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Editorial

Qualitative Research – Voices from Social Science Classrooms[1]

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educational ethnography, qualitative research in social science education, comparative research in social science education, political culture research, lesson study, learning study, curriculum narrative, case archive, teacher portrait.

1. Re-constructing and interpreting the space "in-between" input and output

What do you recall of your (own) biographical process of "becoming political" (Hahn 1998) and "developing citizens" (Kahne/Sporte 2008)? And which role do formal civic education lessons at school play within this process? It can be a fascinating exercise to find out about it, for instance in a teacher training seminar or in further training of teachers: Each participant chooses one specific kind of material that reminds him/her of a core experience in civic education and tells its story. Besand (http://www.jsse.org/2009/2009-2/besand-12-jahre-berufserfahrung-jsse-2-2009/pdf/Besand-JSSE-2-2009.pdf) has given a vivid example of how to use such biographical methods in teacher professionalization in this journal (see examples in figure 4 and 5, chapter 6.1). Listening to the stories emerging and getting into a discussion about them could lead directly into a process of qualitative research, of collecting narratives, observing and participating in the colleagues' teaching practice, leading biographical interviews. According to Donald Schön (1983), it could also be an element of everyday practice for the professional teacher who becomes a "reflective practitioner", if he undergoes such explorations.

If such explorative projects are done more systematically, we define this approach and the research methods applied as "qualitative" methods. It is well known that a clear-cut distinction between quantitative and qualitative is artificial because "counting" is an inherent element of quality and of observation, and interpretation can contain aspects of quantification. Thus re-constructive or interpretative research methods might be a better term. In Anglo-American methodological reflection, qualitative research is even used synonymously with ethnographic research: "Ethnography is simultaneously one of the most exciting and misunderstood research methodologies and research products within educational research. What initially appears to be a straightforward process of 'hanging around' and writing about what has been seen and heard, rapidly becomes a far more complex process." (Walford 2008; Spindler 1982; Woods 1996) Qualitative study focuses on the re-construction of micro-logical structures of teaching, instruction and learning. "The fundamental question underpinning macro level political socialization research is: how do polities transmit values, attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and behaviors to the mass public? Micro level studies ask: how and why do people become citizens?" (Owen 2008, 2)

Recent educational research seems dominated by so-called large scale assessments and international comparisons, with a quantitative research focus on learning "outcomes" and competencies. For many critics, the practical relevance of this research paradigm is at least doubtful. Furthermore, the paradigm and its implementation by corresponding policies implicate new forms of social control (Mason, Delandshere 2010). The following issue of JSSE 2010-4 will take a critical view on this worldwide "Olympics of education". Quantitative methodology and large scale assessment in combination with standardization and testing tend to concentrate on core subjects only such as Mathematics, first language and English. Quantitative data can serve to legitimise anything and everything in educational policies. They do not really help to make the job of education more transparent or simple. In what way can the data be relevant to the teachers' everyday profession? Do data "talk" to

them? Are they meaningful to teachers? Unfortunately, however, these questions remain relevant to qualitative research as well.

In any case, the space "in-between" input and output is ignored. This in-between is the site of "Bildung". This issue of JSSE hopes to set a counterpoint: It focuses on the "in-between", i.e. the domain-specific teaching and/or learning processes between input and output. It collects voices from social science classrooms. It follows an alternative strand of research, which is based on case studies and uses reconstructive and interpretative methods. In minor subjects such as civics and social science education, this approach is even the pragmatically given because research can be started with few resources only.

This type of research has a remarkable tradition. For an overview of qualitative research on social studies in the US see Stanley (1985), Armento (1986), Shaver (1991), Segall/Heilmann/Cherryholmes (2006), Levstik/Tyson (2008). Fenton presents a complete transcript of a global issue lesson (Fenton 1966). Most of the studies focus on history or geography, and only a few on civics or economic education.

The contributions in this issue lead us into classrooms in Sweden, Switzerland, Germany and the UK. All cases are related to formal education at school. We hear students' as well as teachers' voices.

2. *Voices* – Five explorative case studies

"*To be honest I have more or less stopped working with the book. They [the students] don't have to read so much. This level of abstraction is too difficult for them*". (Mark).

