snowball system, the broadly distributed models of Bolte/Ohrt (1966) were developed. Other models were by Gagel (1966), Rahmeyer (1968). In addition, the reception of American sociological curricular models was promoted (Wulf 1973). Today, when financial resources are scarce and where teacher training slowly ceases, resorting to this strategy of medium-term curriculum reform might be highly recommended. The task remains to look out for genetic Wagenschein-didactics in the field of civics.

The article by Tilman Grammes (Hamburg) follows this search mission. He presents eight search strategies for didactic drama traditions in the subject field to energize colleagues at school so that they carry on the tradition. When one looks at the history of the subject, didactic traditions and storylines for didactic drama can be identified of course, even though they are often concealed. But present academic debates and practical proposals are led in a frightening unhistorical manner, and are not conscious of their inherent traditions and innovative problem solutions. The publication market jumps from new concept to new concept, discontinuous and not very comprehensive. The advice to all developers of core curricula and standards reads therefore:

"It appears that core curricula are only possible in a more or less conventional curriculum shape, where they already informally exist. Core curricula therefore cannot create but only fix, by common consent, a core of educational goals and contents. They ratify a successful domain-specific educational convention and tradition, and are thus always the result of the

history of a specialized subject. Therefore they are not suited for extensive innovations. The quality cannot be improved by core curricula only, but by efficiency and effectiveness of school teaching as well. They can only stabilize the terrain for beginning improvements, and thus add to the consolidation of the domain-specific subject instruction." (Behrmann 2003).

However, much would be achieved by this contribution, nevertheless!

Therefore, concrete curricular work is continued on the basis of two reports from teacher workshops; both of them are indispensable modules of a "Frenzel of Civics". The speech of "Frenzel" refers to the famous encyclopaedia "Topics in World Literature" (Stoffe der Weltliteratur) of Elisabeth Frenzel, which gathers and compares the "essential and repeatedly treated literary material of poets of all times and nations, such as Faust, Amphitryon, Antigone or Don Juan, in their larger and smaller fictional realisations. At the same time, it also examines the poetic substance of each individual piece of material (Frenzel 1998, cover text).

Andreas Petrik (Hamburg) has chosen the most ambitious theme of modern political education which is sadly rarely represented in everyday practice: "the future". The subjects of core curriculum are "history" and - luckily - "the present". But "the future" is under-represented among curricular themes. It is even more surprising that there is a script tradition concerning the topic "future". The topic "future" reacts directly to criticism. Available didactic dramas mostly have "a backwards-turned and simplifying tendency" (Bonati 2003, 72). This proves that Lehrkunst in the field of civics can introduce a special colour to the repertoire. With justice, future compliance (Zukunftsfähigkeit) is a key problem of politics in the age of globalisation and risk society. The according competence applies in curricula in the meantime as the key topic of political education (see Hilligen, Klafki in Berg chap. 2). Well-known in German academic discussion, and something that became a yardstick, is the concept of civic education by Peter Weinbrenner (Bielefeld) which is to build around the concept of "Future" systematically. In addition, Petrik contributes systematically to a genetic didactic of civics education, thus spelling out the concept of Martin Wagenschein which was originally developed for natural sciences, for the purpose of social science education.

Horst Leps (Hamburg) reports likewise on the concrete lesson development job. If lesson reports are normally on the margin of this magazine profile, it should become evident that thick descriptions (dichte Beschreibungen) - a kind of ethnographic report (Lewis 1995) - must be central and indispensable within the concept of Lehrkunst. Reflected and well-done lesson reports do not belong to the Top Ten of didactical literature in the field of civic education. (6) Not only a discursive culture of evaluating the quality of a single lesson (Gesprächskultur des Redens über Unterricht) is missing (see Grammes 1991), a culture of lesson report in a narrative style and appropriate documentary basic books (collection of teaching/lesson scripts, direction books) are missing as well. But again, well-told, colourful and vivid reports exist in the subject tradition. They are only scattered in local teacher journals and often published in remote places. It is a hidden and at present, an unknown tradition. The lesson models in today's periodicals abstract usually from the level of practical realization and experience, even if they claim in a footnote to have been repeatedly tested

by the author in practice, and not only designed on the drawing board.

