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Snacking on Knowledge and Feel Good

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Abstract

The aim of this article is to re-think the results of four larger studies conducted by the authors during the last decade, all with a discourse analytical approach. The studies are empirical and concern the Swedish field of arts in education and deal with a comprehensive material consisting of interviews, observations and field notes. In the results of these studies three prominent discourses emerges. A *Curriculum discourse*, where content knowledge is connected to traditions, norms and values of educational institutions, a *Feel-good discourse* that deals with content knowledge where social and personal aspects are essential, and a *Snacking on knowledge discourse* where content knowledge is portrayed as something students are able to pick and choose according to their own preference. Ideas of late modern society and arts in education are then used as a basis to carry out a critical discussion about the emerging discourses. Also different teacher and student positions are problematized.

Keywords: arts in education, music education, education, discourse analysis, late modernity, social constructionism

Introduction

During the last ten years different forms of discourse analysis have grown stronger within the field of Swedish education in the arts. This is found in both macro and micro oriented studies which cover a variety of discourse approaches such as discourse psychology, critical discourse analysis, discourse theory and Foucault inspired analysis. The field of research is also wide, ranging from preschool and elementary level to higher education and universities as well as community schools of music and art. The aim of this article is to re-think the results of four larger studies conducted by the authors during the last decade, all with a discourse analytical approach.

The four studies deal with different educational contexts why our team of researchers found it important to revisit these results based on two motives: 1) The first emanates from an interest to study what tendencies would arise if we broadened the discursive field from covering specific educational institutions, such as elementary school and higher education, to covering all of the institutionalized educational contexts that have been underpinning our research. We asked ourselves what discursive tendencies we would spot? Can more general tendencies emerge and be made visible by such a procedure? 2) The second argument is aligned with the first. Here we emphasize an ambition to highlight the results, making it possible to participate in an international discussion about the challenges and conditions that education in the arts faces today in a late modern society.

All four studies are empirical and deal with a comprehensive material consisting of interviews, observations and field notes, analyzed with a variety of discourse approaches. The studies have in common an ambition to focus ideas and events that occur in the educational practice, and to emphasize different and sometimes contradictory aspects, with an objective to construct each specific context as complex and multifaceted. In the studies these aspects are discussed and problematized.

Late modern society and arts in education

In our understanding of a late modern society, modern ideas have become less dominant, and social structures more flexible (Giddens 1996; 1997; 2003). A de-traditionalized society is emerging, where the expectations of individual actions following traditional patterns are low. Such a shift towards greater individualization creates more freedom for people to choose their own identity and to choose their lives without taking norms and traditions into consideration. Medialization of society and development of the Internet are also key factors in this flexibility. Individuals do not need to be at the same geographical spot at the same time to be able to interact with each other, which make both local and global interaction possible.

Also concerning the arts, the development of new media implies an increased possibility to communicate and share different matters. For example, pedagogical possibilities are put to the fore when music technology is considered a way to handle the lack of creativity in the music classroom (Watson, 2011). Music digital technology mediated teaching and learning is seen as enhancing students' self motivated engagement in the music class and their perception of music in general (Kim 2013). The era of late modernity eases the pressure from the arbiters of taste and personal taste combined with a relativization of aesthetic values become prominent (Bell 1986; Featherstone 1994). Furthermore, these conditions permeate the area of teaching the arts, where an uncertainty about what may be essential knowledge content is prominent. The embryo of this shift is found in the 1930s, when jazz became a controversial element in Swedish schools. For decades to come, there has been a continuous relativization of knowledge within the arts (Jameson 1986). This creates ideological tensions between popular music and formal school contexts and music teachers´ popular music selection processes (Kallio, 2014). There are complex negotiations involved in including or excluding popular repertoire from school activities. This raises issues

about what it means to be authentic across popular music education (Parkinson and Smith 2015; Smith 2006). It is considered a responsibility for music teachers to place the issue of authenticity at the center of pedagogy, in order to contribute to the development of the field. Also, it is argued that the adaptation of some informal popular music learning practices for classroom use can positively affect pupils' musical meanings and experiences (Green 2006).

