Symposium

NETWORK 23. POSTSTRUCTURALIST PEDAGOGICAL RESEARCH

Chair/discussants: Bosse Bergstedt, Anna Herbert, Anja Kraus

The Tacit Turn in Pedagogy

Anja Kraus

Actual pedagogy refers to the kind of theoretical and empirical research which problematizes the concept of “objectivity”, and investigates the principle of consensus. Here, social reality is viewed as if it were a text (cp. “linguistic turn”). That is to say, it deals with social reality as if it were ruled by completeness, closeness, unambiguity and linearity (Oser 1997, Wulf 2007). Analogously, in school it is widely regarded as the main aim to impart available knowledge and abilities oriented at certain objectives. Pedagogical theory and practice is often reduced to certain norms and to definite interventions in well-defined pedagogical situations. In this regard, pedagogy as well as pedagogically intended knowledge and abilities are interpreted as psychometric competences.

By focusing mainly the tacit side of practices, we follow up a paradigm shift in pedagogy.

This paradigm shift entails not only a revision of instructional practices but also a revision of the existing theoretical approaches to educational practices and to learning. Also the learning goals and the means of instruction have to be revised.

Questions that can be interesting to discuss at the symposium can be for example:
1. Turn-taking in pedagogy: What does it mean, cause, effect and implicate?
2. What is a tacit turn in pedagogy? Which discourses should we refer to?
3. Which turns accompany the tacit turn? (material turn etc.)

Presentations

Bosse Bergstedt

Desire for knowledge!

The past few years have been defined a variety of turns within pedagogical research; the linguistic turn, the tacit turn and the material turn to mention a few. These turns can be taken as evidence for the evolution of knowledge societies where more and more people become involved in the ‘search’ for knowledge both within research and everyday life (Bauman, Beck, Korsgaard m.fl). Knowledge has become a product, sold on a global market whilst simultaneously the desire for knowledge has become more and more omnipresent and important. How can the desire for knowledge give us information about what is happening within the pedagogical turns?
The real challenge as a researcher and a teacher is to maintain knowledge desire, to enable it to slip and slide in the individual and societal structures without ‘getting stuck’ or becoming fixed. The prerequisite for this is that one does not balk when faced with the unknown in desire, that there is always something which can’t be understood. There is something ‘unclean’ about knowledge (Lacan, Deleuze m.fl).

If one wishes to see and use knowledge desire as a researcher, teacher or student then it is necessary to ‘perceive’ the gaps and breaks in the creation of meaning and knowledge. It is necessary to hold the door slightly ajar and wait for the unexpected to appear. It is when one least expects it that the foundation for the desire for knowledge shows itself. Such a realization can lead to new vantage points for methodological as well as theoretical and practical standpoints within pedagogy.

Anna Herbert

**Performativity and knowledge!**

Modernity is described by Hargreaves as a world of large scale production, where students are ‘forged’, refined, and graded according to standardized formulae at every level. The educational establishment’s activities are internalized by the organizations members using calendars, computerized absentee charts, schedules, grade lists and so the members of the organization are coordinated whilst curricula and texts describing the establishment’s visions inform the inner and outer world as to the educational establishments aims and activities. An educational establishment must be transparent (as it is part of everyday life, i.e. belongs to the domain of the public). Everybody has a right to its documents and products. Politicians must be assured that their visions and goals are being met and parents must be able to ensure themselves that their children are getting a good education and that their taxes are being put to good use. The student then is both product and producer, product of the educational system and producer of knowledge which must be quality controlled and graded. Because of man’s capacity to understand how others perceive him/her s/he is both object and subject, the perceiver and the perceived (Lefort, Merleau-Ponty). Whilst performing we are often the perceiver but in judging the result of the performance we become the perceived. To achieve is closely related to being an achiever and so we tend to merge the judged and the jury. The subject drives the object’s achievements, the perceiver drives the perceived. The student must learn to position him/herself in a world where man is both product and producer to build strategies so as to create ‘free room’ within his/her given space this implies an interaction between tacit and explicit dimensions of knowledge.