The disregard of educational narrative - which is an art in itself! - leads to the fact that the "theorizing and legitimising root of general didactics rampantly grows, but at its pragmatic root withers." The original function of models to make teacher students and teachers ready to teach is lost (Lütgert 1981, 579). Didactical literature in the field of civics education behaves as it were an art science without pictures. But, then Berg asks (1995, 29): "Only Paul Klees Bildnerisches Denken without his pictures? Only Lessing's Hamburgische Dramaturgie without his dramas? In the art sciences this is unthinkable. However, in didactics nowadays it's common, unfortunately.

One can remember that at the beginning of the so-called didactical turn of political education there was a basic book which became a rare bestseller in many editions: "The Political Instruction" (Der politische Unterricht, 1960). It was written by Kurt Gerhard Fischer, a young academic at Gießen University with teaching practice in the field of vocational training of young adults, and his co-authors Herrmann and Mahrenholz, who were both teachers. The resulting integrated lesson units resemble lesson reports ("A student raises his hand... "). The theoretical part of the book and the part containing lesson examples are narrowly related. Without the examples, the book would be completely incomprehensible. Its theory is drawn rather from these examples which one underestimates if they are taken as illustrative only. Fischer translated, and at the same time modified, the Wagenschein didactic into the field of political education. It is not by coincidence that the composition structure of the book is repeated in the basic book on Lehrkunst (Berg, Schulze 1995). The same task demands similar solutions.

According to vivid lesson practice reports, the art of teaching in the field of civic education doesn't disappear into margin themes but thus goes straight back to its original roots! We examine exactly at the beginning of the professionalization of political education - its so called "didactic turn" (didaktische Wende) -, to what extent we are going in the right direction. Lehrkunst in the subject is by far not a further fashionable idea, but "gatekeeper of the subject didactics tradition" (Detjen in Pohl 2003).

The lesson report of Horst Leps "In search of the best constitution" (Die Suche nach der besten Verfassung) refers to a strong thematic tradition. Let us have a short look on what a "Frenzel of Civics" should contain:

Constitutions are core topics of civic education everywhere.⁽⁷⁾ This is true for the US where the Mayflower compact can count as an example of Lehrkunst and where the Indian tradition is still to be discovered in textbooks (Harvey, Harjo, Jackson 1992; Kickingbird 1987).

In Germany, after World War I the constitution of the Weimar Republic gave civic education a constitutional status. "Catechism of the German Citizen" and commentaries about this constitution created a vivid book market.

In West Germany, a course on the central ideas of political philosophy was an indispensable standard in the upper grades of secondary school on route to the general university-level graduation during the 50s and 60s. It was integrated in history classes or the new subject of Gemeinschaftskunde ⁽⁸⁾. There were appropriate textbooks, collections of classical authors, for the use by students. During the 70s, political philosophy was displaced from the "modernized" curricula and also the humanistic tradition at special

secondary schools, putting the study of ancient language such as Latin and Greek in the centre, but diminished. Until then the two humanistic subjects Greek and Latin played on this curricular field.

The experiment by Leps insists that the question of the best constitution and the discovery in ancient Greece belongs in the centre of the curriculum (as provocative education experience). But not only as the somewhat delayed comprehension regarding the thoughts of great men, but as self-discovery and experiencing the invention of democracy. The concern of the "guardian of civic education" from their blinkered political scientific perspective, whether there's an inadmissible analogy reasoning from antique forms of "democracy" - well known as without the participation of women and slaves - and modern state democracy. This would lead to fatal false concepts (misconceptions), missing the core of the task. This discipline-orientated perspective on one hand is therefore completed by the surface-orientated motivation technicians on the other. The pupil-centred pedagogues would rather give applause to the toga that the teacher is wearing in the classroom playing the role of Socrates. It is common to both evaluations that the subject is presupposed positively. Genetic and dramaturgical Lehrkunst aims at connecting objective subject genesis (Sachgenese) and subjective individual genesis (Individualgenese):

"In this way the students discover a concept of politics which reveals similar insights (Einsichten) as when they reflect about themselves ... To me the students seem to be somewhat more fortified for the forthcoming world. And - I hope at least - they like themselves a bit more." - so is the conclusion of the teacher (Leps in this volume).