Mark, the social studies teacher here, observes that students face huge difficulties to benefit from written texts. Thus, he implements a new media ecology. Mark works as a social studies teacher at a Swedish upper secondary vocational school. In his case study Per-Olof Erixon (Umea) takes us into Mark's classroom and draws a teacher portrait. The study is based on semi-structured interviews with one teacher and classroom observations and provides an insight into the consequences of a shift from written to visual culture in social studies classrooms. This relation between images and learning in human development has a tradition from cave painting of stoneage man via Plato's cave parable (allegory) until previous JSSE issues (2008-4 http://www.jsse.org/2008/2008-2/contents and 2009-1 http://www.jsse.org/2009/2009-1/contents-jsse-2-2008-1-2009) discussing the link between visual and civic literacy. The case study explores what happens to educational activities at school when electronic media and pictures replace written texts. It remains to further discussion whether the hoped-for empowerment of students could in turn be a chimera. There are some indicators in this study that it might be less the students than the mass media that will be given a powerful voice in this shift. Media serve as both content and instrument in instruction. Thus, educational media can be seen as hidden and "frozen" content decisions. In a broader context, the change due to young citizens and voters using social media and emerging new forms of social participation has to be linked to civic literacy (McFarland, Reuben 2006; Bachen et al. 2008; Bennett 2008; Loader 2007; Owen et al. 2010).

"*A group is touring across the desert …*" (Teacher).

This impulse, given by a teacher in a history lesson in Switzerland, tries to reveal a learning environment in which students can follow their imagination on social life. Does the answer contribute to history, to moral, to social or to political education? (Lange 2006) For Beatrice Bürgler (Zürich)/Jan Christian Hodel (Aarau) this is a matter of "perspective". Therefore they look for "political perspectives" in the classroom. Their research derives from a region – the German-speaking part of Switzerland – in which civics (as well as economics) as a subject in its own right is scheduled for only a few hours a week, if it at all. Thus, it is important to know in what way other school subjects contribute to political education. Until the 19th century this was done to a great extent by religious education. Later, and until today, history and native language classes took over. Bürgler/Hodel use transcripts of videotaped lessons from a Swiss archive of educational video (www.unterrichtsvideos.ch). Every researcher videotaping lessons and making transcripts will soon be disillusioned: How to cope with the mass of material? How to analyze? The solution here seems pragmatic and striking: politics is defined as the way of decision making. The criterion for this is that a fact is given as open and not „closed" (i.e. already decided). This approach is connected with research on the teachers' and students' epistemologies, i.e. the ways in which knowledge is built and conceptualized (cf. for history learning Maggioni, Fox, Alexander 2010 http://www.jsse.org/2010/2010-4/pdf/Maggioni-et-al-JSSE-4-2010.pdf). It relies on a constructivist approach to learning, which underlies most contributions in this issue.

"*I think people should be able to travel freely between countries, but moving to another country permanently, needs to be watched. I think, this should not be that easy.*" (Nora)

This is Nora's, a 17 year-old student's, ambivalent feeling about mobility under European Union regulations. Andreas Eis (Frankfurt/Jena), who interviewed her, explores "Concepts and Perceptions of Democracy and Governance beyond the national State". His study deals with the question of European education in relation to education on the European Union. European citizenship identity is set "between" both local / national identities and global views, which are discussed under the label of cosmopolitanism in citizenship edu-

cation at the moment (forthcoming JSSE 2011-1 http://www.jsse.org/2011/2011-1/contents-jsse-1-2011). This position "in the middle" runs the risk of being experienced as "Europe without society". Multi-level governance in the European Union definitely challenges theory and practise of civic education. The research is based on two different methodological approaches: On the one hand, everyday ideas and interpretations of democracy and governance beyond the nation state were gathered from secondary and high school students and teachers in Germany and Great Britain in semi-standardized interviews and written surveys. On the other hand, teaching and learning strategies as well as didactic approaches of teaching citizenship were explored by the systematic evaluation of lessons on European topics. The classroom research reveals that in the civic education lessons observed, the students' concepts are seldom reflected and seldom lead to social-science-based explanatory models. Sometimes misleading concepts are even reinforced in classroom interaction instead of being clarified by the development of adequate categories and models (cp. Weisseno, Eck 2009). In this sense, political education could itself become part of a bottom-up process in constitution-making – "Thinking European(s)" (Keane 2009; Laine, Gretschel 2009).