These late modern trends might create a higher degree of flexibility related to identities and knowledge. Regarding the school area, this affects the relationship between students and teachers, where teachers are expected to focus on the relationships in the classroom (Carlgren and Marton 2005; Ziehe 2000). According to Ziehe, a demystification of the relationship between adults and children has emerged, leading to dissolution of boundaries. New media informs children and adolescents of a variety of issues concerning their lives. The youths become more competent than the parents that have to rely on the stories of their children. Thus, parents´ position as role models have become weaker. From a historical perspective this is a disruptive change. Demystifying the relationship between children and adults also affects the relationship between teachers and students. It's more challenging for the teacher to legitimate him-/herself as a responsible adult in teaching, and students are not likely to automatically allow themselves to be disciplined. From this perspective, it is understandable that teachers have to focus on relations that create further intimization between the actors in the classroom (Ziehe and Stubenrauch 2008).

In our opinion, a late modern perspective also implies limits to individual freedom. In fact, Scandinavian schools with the arts as a profile, practice become a creative but challenging tension between frames and freedom for the pupils (Christophersen and Ferm Thorgersen 2015). Flexibility has increased but media supply can be considered to expropriate individuals' consciousness. Also, the fact that people get

exposed to certain music without being able to control it is a parameter that relate to the freedom of choice (Burrill and Adorno 1987).

In cultural analysis and in educational research efforts have been made to find successful ways to handle a late modern school by using *Radical aesthetics* (Persson and Thavenius 2003), and by talking about the classroom as a *Public* or *Liberal Space* (Ericsson, 2002; Ziehe 2000). These ideas dismantle the boundaries between school and community, and encourage teaching characterized by openness, democracy and discussion. Here, the content can be empowered by both students and teachers, even if it from a policy perspective may be questionable. Thus, school in late modern and flexible society become spaces for radical knowledge. Martin (2013) states that by in-corporating the arts as a school subject, it is able to promote a political subjectivation to each child.

The ideas of contemporary western society presented above are the basis for our understanding of the overall trends in *the four studies.* Accordingly, we also regard school and education as an integral part of society. In this perspective, the activities that occur in schools are directly related with the community, and the social context creates certain conditions for possible actions in the field of education. In the four studies different micro-oriented discourse perspectives dominated the methodologi-cal approach (Potter and Wetherell 1987; Potter 1996). However, in this article we will apply an approach to arts in education, in accordance with the macro-oriented dis-course theory developed by Laclau and Mouffe (1985). In this perspective, the dis-courses mapped out by the meta-analysis are identified by varying articulations of content knowledge occurring in the four studies. Inline with these articulations also different teacher and student positions occur. Each discourse makes specific positions possible according to how the content knowledge is articulated. Significant for the emergence of the discourses is also the varying constructions of musical practice,

teaching, music and art, and the construction of the learner. At the end of each out-lined discourse a conclusion of the central aspects are presented.

By undertaking a meta-analysis of the results of *the four studies* we begin to search for discursive patterns in the results of the entire material. Our intention is to identify and discuss different logics and rhetorical strategies expressed in the publica-tions and to analyze these in a comprehensive perspective.

Meta-analysis

During the past decade qualitative researchers have shown a new interest in exploring methods for synthesizing qualitative research findings conducted by different re-searchers, however not that many within educational research. According to Mc-Cormick, Rodney and Varcoe (2003) there are several problems in integrating indi-vidual studies with the work of other researchers. One of the most problematic as-pects is that there are lots of techniques and disparate philosophical stances of meta-analytical methods and there is no agreement of significance of many of them (ibid.). From this point of departure it is important to declare that our aim in this analysis is not to provide greater "truth" by integrating four studies in our analysis. Instead it is to reflect on the studies in new ways. Since we have access to the raw data of the four studies (we are also the original researchers of the primary research) this can result in an analysis with greater depth.

Inspired by McCormick, Rodney and Varcoes (2003) work in meta-analysis our analysis went through five steps. (1) Each researcher read all studies very carefully; (2) we identified key themes, which we juxtaposed for comparison; (3) we raised ques-tions, returning to the original data to verify, contradict, extend, or enrich interpreta-tion; (4) we synthesized our interpretations, i.e. we created an interpretation of the interpretations, a new narrative, and (5) we expressed the synthesis in text.