The contribution also provides impact to think systematically about stylistic criteria of lesson reports in order to donate a culture of lesson review (see Berg). The equipment to describe and analyse learning processes in school extends from gradually proceeding interpretations (Schelle 2003) to minimalistic portraits like a vignette on a scarce side (inspiring Scherler 1989) by examples taken from physical education. The report by Leps chooses a pragmatic compromise:

- the perspective of reporting is the learning community ("we"), students find the word in selected dialogues, shown literally in key passages, and their function is to correct the teacher's perspective;
- the results of students' work are documented with exemplarity, so that for external observers the evaluation of the effects of the didactic drama remains possible;
- students feedbacks are documented (feedback culture);
- frozen image sequences - like the quarrel among the plebeians - can give an impression of the importance of the public sphere within the constitution of "the political" (compare Grammes in this volume, Grammes search strategy 4) and its relation to the inner fantasies of adolescents;
- the intention of reporting is not to present a success story (Erfolgsstory), but the focus is directed on learning crises that have not yet been successful either.

Wolfgang Hilligen (1916-2003) can be considered as a pioneer of Lehrkunst in the field of civic education. He was able to grab the genetic principle of teaching from his father when he was a child. He lived in the school house

and attended his father's classes. Hilligen was a scholar of Hugo Gaudig, one of the most important and influential reform pedagogues. More than half a decade later, Hilligen, a school inspector, summed up his experience and deficit diagnosis in a vademecum called "A Handful of Change" (Eine Handvoll Kleingeld). For effective and sustainable learning effort, two things are crucial:

- students must develop their own questions to the subject of learning article (problem orientated learning);
- direct contact with the subject; there must be at least an inner cognitive conception.

These two rules anticipated the main advice from the TIMSS and PISA-studies. Their consistent consideration could have saved us much useless PISA excitedness of today.

Hilligen is a pioneer of the joint venture project in this volume, because he was an early educational voyager to the States. Therefore he was able to open the German reform-pedagogical tradition into the learn-psychological beginnings of the American curriculum research during the 60s (Hilligen 1971 published, written already 1967). In his last interview at a conference in Ruedesheim in 2000, on teaching art in the field of civic education, he not only summarised his life's work, but connected the needs of civic education to new developments in general didactics in his usual manner: present in spirit, lively and encouraging to young students. Insiders know that this was intended to continue the inner-Hessian discourse of the large community of subject didactics at Gießen University with the fraction of general didactics at Marburg University (Klafki, Berg). The main idea of the conference was to ask Wolfgang Hilligen to read some didactic dramas beforehand because didactic dramas hardly develop from general didactic conceptions, but rather from intensive and desirable practical experience and reflection on other didactic dramas. Much in the same way "as a one piece of coal makes the next one glow" (wie eine Kohle die andere anlüht - Herder). At the opening of the conference a broad spectrum of already more or less successfully didactic dramas were presented: "newspaper on fables;" "human rights;" "the native Roman city;" "Faradays' candle;" the "village pond as coexistence/ecological system"; "Italian journey" and the "chemical equilibrium." Hilligen commentated on these with collegiality and criticism, and supplemented his own pieces from teaching practice and from his own textbooks (Pilgrim Fathers/The Founders, "Master of the Flies").

3 Lesson Study

The contribution of Catherine Lewis (Mills College, Oakland/CA) presents and tries to enlist support for the concept of Lesson Study (Jugyokenkyu) on the basis of her own ethnographic observation mostly in Japanese elementary schools during many years (Lewis 1995)(9). Lesson study was established in Japan as a teacher's movement and at the moment is widely discussed and tested in the US. A number of questions arise because of

cultural differences (Kelly 2002, Fernandez et. al in press; Chokshi, Fernandez 2004). As result, Lesson Study goes far beyond simply improving a lesson (Lewis, Perry, Hurd 2004).

How does the working process work in a "Lesson Lab"? Colleagues identify and inform themselves about an urgent learning problem (e.g. How can students gain the competence to improve the problem-orientated reading of longer texts?) or a content of core curriculum which all teachers feel is difficult to teach (e.g. introduction of the principle of the free-market economy). In a common work process variant solutions to the problem are looked for, tried out, discussed, documented, revised and optimised. On special days of open classrooms with up to 300 visitors at one individual school - at well-known reform schools it can be also far more - topic-oriented lessons or problem solutions are finally presented to a broader public. This makes clear that the concept can only prosper in an educational culture that is learning-friendly (Rohlen, LeTendre 1996).