"*I think, if we have a mayor, he mustn't decide on his own.*" (Kerstin)

Kerstin, a German student, makes that statement during a discussion in a fictitious desert mountain region far away from home. The scenario represents a "point zero" in the tradition of "island-scenarios" or "Robinsonades". After Kerstin's statement the transcript marks "chaos", i.e. what is discussed in the classroom is no longer intelligible. Andreas Petrik (Halle) combines the German tradition of defining education as "Bildung" (Wolfgang Klafki) with the Anglo-Saxon approach of linguistic analysis. He uses argumentation analysis of the recorded lesson sequences. Like Davies (2009 http://www.jsse.org/2009/2009-2/pdf/Davies-JSSE-2-2009.pdf), Petrik proposes an adaption of Stephen Toulmin's model of argumentation as a congenial method to explore interactive political learning processes: Two kinds of political awakening in the civic education classroom are distinguished by a comparative argumentation analysis of the "constitutional debates" of two "found-a-village"-projects with 8th graders. Petrik (2010 http://www.jsse.org/2010/2010-4/pdf/Petrik-JSSE-4-2010.pdf) further discusses these questions in the next issue where he develops a "Political Compass" as a core concept.

"*I am a person, but at school I have my teacher role. But you are also a person, a private person. How much can I interfere with their lives?*" (Teacher)

This is a teacher's statement within a **group discussion** Sara Irisdotter Aldenmyr (Stockholm) led in different teacher groups in compulsory schools in Sweden about ethical issues in teacher work. The author dicusses how teachers' identities and self-understandings are influenced by the marketization of society. Her discourse analysis presents three "Grande Discourses" that have been incorporated in the contexts of teaching. This means putting the question of "silent" power in teachers' work which is even more important under circumstances of educational reform and the new strategies of subjectivation (Youdell 2010). The (discoursive) power of educational language within cultural industry remains a central topic of interpretative research (Popkewitz, Brennan 2002). Citizenship education has to cope with the "tyrannies of intimacy" and the new "cultures of evidence" which make people unable to engage in collective issues and go beyond themselves. Can teachers work within the context of marketization and yet relate to it with an attitude of self-awareness and critical reflection? And how can teachers deal with both traditional teacher values and progressive, democratic values that may be in conflict with the conditions of a marketizised school system?

3. Curriculum stories as models of wisdom

In the end, even the strong thrust towards standardization and competences in recent years remains dependent on examples of good practice. According to Hess (2009, 56), good cases as "models of wisdom" allow us to learn from the possible, not only the probable. "Thick description" and reports on lessons are situated in-between construction for teaching purposes and the re-construction by interpretative research on teaching and learning. Documentation and comparison of lesson plans and their performance has long been underestimated (see Web-portals: video sequences of (social science) lessons). Research where a single given document is analyzed from multi-perspectives by different researchers seems to be bound to a national context and is known from Germany only until now: three so called "video books". A single lesson, video-taped and with full transcript, perhaps teachers' and students' stimulated recall is analyzed from different perspectives (Grammes, Gagel, Unger 1992). This could lead to a further JSSE project in intercultural and comparative citizenship research.

On the basis of such documentation, expert teachers can share their classroom experiences with their colleagues, and become better aware of the individual learning biographies of their students. Teachers learn from exchanging such experiences in communities of practice. Professional knowledge is focused on cases (models, paradigms, myths). This is the shared knowledge of four models of further training for teachers worldwide.

Models of teacher training

1. Lesson study
   (www.worldals.org, Lewis 2004 http://www.jsse.org/ 2004/2004-1/lesson-lewis.htm)
2. Lehrkunst – Best practice performance of classical curricula
   (Berg 2004 http://www.jsse.org/2004/2004-1/lehrkunst-english-berg.htm; www.lehrkunst.ch),
3. Pädagogische Lesung
   Educational lesson reading in former socialist countries in Eastern Europe is not much researched yet.
4. Reflective communities of practice
   (McLaughin, Talbert 2006)

„Curriculum stories" serve the expert teacher „to organize content in their curriculum" (Gudmundsdottir 1990). In view of this fact, the lack of attention given to systematic documentation and criticism of everyday practice so as to identify good examples is still surprising. Educational science resembles aesthetical theory without works of art. While in art (at university) a review culture of new productions is a matter of course, expert teachers tend to take their knowledge to their grave. In educational practice the art of review is needed more than ever. In order to become an expert social science educator one needs to be conscious of the traditions of one's own profession. Traditionally, teacher journals served this purpose and were an important instrument in the teachers' professionalization. Nowadays, this task has been passed on to the Internet/electronic media where assessments of quality are as yet poorly developed.

Successful teacher training needs case studies and examples. This is solidly confirmed by empirical research on teacher professionalization. According to these findings, so-called online case archives have recently been built for use in teacher training. See links for further information on websites.