Anja Kraus

**The Difference between the Implicit, the Performative, the Mimetic and the Corporeal Dimensions of Pedagogy**

On one side, today’s Pedagogy is ruled by the perspective on caring and its normative framing, and on the other side it is led by the high esteem for the personality, responsibility and also the autonomy of the child. Both approaches are deeply based in the tradition of Enlightenment (cf. Adorno 1947). In the year 1979, Francois Lyotard proclaimed the “end of master narratives” such as “emancipation”, “autonomy”, “societal progress” etc. By the postmodern movement the self-interpretation, the contingency, discoursivity and the stage-character of phenomena was stressed. A paradigm shift was initiated by referring to the materiality of the body, of experience and of history. By this, also new fields of social research have been opened up. In Pedagogy concepts such as implicit knowing (Polanyi, Neuweg, Mayr et al.), anthropological approaches that describe human existence by terms like performativity and mimesis (Wulf, Zirfas, Tervooren et al.), and phenomenological approaches (Merleau-Ponty, Waldenfels, Meyer-Drawe et al.) that refer to corporeality and bodyliness can be regarded as a reference and as an answer to this paradigm shift. In my contribution I will make up some main points of these latter approaches and compare them.
Maud Hietzge

**Turn to turn-taking ? What does it mean to switch to bodily processes in education ?**

On the basis of a broad concept of competence (Pfadenhauer) the body as mediator of learning processes and subjectivation in general will be addressed. So called ‘nonverbal communication’, the interaction with material surroundings, other (human) beings, and media influence behavioural dispositions. These dispositions are brought into the classroom and the gym, and can be transformed in different directions. Even the bodily behaviour of the teacher has strong influences on lesson processes.

Building a methodological bridge between phenomenology and poststructuralist theories of the body, research on bodily interaction analysis will be made useful for pedagogical questions of central relevance. The potential of situations will be explained, possibilities of meta-actional behaviour will be discussed and some concerns of the relatively new philosophy of cognition will be taken into account (Nöe), not being socially blind anymore.

- What does it mean, that pupil have to be involved *intrinsically* (german notion of “Bildung”)?
- What is the state of the art of body theory in the social sciences and how can we deal with?
- How can one work with it methodologically?
- Which relevances does the praxeological approach have in the context of growing up in mega-cities?

Joris Vlieghe

**Exercise as a typical school practice. Why impotentiality matters educationally**

In this contribution I want to focus on the educational value of an ‘everyday’ pedagogical practice, that is however more often than not forgotten in theories of education. More concretely I will go deeper into the practice of ‘practising’, i.e.: exercising, ‘oefenen’ (Dutch), Üben (German). Representative examples of this are: repeating over and over again mathematical formulae in group, taking part in repetitive forms of gymnastics, or reciting the alphabet or the text of a poem. As a rule, this practice is dealt with in two ways. Either it is seen as something completely obsolete that, in view of constructivist theories, hinders deep forms of learning, long-term study effects and genuine self-development. Or it is seen as something that has a mere instrumental value (in the sense that it might prepare students for more important learning activities or that it might indirectly help fostering discipline). In this contribution, I want to open a new perspective on this practice that, instead of immediately denouncing it, tries to conceive it as a ‘pedagogical form’, i.e. as something that is constitutive for what schooling is all about. In that sense I focus not so much on learning outcomes or on the impact of this practice on well-being or motivation, but on the ‘tacit’ dimensions of an everyday educational reality.

I start from an extensive analysis of Bollnow’s phenomenological views on the pedagogical meaning of exercising. I will criticize the incompleteness and lack of accuracy of this approach and propose to refine his view by bringing in an Agambenian perspective.

I hope to show that exercising is a typical educational practice, because it concerns a strongly embodied, repetitive and collective practice in which students relate to something they in a sense already ‘possess’ (in contradistinction to mere ‘learning’) and which allows for a particular transformation of individual and collective existence.
Revisiting an old everyday school practice and taking it more seriously than is commonly done, I hope to contribute to an alternative approach of doing educational research, which focuses on experiences of concrete activities, with a special emphasis on its corporeal dimensions.