The interest of teachers, researchers and the public in the US concerning the concept of Lesson Study was particularly awakened by the critical report called "The Teaching Gap" (Stigler, Hiebert 1999). This successful book introduces the TIMSS Videostudy and connects it with the concept of Lesson Study. The TIMSS Videostudy differentiates ideal-typical learning cultures and teaching styles (Unterrichtsstile) with respect to the subject of maths in a comparison between three countries:

"The *US lessons* seemed to be organized around two phases - an acquisition phase and an application phase. In the acquisition phase, the teacher demonstrates or leads a discussion on how to solve a sample problem - the aim is to clarify the steps in the procedure so that students will be able to execute the same procedure on their own. In the application phase, students practice using the procedure by solving problems similar to the sample problem. During this seatwork time, the teacher circulates around the room, helping students who are having difficulty. The problems that are not completed by the end of the lesson are often assigned for homework.

The *Japanese lessons* seemed to follow a different script. The lesson tended to focus on one or sometimes two key problems. After reviewing the major point of the previous lesson and introducing the topic for today's lesson, the teacher presents the first problem. The problem is usually one that students do not know how to solve immediately, but for which they have learned some crucial concepts or procedures in their previous lessons. Students are asked to work on the problem for a specified number of minutes, using any method they want to use, and then to share their solutions. The teacher reviews and highlights one or two aspects of the students' solution methods or presents another solution method. Sometimes this cycle is repeated with another problem; at other times students practice the highlighted method or the teacher elaborates it further. Before the lesson ends, the teacher summarizes the major point for the day; homework is rarely assigned.

The *German lessons* seemed to follow a different script again. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher presents a simple situation or

concept on the board, which will be expanded through a series of question-response sequences, and leads a discussion to arrive at some general principle at the end of the lesson. For example, the teacher draws a triangle it is, what they know about its properties. The teacher asks many more questions and students contribute a great deal in verbal exchanges. In the end, they may arrive at the conditions of congruence or Pythagorean theorem. The characteristics of German style are that the teacher and students spent a lot of time elaborating on a particular topic, but the lesson goals are not always stated by the teacher at the beginning of the lesson and the summary of the major points of the lesson is not always provided at the end of the lesson."(Kawanaka, Stigler, Hiebert 1999, 86ff.).

As to the question whether similar differences in teaching styles can be found for Social Studies and/or Civic Education, the above mentioned quantitative studies, according to the PISA-type, contribute little information (see for example the nation reports in Amadeo et. al. 2001; evaluation of a curricular model Hartry, Porter 2004). First qualitative observation data are given by means of some incidental remarks by Hahn (1998): The German lessons seemed to follow a script which can be caricatured as Easter bunny pedagogic: students try to find the eggs that teachers have hidden. Civics lessons are dominated by a series of question-response sequences. They don't necessarily arrive at some general principle at the end of the lesson.

Different learning cultures require specific adaptations of educational concepts. Since the US covers a wide area, in contrast to Japan, the concept of Lesson Study seems to spread on the basis of video documentation which are put in the Internet and commented on by colleagues. Important links to Lesson Study are: www.teacherscollege.edu/lessonstudy;, www.lessonresearch.net, www.lessonplan.net.

It is certain that the overall good achievement of Japanese students shown in the international comparative studies is due to cultural differences, e.g. in the selection of schools for testing and a special test culture that has spread throughout the country. A further reason might be the appropriate self understanding of teachers: "The most important thing is there are open classrooms with mutual observation by teachers for the improvement of their own teaching practice. This concept of self evaluation has little to do with centralised control. It serves the self-professionalisation (and discharge!) of the individual teacher as well as the didactical improvement of the subject-orientated lesson culture in general. The focus is on the learning processes, in particular the learning results." (Kuno 2003, 1) Kuno names the following essential elements:

- the educational self concept of teachers
- an unexcited openness of the classrooms
- the awareness and accepted value of constructive criticism(10)
- representation of different specialized perspectives in the coaching process and

- the pragmatic use of manageable observation instruments ("marked students", see below).

The following instruments of self evaluation are systematically used in order to create a feedback culture: Written planning of the lesson by the teacher, transcripts and video recordings, "marked students", students worksheets, consultation in following collegial teacher conferences with more accompanying subject didactical consultation by university teachers.