In order to seek for a greater abstraction in our analysis we tried to decontextualize the data by removing them from the original context where they were constructed. But at the same time we tried to stay close to the data and retain their contextual features. This might be considered as a hard way to go and therefore a limitation of the analysis (McCormick, Rodney and Varcoes 2003). However, we think it is possible to manage both, and even important to do so in order to problematize discursive tendencies in late modern society in relation to specific educational contexts.

The four studies

In the first study, *Teacher Education* (Lindgren & Ericsson, 2011; 2013a; 2013b), the empirical material consists of 19 group conversations with teachers and student teachers at 10 Swedish teacher-training programs. The conversations had their starting-point in casually structured conversations with the learning outcomes for aesthetical courses within different teacher training programs as a basis. The focus was to examine dominating discourses related to learning and teaching within the Arts in the teacher-training program.

The second study, *Music Academy* (Zimmerman Nilsson & Ericsson, 2012; 2013; Zimmerman Nilsson, 2014), is based on 45 hours of recorded lessons at a college of music, where students, with slight intellectual disabilities, during a semester participated in an introduction course in music. The course included music history, singing, eurhythmics, marimba, battery, dance, electives, study techniques, preparation for visits to musical performances and projects. The teaching activities took place at the Music Academy and at a stand-alone educational institution where students previously had taken lessons in music. The focus of this study was to examine what subject positions the students were offered and what identities were made possible during the lessons. The study also had an ambition to examine how knowledge was constructed during these activities.

In the third study, *Community School of Music and Art* (Holmberg, 2010), the empirical material consists of group conversations with 27 teachers at 6 Swedish community schools of music and art. The conversations had their starting-point in casually structured conversations where the participants were able to choose discussion topics. The focus was to examine how teachers spoke of their activities and then to describe, analyze and discuss how the teaching was manifested. Also, the study had the ambition to answer questions about how teachers constructed their teaching, and how they positioned the students and themselves.

In the fourth study, *Secondary School* (Ericsson & Lindgren, 2010; Ericsson, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2010; Ericsson & Lindgren, 2011; Lindgren & Ericsson, 2010), the empirical material consists of video documented music lessons in grade 9 at 10 schools. The lessons were recorded once a week during a semester. Focus of the study was to discuss how market aesthetics and students' everyday culture were expressed in Swedish music education.

Curriculum discourse

In all four studies a *Curriculum discourse* emerges where the content knowledge is connected to traditions, norms and values of the educational institution. Teaching with clear goals, where the teacher positions him-/herself as a communicator of the subject matter without being questioned by students to any greater extent. In other words, what shall be teached often appears to be obvious to those involved. It does not matter if it concerns a practical activity or knowledge about the arts, the content knowledge is characterized by a cultural dominance that appears as being taken for granted. None of the participants seem to think of the possibility to question it. The teacher's position is also crucial whilst a certain distance to students is expressed.

A clear concrete example of a curriculum discourse is found in the *Music Academy* study. Several lessons have a content characterized by a clear structure. The

teacher's actions are characterized by verbal and physical action. Also, musical terms such as rhythm and pulse are repeated and related to the practical exercise. The students' actions completely rely on the teacher and are restricted to the activities initiated by the guiding teacher. There is a clear goal and there are many right and wrong ways of executing the tasks. The students have restricted influence and democracy is scarce in this kind of activities. The content knowledge is predetermined and the lesson paves a straight road towards the course goals. This teaching has qualities in terms of the teacher being able to plan the subject matter without having to take the students' interest into consideration. The flaws of this method lie in student influence, which has been marginalized in order to adapt to the actions of the teacher's ideas.

What characterizes this educational practice is the distance between teacher and students. The teacher is the one who plan the lessons, even if the students partially can make their voices heard. The content of the lessons have a strong musical character. In other words there are no personal or private conversations between the actors. The teaching is distinguished as hands-on musical activities where all participants are expected to execute different exercises correctly. The teacher's actions are often of an attendant character, which creates a teacher-directed practice even to the point of details. A lot of time is spent on verbal instructions and meticulous presentation. The students are positioned as receptive apprentices whilst the teacher takes on a position as an exemplary expert. The rhetorical strategies that distinguish this reproducing musical discourse is characterized by clear instructions through well-established musical terms. The teaching has an ambition to transmit rhythmic specific knowledge from the teacher to the students according to the traditions present within the field.