"Does a teacher's political point of view influence the way s/he presents political issues and thus the pupils?"

This core question stands at the beginning of Rudolf Engelhardt's curriculum narrative (lesson report). It can be considered as a paradigm for German subject matter didactics in the field of civic education until today. Rudolf Engelhardt worked as a teacher and teacher trainer in the 1960s and 1970s in West-Germany. In Germany, the Spiegel affair (1962), which is described as the curriculum's center, marks a crucial point in the cultural development towards an open society. Horst Leps (Hamburg) comments on the curriculum narrative from today's perspective.

He contextualizes categorical conflict didactics as a paradigm of civic education in Germany. There are similar accounts in the U.K. on "controversial issues" (Hess, Avery 2008) and recently in France on "socially acute questions" (Simmoneaux, Legardez 2010 http://www.jsse.org/2010/2010-4/pdf/Simonneaux-et-al-JSSE-4-2010.pdf). Further on, Leps gives some hints as to the way such a "curriculum novel" could be used in a teacher training seminar. Curriculum narratives can bridge the gap between re-constructing research and constructive subject matter teaching and didactics.[2]

"One warm day in the spring of 2006, I visited a U.S. history class at a public charter school in a large Midwestern city ..."

This initial sentence of Diana Hess' study "Controversy in the Classroom" indicates the strong narrative element of this book, which is dealt with in the review section. Like Engelhardt, the author investigates standpoints of teachers in controversial issues. Hess tells many stories of democratic power in discussions. Her study fascinates because of the vivid descriptions of discussion cases and debates in various situations/ groups of learners. Thus, the book itself could be seen as a contribution to a case archive.

4. State of the art

The actual findings of a large scale assessment, the ICCS – International Civics and Citizenship Study http://iccs.acer.edu.au/index.php?page=about-iccs are reported by Anu Toots (Tallin). Hitherto the ICCS study was known as IEA study (International Education Achievement, Baxter 2009; critical approach Mason, Delanshere 2010). The next ICCS is scheduled to take place in 2017. Hopefully it will also include qualitative methods. A model for such combination of quantitative with qualitative methods is given by the largest national longitudinal study on citizenship education, the CELS Citizenship Education Longitudinal Study (http://www.nfer.ac.uk/research/projects/cels/) in the U.K. The CELS report includes case studies on various aspects of citizenship education in twelve schools and their surrounding communities. The CELS report leaves the last word to "those practitioners who have taken the vision and expectations for CE

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2 This series will be continued in JSSE 2011-1 with a lesson report from a socialistic democratic culture, the former GDR German Democratic Republic. The subject is "Staatsbürgerkunde". In JSSE 2011-2 ff., we hope to present lesson reports and "typical" curriculum narratives from other countries and cultures. A special issue of JSSE on this subject is considered.

[citizenship education] and attempted to embed it into the policies and practices of their schools."

Snapshots: Voices from the CELS study on Citizenship education (CE):

"'What we really need is students to see members of staff as citizenship-role models, in the same way they might see a member of the science staff as a role model for science as a subject. Someone who loves the subject, is really enthusiastic about it. [For citizenship, we would need staff to be really] enthusiastic about what being a good citizen is, enthusiastic about being involved in a multicultural society, rather than the other side of it... this fear and suspicion of different parts of the community we live in.'

Senior Manager, Queen Street Upper School

'I don't get a choice of who teaches CE. It needs to be people with and interest of citizenship or who have had experience of teaching CE before. But occasionally you get people who have gaps in their timetable and that come in not necessarily wanting to do it. It's happened in the past, but I have fought quite strongly that it shouldn't happen. It is seen as one of those subjects.'

CE Coordinator, Arcadia High School

'...we have so little time it's impossible [to follow the National Curriculum]. Sometimes we have to drop whole topic areas.'

CE Coordinator, Harcourt Street School

‚Citizenship and being a good citizen runs through the school like a stick of rock. It affects everything we do, from our teaching and learning policy to our pastoral policy.

Head teacher, Blackrock School

‚I think CE is an important subject to be taught to actually show them [the young people] that we are part of a wider society and wider world.'