Kuhn/Kuno (2004, vgl. Kuno 2003) describe the attached working process concretely:

"The written planning by the subject teacher clearly marks the central question of the lesson. This is necessary so that the students' results can be determined later on: written. Lesson concept and lesson realization can be compared. Present were 3 to 5 teachers who represented different subject perspectives, e.g. mother language, maths, civics. The whole lesson was filmed with a digital camera - necessary for transcription. A characteristic of this Japanese form of evaluation are so-called marked students, thus selected pupils whose performance and subject statements are documented in detail. The learning process - representative of the entire class - is then reconstructed by means of the documentation. Marked students don't know they have been chosen for observation.⁽¹¹⁾ The selected students have different achievement strength - a condition to gain information for later required internal differentiation of the learning process according to different learning types (Lernertypen). The acting teacher would be overtaxed wanting to make single observations and acting with the group at the same time.

A further component is the worksheet which consists of two elements; it is filled out by students immediately after the lesson and collected by the teacher. In the first section the students formulate their result concerning the key question of the lesson (open response possibility). From the differentiation of statements, the quality of the students' achievements and the lesson as well can be revealed. A self-assessment of students then follows which covers five dimensions marked in a scale: the considerations about lesson participation, one's own interest on the subject, and the overall comprehension of the subject during the lesson.

Last step is a conference of the teachers. Based on recordings and impressions, the teachers give feedback to the subject teacher and the lesson process. Emphasis and value is put on constructive criticism. Older or experienced colleagues are sometimes inclined to a form of criticism, uttered without alternatives becoming visible. Here the function of an external observer has a lot of relevance. As an expert in subject didactics he or she can stress the procedural moments (just by describing what is going on) and thus lead back to constructive criticism. Specialised consultation (Fachberatung) supplements the collegial perspectives of teacher in-service training (interne Lehrerfortbildung)."

This model of professional self evaluation reveals some surprising similarities with the didactical phaenomenographic (didaktische Phaenomenographie) developed in Scandinavian countries (compare Kroksmark 1987). The teachers compare by means of "before and afterwards" stocktaking to find out if, or how, the cognitive structures and pre-setting (Voreinstellungen) developed with respect to core concepts. Still

more consistently self evaluation can be done by the students themselves by marking a worksheet before and after the unit (see for this evaluation technique Vernersson 2000; Svingby 1987; Grammes, Wicke 1991). It can be further developed to a feedback culture, in which as a consequence students test themselves and measure their own learning progression. From this experience they could gain the motivation for self-effectiveness (Selbstwirksamkeits-Motivation). The test monopoly of the teacher would be broken. This corresponds to the main goals of civic education such as independence (Selbstständigkeit) and responsible autonomy (Mündigkeit) (12). In Germany the first steps towards a student feedback culture (Bastian, Combe, Langer 2001) can be connected as well to the new didactic concept "research on learner development" (Bildungsgangdidaktik - Meyer, Reinartz 1998).

As far as I know, no Lesson Study groups are constituted at present in the field of political education (civics). A group led by Stan Pesick (Director of the Teaching American History grant Program, Oakland, California) works on basic courses on American history and the emergence of democracy (www.teachingamericanhistory.us). One may be curious as to whether the subject will take up the impulse or not.

4 Interdisciplinarity and Internationalisation of Global Communication in the Field of General and Subject Didactics

Interdisciplinarity and internationalisation rank high among the profile of this online-journal. What do they mean in respect to the concepts of Lehrkunst and Lesson Study?

4.1 Interdisciplinarity

The contributions in this volume bring different disciplines of educational science into discussion:

- general didactics, school and lesson development
- special/subject didactics concerning the natural sciences (the Wagenschein-tradition, genetic didactics)
- special/subject didactics concerning the social sciences.

The contributions in this volume show how difficult, but nevertheless necessary, and in the end fruitful it can be to relate general didactics and subject didactics to each other. So let us look what special-subject didactics from the view of civics can give us some feedback to didactic dramas that are already available in other subjects.

Lehrkunst cannot be separated from the role that the personality of the individual teacher plays. In the limited research done on the professionalisation and teaching expertise in the field of social studies, the importance of their experience potential and especially a narrative competence has been stressed (Stanley 1991; Yeager 2000; Riley, Wilson, Fogg 2000). The pioneer studies of Gudmundsdottir (1990) clearly show

the importance of a curriculum story which helps the expert teacher to combine single facts and present an inherent thread which the novice teacher can't do.