In the *Community School of Music and Art* study, the *Curriculum discourse* is distinguished by musical craftsmanship, effort and a traditional instrument repertoire. The instrumental technical skill has high priority in this perspective, and the

repertoires should be challenging enough so that the students' musical development does not stagnate. Here, a knowledge sharing function is used, that emanates in passing on a canon that has been established for each instrument. Also, it is through individual skill and knowledge on the instrument that the teacher becomes an authority during teaching. The student is positioned as durable, kind and compliant since great emphasis is put on adapting to the teacher's agenda. A teacher driven practice is emerging, where the student's activities are created and restricted by the teacher's agenda.

The *Curriculum discourse* also appears in the *Community School of Music and Art* study according to teaching in elementary school. Here, the teachers position themselves as well-needed artists and experts, while constructing teachers in other subjects as strictly controlled by educational policy documents. The teachers are expressing a great sense of freedom where they can use their skills in the arts and basically implement a teaching that they consider to be the best. Here, the *Curriculum discourse* is tied to traditions in *Community School of Music and Art*, and according to the teachers it can be fully implemented.

In the *Secondary school* study the *Curriculum discourse* is present in activities strongly associated to a teaching that aligns with *learn-about* rock- and pop music in a historical and contemporary perspective. The history of rock music is presented in a chronological order with its roots in the middle of the 1950s with a focus on an Anglo American perspective. In most cases teaching consists of clarifications concerning the development of rock- and pop music and how different genres emerged, so that a family tree of pop music can be illustrated. This way of working with popular culture, indicate an objectified content knowledge where the students are to learn-about the subject. In these activities the students are not expected to practice their musical skills, but to listen and enjoying a teacher driven "music and talk show"-alike teaching. What is problematized in the Secondary school study is whether this objectified

content knowledge really could be considered as the students' popular culture since the rock music often is about 50 years old. Through this form of teaching where an objectification takes place, a distance is created to the phenomenon the teaching deals with. Within such framework it is also possible to process aspects of popular culture that, with consideration to the school's fostering obligations, would have been problematic. To treat this content, sometimes with a doubtful sexual and/or drug-liberal message, as simple facts about a music group, creates a distance and makes it a possible part of the teaching.

In several of the examined music practices in the *Secondary school* study, the making of music has occurred in small groups. The creation is made from scratch, the students write their own lyrics and music to later perform their work in front of the class or in a wider context, such as more or less internal concerts. Difficulties emerge when students' everyday culture in the shape of juvenile artistic expression is to be processed into a school context. In these kinds of projects where students have a greater influence in terms of the message that is to be communicated, it could be considered as a forum for freedom of speech. However, the working conditions for creating music in this study are characterized by a set of rules, which force the creation into a framework specific for school. Here, it is presented as a heavily controlled activity with undertones of governance, which can be tied to the *Curriculum discourse.* For example, the creating of music and lyrics has to take place in groups on scheduled hours and the songs must have a specific form with a verse, chorus and middle eight. In several practices there are rules concerning how provocative the lyrics are allowed to be, especially if they are to be performed outside of the music classroom.

Within the *Curriculum discourse* also some transformations can be detected, but it is important to point out that they still can be articulated within the logics of a curriculum discourse described above. These transformations become indicators of that the content knowledge is in a position of change. An example is dislocations of

knowledge in the *Teacher Education* study, where the skills of musical craftsmanship have a hard time facing the academization trend within the teacher training-program, witness such a tendency. This is also emerging both in the *Teacher Education* study and the *Secondary school* study, but becomes most evident in teacher education.

In the *Teacher Education* study, knowledge-production within courses are at a large extent about understanding *how* and learning *about*, which excludes being able to play or draw well. Music and art has transformed from being a practical competence into a tool for another kind of learning. By this transformation the content knowledge becomes rearticulated, but still within the logic of the *Curriculum discourse*. Practical work within drama, art and music is not arranged as arts education but as parts of subjects like *leadership, conflict management and group processes*. The teachers position themselves and their subject within the more general field of educational sciences instead of within the arts. Hereby it is also possible to create a space for the arts subjects within the teacher-training program. This might be regarded as a way to deal with an educational policy that does not express skills within the Arts subjects as a valuable part of the teacher-training program.