Teacher King Street School"
(Keating et al. 2009, 89-90)

The research methods (Flick 1998; Barton 2006; Friebertshäuser, Langer, Prengel 2010) used in the explorative case studies presented in this issue vary from classroom observation to argumentation analysis, discourse analysis, video recording and transcript analysis, expert interviews and lesson plan analysis. The combination (triangulation) of qualitative and quantitative methods seems to be no longer in question. It may come as a surprise that this issue does not include examples of teacher-as-researcher projects (action research or "Praxisforschung", Altrichter, Posch 2007; Burton, Bartlett 2005; Clarke, Erickson 2003) and studies combined with further training of teachers and professionalization (see again the concept of lesson and learning study: www.worldals.org).

As researchers, we end most of our studies with a call for additional research (compare the ten conclu-

sions for further research which cover most aspects in the field – Hahn 2010, 17-18). Today, nobody could seriously claim any longer that there is a lack of empirical knowledge of teaching and learning processes. On the contrary! According to some critics, qualitative research does not have to present too many viable and resilient results. Moreover, the results often seem to be weak and hardly exceed everyday knowledge and assumptions. The status of a paradigmatic "normal science" (Thomas Kuhn) has not been reached yet. Qualitative research holds an explorative status with the function to generate questions and hypothesis. This is not to be sneezed at! It serves to discover problems and research questions and can contribute to casuistic and systematic comparison in international perspective.

Qualitative research in social science education shares some deficits with qualitative research in educational science in general (Henkenborg 2002):

1. A lack of continuity and coherence in research profiles as well as a lack of systematic discussion to improve the quality of research.
   Currently, an international spread of electronic publications, accessible in English, gives a push. The research is disparate and diverse, and thus without significant progress. This is due to the extremely broad definition applied to political, education/social science education, which lacks a "consistent body of subject matter, derived from academic disciplines" (Hooghoff 1989, 39).[3]
2. A lack of secondary analysis of data from previous research (replication study), reorganizing research under a special thematic focus.
   Instead we constantly redesign underlying theories and research programmes which prevents cumulative effects in gaining experience. Thus the value of selected reviews – not only of monographs but of journal articles as well – cannot be overestimated.
3. A lack of archive and documentary systems for social science education (see links: case archives in educational science).
   At the moment, there seems to be no book series dedicated to qualitative research in citizenship education. JSSE tries to fill this void by starting with Engelhardt "How to deal with party politics at school?" – a series with reports of "wisdom of practice" in subject matter didactics from different cultural traditions in Europe, and perhaps worldwide.
4. There seems to be a serious language barrier Due to the review process within most interna-

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3   In previous issues of JSSE there had been some examples of qualitative research in the field of economic education (Davies 2009). But this field could be extended.

tional journals, probably most of this research is found in local and national journals and predominantly in languages other than English. This indicates qualitative research, which emerges in smaller professional contexts, includes practitioners into the research process and reflects the results as part of the ethics of educational research. This research remains in the respective regional languages. The effort of translation into English as the language of global scientific exchange is often bound to competitive publication standards. The established peer review standards have a bias towards quantitative designs informed by educational psychologists. Why should my "private" case study be of interest to international scientific communication? But a culturally sensitive research on citizenship needs to relate to and compare local knowledge.[4]

5. Research should become teacher-action research. Here "diagnostic competence" is seen as a core competence of the professional teacher. Taking up the access via teacher-as-researchers, most of the research material given in the case studies here can become material for discussion and reflection in social studies classrooms in itself. For instance, the Toulmin schema of argumentation analysis (Petrik) or the video sequences (Bürgler/Hodel) can help to reflect on the quality and status of one's own knowledge. Statements by young Europeans considering the European Union can be used as impulses to be reflected by their classmates to develop their own judgements. Critical and reflective social science teaching constructs students as researchers and everyday sociologists! Indeed, there is a fundamental correspondence between the way in which children and others learn and the way that ethnographers go about their task. (Walford 2008) This leads to a deeper understanding of "diagnostic competence" as an element of the educational process.

6. Research always tends to focus on traditional forms of teaching – because they are such powerful. The former limitation to single 45-minutes lessons is dissolved in favour of complete teaching units and learning biographies of students over a longer period. There are first examples of critical research on the so-called new cultures of learning and "pupil-centred" methods. In some schools, the students' schedule does not include the word „lesson" at all, but it is – proudly or coyly – replaced by formats like project, workshop, atelier, laboratory, elearning etc. Research must take into account that content learning takes place in institutional contexts and is incorporated into a powerful competitive and selective system. Research must reflect on the relation of subject matter teaching and informal social and civics learning in a cross-disciplinary subject approach and within school culture (informal learning; extramural learning outside in "learning democracy" – Vinterek 2010, Willkenfeld 2009). As to the various processes of informal civic education, which are summed up as political socialization, these have to be dealt with in a further issue.[5]

7. To re-construct "the political", researchers often relate to textbook research with a focus on content analysis. But we know little of how textbooks are used by teachers and students and what is really learned from them. There are no content analysis of students notices during lessons or black board drawings used in civis.