Many didactic dramas are naturally shaped by a "didactical ancient gesture" (didaktische Urgeste), which influences the teacher to present the knowledge in such a way so that the students can comprehend a particular problem and thus gain independence (Selbständigkeit). From the perspective of general didactics and as a critical friend Bonati (2003, 69) asks whether students could be brought into the process of the generating of knowledge earlier, by putting in a word during the choosing of topics and the asking of questions, for example. The units could be designed more openly to promote initiatives and ideas from the students' side. Until now, the form of the given didactic dramas is probably too closed.

From the perspective of special-subject didactics we can go forward to another and more specific meaning of student-centred learning (Schuelerorientierung) which transcends the poor opposition of "open-close": Again the above-mentioned classic book by Fischer/Hermann/Mahrenholz is state of the art: The systematical observation of the domain-specific development of cognition. The reflection of adolescent cognition in part 3 - under the heading "Didactics of civic education viewed from the students perspective: Political instruction must be appropriate for development phases" (Fischer/Hermann/Mahrenholz 1960: 95-99). Exemplary teaching units have to be conceptualised within the developmental horizon (Entwicklungshorizont) of the students from the very beginning. Such domain-specific analysis of individual cognitive learning conditions (Lernbedingungsanalyse) is missing in the basic book of Lehrkunst (Berg, Schulze 1995).

A further point of criticism, connected immediately with the closed form of model units, is the tendency to harmony in many of the didactic dramas available so far. The topics of many didactic dramas are "poor of conflicts" such as "oasis put into conflict-free zones" (Klafki 1997, 23, 25). Abilities for critical judgement and divergent thinking are neglected (Bonati 2003, 69). Didactic dramas aim at consensus not at conflict. The latter being considered to be the domain of civic education (controversial principle). A political song - a nasty song (Politisch Lied - ein garstig Lied) - such the famous students' song in Auerbachs cellar in Goethe's Faust. With Lehrkunst in the field of civics we have the chance to add "ill defined problems" to "well defined problems" as the developmental task for adolescents. But can the anaesthetic muddling through politics arouse the interests and sympathies of adolescents?(13)

4.2 Internationality

The communication problem is a problem caused by the technical jargon (Fachsprache) used to talk about the educational process. Since the beginning of the 20th century there has been a continuous transatlantic transfer in the international movement of educational reform (Reformpädagogik - Roehrs 1995). The philosophy of education of the Dewey school is inspired by German philosophical discussion (Kant, Hegel) of the 19th century; the German branch of educational reform is inspired by

observations of transatlantic travellers such as Kerschensteiner after the Weimar Republic (Hylla 1929). The current German discussion on the educational philosophy of democracy (Demokratie-Paedagogik) refers to the Dewey tradition as the central component as well (Kleinespel 1998). That applies to relevant initiatives such as the nation wide model program "Demokratisch handeln" (acting in a democratic way; Fauser/Beutel, Jena) and the program of the Bund-Länder-Kommission (BLK Modellprogramm "Demokratie lernen", learning for democracy).

In spite of this transatlantic exchange, different continental discussion cultures developed in educational science nevertheless and manifest themselves in terminological differences, too. The Anglo-American didactical research tradition is empirically oriented. The German didactical reflection works hermeneutic interpretively (hermeneutisch-interpretativ) - which could be seen as part of the German Sonderweg in political education, as Koopmann (2002) summarises. By comparison, this causes metaphorical and "romantic" educational language. This is not strange to the Anglo-American either, as the anecdotal and poetic opening of Lewis shows ("When I lived in Japan in 1967 I learned to love sushi"). But the so-called homeland terms (einheimischen Begriffe - J.F. Herbart) of the German educational science tradition still remain a barrier to communication which can be bridged with some difficulty. With reference to the reception of Martin Wagenschein's didactics Hartmut von Hentig writes:

"One of his special strengths proves to be a weakness in this situation: his pure, sentimental German language style. Simple, metaphorical, educated and at the same time without any pretension it doesn't seem to be able to compete with the scientific jargon of the others. Had he said "original understanding" (urspruengliches Verstehen) instead of "congruency of cognitive, and emotional processes" instead of "unbroken perception" (ungebrochener Anschauung) "integral apperzeption". Or "task from the school reality" (Aufgaben von der Schulwirklichkeit) instead of "project methode", "the will to learn" (Lernen-Wollen) instead of "motivation" he would have had a solid position with the leading international curriculum experts from Bruner to Ausubel today. Wagenschein certainly affected me once as he regarded me with what was probably only well-controlled displeasure when I expressed my agreement after his lecture on a conference on didactics: 'Ah, if only we were to have - among these many instructional functionaries - more pedagogical romantics such as you!' Wagenschein, the physician and mathematician doesn't like to be called "romantic." (Hentig, in the preface to Wagenschein 1991, 21f.).