It seems like arts education has difficulties to legitimize its existence through practical activity and has to use other strategies where, for example, speech and texts about the arts play an essential part of the knowledge formation. A re-articulation where the arts are transformed into parts of the more general subject educational sciences becomes a successful strategy of legitimizing. Accordingly, the *Teacher Education* study also shows examples where teachers express a skepticism towards colleagues who wants to work with song, music and visual arts in a practical way. These teachers do not consider arts education to concern being able to play well or to develop skills in drawing. Here, opinions according to music and art not being about practical knowledge are presented. Instead, the purpose of the arts is considered to be a tool for other fields of knowledge.

In the *Curriculum discourse* an attitude to teaching is found where the content knowledge is of a predetermined character. Constructions of knowledge that derive from educational institutions' norms and values have a prominent position. This discourse focuses on school's traditional undertakings to convey knowledge and foster a growing generation. The rhetoric in the discourse revolves around the creation of a well-adapted citizen who submits to education authorities´ choice of knowledge.

In the four studies, a feel-good dimension emerges. It deals with content knowledge where social and personal aspects are essential. The teaching revolves around a knowledge that might not be associated with education within the Arts.

One focal point found in the *Teacher Education* study is an endeavor to make student teachers feel confident in themselves. This is conveyed as something essential to master before knowledge about the arts subjects, children and educational issues can be processed. Here, knowledge can be described as making *personal development* and a *personal journey* where students have to believe in their own abilities. It is also about student teachers having courage and confidence regarding subject knowledge and themselves. The findings within the framework of the teacher-training program indicate that many students in the program find the arts activities daunting. A reasonable question in this perspective is whether teacher education actually reaches the most appropriate students.

Also in the *Music Academy* study, *Feel-good* aspects can be identified. The findings indicate that the teaching is characterized by a lack of demanding activities. For example, the ambition for the lessons might be that the students should learn the difference between pulse and rhythm through exercises, two well-established phenomena within music. However, teachers tend to use more common expressions like 'feet' and 'clap'. It is possible that the teachers have a fear of staging a lesson where not all students are able to understand or succeed with the activities. Based on such rhetoric the simplified language could be a method to prevent exclusion of students and en-

able everyone to join the activity. If such complex expressions would be used, there would also be a risk for students' misunderstanding. By simplifying no one can possibly fail. However, this also implies a simplification where students are not given the conditions to develop their musical conceptual framework.

Since the teachers do not correct the students for making errors during the exercise, the experience can also be described as unconditional. Not to correct them could be viewed as the teachers avoiding to demonstrate how it is supposed to be performed, since that automatically tells them if they are right or wrong. Another discomfort could be that the teachers feel uncertain whether they can help students to perform the activities correctly. Thus, the teachers also express a doubt in students' abilities to manage the exercises included in the lesson. By for example articulating some of the activities as just a game instead of teaching also enables the teacher to say that everybody did really great. For the teachers, such statements become a strategy to save the chaotic teaching situation.

The reoccurring use of other terms than musical highlight the exercise's non-musical character. The rhetorical strategies used by the teachers appear to aim at achieving an including activity where social aspects are focused. It seems more important that all students are included and having fun together, than achieving good musical qualities. The teachers obtain a protective position where their ambition is to protect the students from an experience of shortcomings at any costs. Through such a construction an teaching activity can be created where social aspects like camaraderie and feeling safe are at the forefront.

In these examples from the *Teacher Education* and the *Music Academy* studies, the constructions of knowledge is about the students gaining confidence in themselves and that the conditions of teaching, above all, should create camaraderie and safety. The teacher's position is very flexible but also includes a certain fear of situations where students are being too challenged by subject specific knowledge de-

mands. This is legitimized with a rhetoric underpinned by the idea that no one can do wrong and that social abilities are superior in comparison with the subject specific ones within the Arts.

In the results of the *Community School of Music and Art* study teachers norms and visions about a possible future education are emerging. It revolves around various collaborations between different arts subjects and the students' influence on teaching. Both aspects appear to be important to the teachers. Also, it is interesting that the social function of the teaching is discussed. One idea presented by the teachers is to have the school opened up as a meeting-place and a community youth center where young people can come to socialize and have fun. The conditions to participate in the activities are created by rooms equipped to work with different arts subjects, and the teachers' availability if there is a need for help. Teachers' indicate that they have accepted their disassembled influence and are looking for solutions where students' influence and social communities are further emphasized.