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<td>Unthemtic reality. Why and how focus on latent sense structures of pedagogical situations?</td>
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| Research topic | In the beginning of the 21st century modalities of teaching and learning are being fundamentally transformed: Instead of strict directives, moral indoctrination and undoubtable authority educational influences are increasingly realized by enjoyable attractions and anonymous coercions, by unhindered freedom of choice within a landscape of tacit self-controlling mechanisms. We assume that this historical shift of educational practice is an integral part of an overall transformation of society for the target of which the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze has coined the pregnant term of ‘societies of control’.

In the 1970ies the scientific discussion on this topic had one first climax referring to the concept of hidden curriculum. Functionalist and critical social scientists agreed in recognizing that the structure of daily school practices anchored in the design of the institution (expectations, procedures, rules, laws, rituals, timing, spacing etc.) is shaping the identities of the young people. Recently post-structural and critical discourse-analysis addresses similar topics in a broader sense.

In view of the current discussion we prefer to use the term unthemtic aspects of doing school. By this we want to express, that we are dealing with any dimension of teaching and learning that has not become a focused content of the partakers’ thinking or speaking. Therefore this phrasing does not predetermine if what we investigate is an intentionally hidden manipulation or an evolutionary emerged condition, an extractable entity or an aspect of an overall characteristic of a general situation. |
| Theoretical and methodology framework | The concept of the contribution is based on a critical approach between phenomenology and post-structuralism. The methodology of the empiric analysis is Objective Hermeneutics. |
| (Expected) conclusions/findings | Modern edutainment undermines the capabilities to acquire insights and habits that allow to transcend the given societal circumstances. We will present an excerpt of a funded case-study in which we investigate a learning-CD. It tries to accommodate young people by presenting multiplication tables as (karaoke) rock-songs and so gives a paradigmatic example of the intricate new style of teaching by fun and action. |
| Relevance to Nordic educational research | |
| Attachment to NERA-network and/or symposium | |

Practical Knowledge of Teaching

Eva Schwarz, Center for Studies in Practical Knowledge, Södertörn University, Sweden

The paper investigates the “tacit dimension of teaching” taking its starting point in the practical knowledge of professionals, i.e. their non-reflected modes of dealing with specific situations at school. I will show how students of a career-based teacher training program at Södertörn University,
who are already working at pre-school, reflect their practical knowledge, i.e. their often tacit and implicit presuppositions, assumptions etc. which constitute the framework of their actions. The students work in a pre-school while studying, spending one day per week at the university. This means for them a constant rotation between a well-known professional practice and the new field of higher education, characterized by a certain asymmetry with regard to the relation between theoretical and practical knowledge. At certain stages of the training program the students are writing scientific essays within the field of “practical knowledge” (cf. Alsterdal 2009, Josefson 1998, Schwarz 2011). In these texts, the students start out from a dilemma that has confronted them in their work at pre-school, initiating reflections on professional ethics, the teacher-child relation, didactics etc. These reflections are in the next step elaborated as the students further reflect upon their own stories. Interpreting these essays written by the students, the paper explores how teacher students reflect and how they learn to reflect upon the tacit dimension of their praxis. This method is well established at the Center for Studies in practical knowledge at Södertörn University. Research is conducted in case studies, starting out from descriptions of concrete situations and experiences that are in a second step reflected by practical and theoretical perspectives. Yet it is one goal of this paper to develop this method and critically investigate the limits and possibilities of reflection to investigate tacit dimensions of teaching in terms of practical knowledge. To what extent can practitioners themselves explore the tacit dimension of their actions? How to understand the relation between tacit and explicit, experience and reflection? Is it justified to speak of the practices of teaching that are revealed by the teacher’s reflection in terms of “knowledge”? What is the educational significance of such a possible articulation of tacit dimensions?

The research material will consist of a hermeneutical analyses of B-level essays of two groups of students collected by the leaders of the seminars in “Practical knowledge” at Södertörn University.