5 Don't Worship Originality - Lesson Models as Medium-Term Curriculum Strategy

A new conception must be offered that is perceptible for teachers and not just another further fashionable idea. It must be seen as an exculpatory way towards professional didactics. A motive for raising the two concepts presented in this volume is a legitimate need for planning and security in

professional acting. Teachers feel disconcerted by steady public school criticism and teacher bashing (Lehrerschelte), by doubts about what actually counts as good teaching practice and by excessive demand in view of increasing and on the same hand contradictory professional requirements. Therefore they might be open for the assistance which Lehrkunst and Lesson Study can offer: "If one attends the performance of didactic dramas, it will become evident how reliably the teachers act, because they can sum up courage from their profound knowledge of the subject and therefore concentrate on the management of the learning process of group and individuals with great presence of mind." (Bonati 2003, 67).

The didactic concepts which dominate in today's market of educational fashion promote a tendency which withdraws the communication (Vermittlung) of the subject behind the communication of communication itself, e.g. a stress on learning to learn (Lernen the Lernens). Teachers feel obliged by method-oriented didactics to - allegedly - be original. A good teacher seems to be one who achieves the motivating packing of dull subject materials and is able to sell it thereby to rather uninterested young people. "Motivation" by method is the dominant educational fashion. German teachers who attended an appropriate teacher training course, affectionately call it "Klippern"⁽¹⁴⁾. Klippern can however become part of the problem. The motivational spiral screws tighter and tighter without ever being able to compete with the financial and technical possibilities of the mass media which the students are used to. Motivational packages cover the subject, the subjects of learning become unreal and insignificant. The result is the so-called artificial school knowledge (künstliches Schulwissen).⁽¹⁵⁾ The two contributions which are inspired by a straight educate-scientific perspective (Petrik, Leps) show that the fear of "educational liquefactions" (pädagogische Verflüssigung) of the political subject is unfounded with respect to Lehrkunst. Rather only a straight student-centred and a resulting "educational" perspective leads to the core of the political (Kern the Politischen). What is on the agenda is the definite parting from the method of drumming material into heads (Nürnberger Trichter) or Banker's method, as Paulo Freire called it.

This implicates a switch in the concept of knowledge from a positivistic view (it would give a given material which it applies to obtain only skilfully and efficiently) to constructivistic view. The first is nothing more but instruction methodology always near to manipulation.

"Don't Worship Originality" is a central rule of a Lesson Study workshop which inserts objection into the practice of style shows (Vorführstunden). The organisation of instruction "is often a highly individual and idiosyncratic matter. The common view that 'each teacher has to find his or her own style' is a direct result of a discourse of practice that maintains the individualism and isolation of teaching." (Ball 1996, 505).

In one of his dramaturgical remarks Bertold Brecht once made the suggestion to use models from previous performances for direction which does not mean to copy them:

"When the use of given models of performances was suggested, loud shouts arose. This meant that dictatorship, free creativeness and genius are to be prevented (...) But probably one must have done a copy before one can make a model (...) One must free oneself from the generally accepted

disregard of copying. It is not easier. It is not a dishonour, it is an art. That is, it must be developed to an art, in such a way that no pattern forming and solidification occurs (...) As stupid as it is not to use the model (because of ambition, for example) so clear it is that one uses a model best by modifying it." (Brecht 1964: 158ff.).

Civics teachers used to the "hunter-gatherer" model must make friends with this minimalist Brecht' dramaturgy. Up until now they would rather look manically for current and motivating teaching materials, thereby investing a lot of energy but nevertheless convincing themselves and their students as to the full effects of their commitment. Those teachers suffer from losses of self-effectiveness (Selbstwirksamkeitsverluste), refuse acknowledgment by their students and manoeuvre themselves so involuntarily in moaning (maekligen) culture pessimism so that burn-out syndrome or early retirement is not far away. They share these frustrations with many of their failure-accustomed students.