By presenting ideas concerning teaching activities as the creation of a meeting-place for social interaction focusing personal developing activities and having fun, the education becomes articulated with a prominent ambition for everyone to feel good. In this perspective, the ideas of students' well-being are emphasized.

In the *Secondary School* study, several sequences that point at personal aspects as essential become visual. Presentations where the students are to present a song with their favorite artist and then reflect on their choice in front of their fellow classmates, is occurring regularly. This kind of activity might very well be considered as self-revealing although some students appear timid in regards to the presentation. But the students can also discern a certain satisfaction in having a small portion of the lesson dedicated to exposing a personal preference, have it questioned and discussed. When students have a strong preference for a specific kind of music, it also becomes an obvious element in the student's construction of identity. Also, there are other possibili-

ties for the students to present a cultural identity to indicate individual style and taste. Both teachers and students use clothing and haircuts, for example t-shirts with prints that express a preference for certain groups, artists or music genres.

The *Feel-good discourse* has a therapeutic character and includes personal development and social fostering as its knowledge mission. Since the aesthetics in society today is for the most part characterized by competition and elitism, it is interesting that the discourse is identified within education. This is expressed in different TV-shows where the participants repeatedly perform. The jury and the viewers continuously vote out the participants, until only one remains. On the contrary, the *Feel-good discourse* accepts everything that the students do and consequently the distinction between right and wrong is given a secondary priority. The relationship to content knowledge takes on a relativizing approach. The rhetoric in the discourse revolves around the individual's freedom and personal development. With a focus on the individual, education becomes a private and therapeutic project where the teacher's position is similar the one of a personal coach with a primary mission to support and avoid anything that could be experienced as unpleasant, at any costs.

Snacking on knowledge discourse

In the studies, a *Snacking on knowledge discourse* emerges, where content knowledge is portrayed as something students are able to pick and choose according to their own preferences. A trend of marketization of education is discerned, as education is legitimized by the use of exciting and entertaining methods, and as the content knowledge presented by the market is converted into an educational contents. The students' current interests according to popular culture are significant for the knowledge in this discourse. With assistance from different media, teachers are able to adapt the lesson to a particular moment in time. The teacher gives the students an opportunity to pick and choose amongst the vast supply of knowledge.

In the *Secondary School* study, there is an example where the history of music is studied with a focus on both western art music and popular music. The goal is considered to be students gaining some fundamental general knowledge. Concerning art music, there is a clearly stated ambition for the students to familiarize themselves with music that they are not exposed to on a regular basis and learning how to recognize the titles of the music pieces and the composers' names. However, in many cases the students are already familiar with these since they are fragmentarily used in commercials on TV or as theme songs and soundtracks in movies. This hybridization between art music and popular music also indicates that art music has left its place on the pedestal of high status, and is finding a way into the heart of the public. The content knowledge is not primarily about experiencing the music but rather reinforcing it into its original context. If it was an issue of experiencing music, the music pieces should have been enjoyed in their full length, but only short passages and famous parts are exposed. This results in an equally fragmentized way of listening as seen in commercials.

At some schools in the *Secondary School* study, new technology is used to choose the course content within popular culture. If there is access to the Internet in the classroom, it is possible to use the name of a song or an artist as a basis to instantly play music. The findings show that teachers also possess an ability to recognize the harmonic structures of songs after listening to it once or twice. A teaching occurs where the repertoire adapted captures the moment is made possible. Through new media the supply of music grows greater and more available and the preference to a greater extent aimed at specific songs rather than a special style of music or an artist. Another aspect to considerate is the transfer of responsibility in terms of content knowledge, where students are given the opportunity to use optional musical resources within their creative activities.

In the *Community of Music and Art* study teachers describe the current teaching conditions to differ in various ways from teaching in the past. The goal still seems to be musical craftsmanship but the way it appear seem different. The teacher's mission is to create prerequisites for learning through developing exciting teaching methods that appeal to the students. This is crucial, since the tutoring is regarded as a choice made by the students and if it does not appeal to them, they will pick another leisure time activity. Thus, the teachers are given a coaching position where they are to support the students in their different and independently chosen knowledge approaches. Here, it is the student's choice of music that takes a center stage and the teachers´ duty is to support them. In conversations between teachers they speak of demands on delivering musical experiences to the students. Since several students are described as lacking in durability and patience regarding practice, this appears to be a challenge. In several cases the solution is described as simplifying the music into something easily playable. Here, the student is positioned as strong, active and independent, with an ambition to take responsibility for his/her own learning. The teacher's mission is to be flexible towards students' ideas and work as a supporter for students' learning.

Also, the teacher can hand over the responsibility of the musical content in activities where students for example are to create music in groups and are free to choose what pieces of their musical experience they want to include. Hereby, the teachers assign the influence to the students to choose according to their own preference. As a cause of this the *Snacking on knowledge* discourse does not request teachers´ content knowledge, but opens up for students interest as a basis for knowledge.

In the *Teacher Education* study, a relative approach is found, where for example anything would be accepted as knowledge as long as the teaching is fun. With this kind of rhetoric it is possible to adopt a subject position where there are no criteria for right or wrong. The experience is subjective and the artistic work cannot be evaluated, which even legitimize teachers without good subject knowledge.

The *Snacking on knowledge* discourse includes a flexible attitude towards content knowledge included in teaching. The students step into a prominent position as their own musical advisors, with an assignment to choose what areas of knowledge they wish to include as a part of their education. According to this, knowledge is collected in a sporadic manner during the teaching, resulting in a palette of content knowledge where no one can take responsibility for the greater whole of the subject matter, or puzzle the pieces together into larger units of knowledge.

The content knowledge shows a significant influence from popular culture. The arts in Western society today are strongly influenced by the market and in combination with an increased interest in student influence it inevitably becomes a part of education. The rhetoric in this discourse revolves around market logics, where ideologies of marketization also become a foundation for teaching. Therefore, the market becomes the governing force in the choice of content knowledge within this discourse.

Challenging Discourses in Arts Education

In general, there is a good relationship between teachers and students within the framework of the logic that characterizes the *Feel-good discourse*. Previously, similar descriptions have used the term intimization to point at a trend within education that deals with the relationship between teachers and students, underpinned by an aspiration to achieve a pleasant atmosphere and few conflicts (Ziehe 2000; Ziehe and Stubenrauch 2008). A teacher position is put forward with a primary task to create close relationships with the students. However, this kind of strategy can also be expressed through teachers wearing clothing of a preference for cultural expressions that are successful amongst students. Also, this creates the intimization and erases the boundaries between teachers and students that this discourse calls for.

Another aspect important in the establishment of the Feel-good discourse could be the demands on teachers in late modernity. They are more or less forced to work with relations and motivation in order to have a chance to approach the subject (Carlgren and Marton 2005). One way of focusing on relations is to bring in concrete tools to the classroom that closely connect with pupils everyday life such as music technology. Such an approach has shown to both enhancing students' self motivated engagement in the music class (Kim 2013) and their creativity in the classroom (Watson, 2011). Also, one reason for adapting informal popular music learning practices (Green 2006) could be to strengthen relations between teacher and student by acknowledging the students presumed leisure time practice by bringing it to school. The reason for this can be explained by the demystification of the relationship between children and adults, which also affects to the relationship between teacher and student. This results in a demolition of a natural force that adults and teacher have previously been able to rest their authority upon (Ziehe 2000). The transformation of social life, which the demystification is a part of, also permeates our late modern society. Here, the change of social relations concerns a relaxation in terms of obvious and traditional ways to approach oneself and others, that in certain contexts are described by the term detraditionalization (Giddens 1996; 1997). When people have the possibility to choose how they want to be and how they are to act together with others at a greater extent, the interest for questions dealing with identity and social interactions increases. As consequence of the globalization, alternative cultural identities are made possible and available, which further suppress traditional norms and opens up boundaries regarding what should be included in social life. Increased possibilities imply more options, which could result in a greater ambivalence and anxiety amongst people. That the increasing flexibility relate to identity and relationships has consequences for activities within education may not seem strange from this perspective. Here, the arts in school are considered to involve and contribute to learning in the broadest sense, and to the pupils' social and personal growth. Also it becomes a chal-

lenge between frames and freedom (Christophersen and Ferm Thorgersen, 2015). When traditions and norms are dissolved, it affects both teachers and students, since there are no longer any obvious positions to occupy. Complex negotiations follow concerning the teachers´ choice of including or excluding popular music repertoire in the classroom caused by the tensions between popular music and formal school contexts (Kallio, 2014). The teachers' strategies in the Feel-good discourse are focused on working with students' relationships and personal development. This is considered a consequence of the uncertainty and the need that the students express within these areas. We would like to address this insecurity as a problem that our late modern society has to deal with.