The initial attempt of Lesson Study (in some way of Lehrkunst as well) using models as standard situations(16) complies with the model structure of the domain of social studies and civics perfectly: the structural modernity of the social sciences with its model thinking and criticism (Zapf 1966). In Germany a significant reform of curricula (grosse Curriculumreform) failed once already and was changed into a medium-term curriculum development (mittelfristige Curriculumreform) which takes place decentralized in regional teacher training centres (RPZ - Regionale Pädagogische Zentren). The conduct of curriculum reform in the USA was similar (Smith, van den Berg 2002). No reform therefore is "completely new in its content and aim/philosophy, the history of pedagogics teaches us about what has always already failed or will fail with high probability once again, while the accompanying political semantics will always be adjusted to good-will modernization of the educational system." (Oelkers 2003, 217).

As the next step Lehrkunst and Lesson Study would have to lead to the establishment of workshops and laboratories where vivid lesson reports and instructive demo videos of didactic dramas are produced ("good practice") - a culture of self-gratifying teacher training and personal development (Altrichter, Elliott 2001).

On the question "Is There A Cure for the Twenty-First Century Social Studies Blues?" an experienced American sociologist and observer of the Social Studies answers:

"Social studies education is not healthy. The discipline has endured 40 years of confusion marked by the rise and fall of the 'new social studies', the attempt to elevate the skills of decision making and reflective inquiry, a brief obsession with relevance, a crusade for moral education and values clarification, a sordid affair with competency-based instruction and the back to basics movement, and, most recently, a crusade for standards." (Kincheloe 2002, 4).

The German reader easily recognizes many of the fashions and movements mentioned in this quotation. Lehrkunst and Lesson Study are to belong to the "back to basics movement". Both concepts have in common that by concentration on lesson unit models they want to promote a larger variety and effectiveness of learning. A teacher who discovered Lehrkunst didactics for himself gave the following feedback:

"The renewed (or first) confrontation with domain-specific/subject-specific didactical thinking has changed my teaching practice completely! It became more satisfying and my students. Since then I feel young, creative and productively challenged in my work again."

Notes

(1) For example: Social Education, Canadian Journal of Social Studies, New Zealand Journal of Social Studies.

(2) This concept isn't popular in Germany yet, therefore there is no correlating German expression; perhaps the term "Unterrichtsentwicklung" (lesson development) comes near to what Lewis (2003) meant.

(3) German stands here for "German language speaking regions," this includes Austria, Switzerland.

(4) There is a series of books by Beck publishers in Munich alluding to the bestseller "Sternstunden der Menschheit" by Stefan Zweig (1927/1943)

(5) This is an analogy to the dramaturgie of Bertold Brechts "Lehrstücke" and the Dramaturgie of Augusto Boal (compare Petrik 2004 in this volume).

(6) See the bibliography in Pohl 2003 or in the open list of the "Internet Ranking Politikdidaktik" (IRPD).

(7) It would be an interesting project to look at the British routines in civics teaching where there doesn't exist a written constitution.

(8) Gemeinschaftskunde integrates History, geography and civics (including economics, law, contemporary history). It was introduced in 1963 in grades 11-13.

(9) By the way, these are in my opinion the most beautiful and vivid reports on the needs of social and civic education in an elementary school's community and its everyday life. This means the book is an important contribution to what is called "Sachunterricht" in Germany.

(10) There is an anecdote about how observed lesson are commented by observers immediately afterwards. In the US there is an all in all "oh it was wonderful!!!" (even if it wasn't at all and everybody knows how mediocre it was), in Germany there is a formalized "rather good. But you should have noticed that there was a mistake number one ... and another inexcusable mistake number two ... and another mistake ..." In Japan - there is no immediate commentary on the practical performance. This is not at all ignorance or euphemism/lack of critique but valuing the "dignity of practice and educational art."

(11) This ethical research problem of covered individual observation does not seem to represent a specific problem within the Japanese learning culture.

(12) Compare the concept of mastery learning (aim-reaching learning) or the Dalton school plan, particularly when working with learning agreements (assignments) and learning contracts (see Popp 1995).

(13) In the German version follows a longer passage with exemplarily critique of some Lehrkunst models: Gall 1989; Schirmer 1999; Zappieri

2000.

(14) Heinz Klippert is a famous and most successful teacher trainer. His books are bestsellers on the market. Similar examples compare some lesson plan under www.lessonfactory.com ("project politics").

(15) This criticism was first formulated by Horst Rumpf and has been recently fundamentally confirmed by Gruschka (2002) who gives many striking examples; already seen from the Austrian perspective Schirlbauer 1992.

(16) In maths for example a Lesson Study project would start with introducing the Pythagorean formula.

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