What we can observe in the *Snacking on knowledge discourse i*s an approach towards students' everyday culture, which is given a non-problematized space in education. If the discourse can be regarded as to concern students strolling past display windows that offers a variety of merchandise and products where an intuitive choice is made from the available supply based on what feels suitable for the student at that moment, then the choice of content knowledge can be considered as an essential part of late modern society as well (Giddens 1997). Dilemmas in choosing teaching content (Kallio 2014) could be considered a consequence of the snacking on knowledge discourse. However, there are voices speaking of a colonization of the individual's conscience and expropriation by media (Ziehe 2000; Ziehe and Stubenrauch 2008). Since the market is also responsible of a standardization where some products are more exposed than others, the freedom of choice appears as a chimera. This occurrence appears amongst certain thinkers by the term of plugging (Burrill and Adorno 1987), which implies that we get used to certain types of music and therefore are more likely to select them. In a post-modern perspective, the approach is even further radicalized and the freedom of choice seems to be obvious since everything is, in a sense, possible (Jameson 1986), because how can one kind of knowledge define itself as

more valuable than another? From a post-modern perspective the relativization of knowledge does not appear as problematic.

Another aspect important to highlight related to the *Snacking on knowledge discourse* is the extensive freedom the students are given to contribute in the choice of knowledge content. A form of democratization is made of the teaching that could approach the ideas that are presented in the four contexts as radical aesthetics (Persson and Thavenius 2003). Through radical aesthetics, a forum for freedom of speech and a flexible knowledge formation open for negotiations is created. Similar to this, Smith (2006) and Martin (2013) argues, culture in the arts in education is a critical necessity crucial to promote cultural alternatives and to promote a political subjectivation to each child. Parallels to the descriptions of the classroom as a public space (Ziehe 2000) and as a value liberal space (Ericsson, 2002) appears as well. The focus is on what is experienced as urgent, which stirs up that emotion and affects should also be the basis for teaching.

The discourses that appear to challenge the *Curriculum discourse* at different educational institutions within arts in education can be described as a *Feel-good discourse* and a *Snacking on knowledge discourse*. Of the three discourses brought up to discussion, the *Curriculum discourse* perhaps is the most obvious, but also one which occurs in all educational practices. Possibly, the discourse in some practices can be observed as an objective discourse (Laclau and Mouffe 1985), which would imply that it is considered to be an obvious component in education. The others, *Feel Good* and *Snacking on Knowledge* are to some extent challenging contenders. Within higher education such as universities and colleges, it is the Feel Good discourse, that offers the greatest challenge. That teachers, to a high degree, are taking students well-being and personal development into consideration at the expense of other aspects appears as something worth to discuss further.

In elementary school and to some degree in community schools of music and art it is the *Snacking on knowledge discourse* which acts as the greatest challenge against the *Curriculum discourse*. Here, it seems as if teachers have to retreat in order to create space for student influence in terms of content knowledge. Also, marketization of arts in education is important to discuss further.

Altogether, what we have been able to pan out from this meta-analysis is only a segment of the challenge facing educational institutions' adherence towards canonizing knowledge shown by the *Curriculum discourse*. The enlightenment's ideas of education having an emancipatory mission combined with the modern conviction that certain knowledge has a higher value in terms of education is challenged by discourses driven by individualism and market logics respectively. The challengers are not new actors in the field, but can be assumed to have been influential during a few decades as parts of sweeping neo-liberal ideas within western society. What can be observed in this battle is not only a threat against education within the arts, but there are also good reasons to assume that these discourses create problems within different educational contexts. If that´s the case, the logics of the market and the individual's freedom could be considered to challenge education in a wider perspective as well.

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