Traditional media: Textbooks and understanding

"As the September sun beat relentlessly on the roof of the portable classroom and the air conditioner hummed diligently, twenty-one sixth grade world cultures students participated in a review session pertaining to ancient Greece. Using the computer and projector to situate students geographically, the teacher guided the students through basic definitions of Greek landforms. The teacher then turned to the topic of civilizations and asked a recall question: What were the names of the two earliest Greek civilizations? A young girl raised her hand confidently and exclaimed, "Dark Ages!" The teacher responded gently, "No-ooo. Think of civilizations. What is a civilization?" The student shot back defensively, "Well, it was up there" as she pointed vaguely to the white board.

She was correct. "Dark Ages" had been written on the board during a previous lesson, and, in a way, her answer made sense. The teacher had asked for two civilizations; "Dark Ages" consisted of two words. When the class had read about the early Greek civilizations and the Dark Ages, the words, as proper nouns, had been capitalized. Why should "Minoans and Mycenaeans" have more meaning than "Dark Ages" to students who have difficulties placing ideas in context? Researchers have noted that many readers approach a text as a vehicle for answers, not as a rhetorical and human artifact). Oftentimes, beyond general reading

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4 In Europe, the rich German tradition in qualitative research is elucidated by Henkenborg (2002, compare Reh 2009). Unfortunately, however, this research tradition is not very well linked to the international discourse as the following perspective from outside clearly shows: "By nature, subject matter didactics in Germany has always been philosophical thinking, theorising, and construction of theoretical models" (Kansanen 1995, 98). See appendix 1 for a selection from recent qualitative research from German origin which is accessible in English.

5 For the state of the art see, e.g. Pfaff (2010 -> appendix 1); Harris, Wyn, Younes (2010); Gimpel et al. (2003) for youth participation; for new forms of social participation McFarland, Reuben (2006).

difficulties in decoding and fluency, struggling readers lack an epistemology of text.
Brown, Sarah Drake; Swope, John (2010) Using Image Analysis to Build Reading Comprehension. In: Canadian Social Studies, No. 1 (without pagination)

8. In sum, already Palonsky (1987, cf. Palonsky 1986) has discussed the problem that pleading for ethnographic lesson research is much more prominent than given research projects of what anthropologists call "thick description" (Clifford Geertz) of cases and cultural contexts. This may be due to the enormous amount of time (which cannot be delegated) that has to be spent on research, which is not beneficial to an academic career.

Key elements of ethnographic research applied to the study of education contexts:

"• focus on the study of cultural formation and maintenance;
• use of multiple methods and thus the generation of rich and diverse forms of data;
• direct involvement and long-term engagement of the researcher(s);
• recognition that the researcher is the main research instrument;
• high status given to the accounts of participants' perspectives and understandings;
• engagement in a spiral of data collection, hypothesis building and theory testing—leading to further data collection; and
• focus on a particular case in depth, but providing the basis for theoretical generalisation."
(Troman et al., 2006; cp. Carspecken 1996, Hammersley 2007, Hunersdorf 2008)

Of course, longitudinal studies, long term participant observation and a meaningful research on effects of teaching and instruction remains a challenging task, which can be done in research teams only. As qualitative research projects are often a task for individual doctoral dissertation projects (rarely embedded in graduate doctoral programs) a careful research counselling is needed. In contrast to nowadays' practice, qualitative research should not be a job for the novice researcher "bowling alone" but for the experienced senior in a team!

5. Inter-cultural comparative research designs

In her overview of comparative civic education worldwide Hahn (2010, 5) observes "over the past decade as researchers from al parts of the globe are conducting empirical studies that use a wide variety of methods. Clearly, the field of comparative and international civic education has gone global." Within the studies identified there are only a few smaller case studies

called qualitative and "ethnographic": Peck (2009), Levinson (2007), Fairbrother (2008), Shirazi (2009). In accordance with the process of globalization, further research should focus on inter-cultural analyses of teaching styles, epistemologies ("philosophy" of the school subject) and learners' biographies. The comparative study of Schiffauer et al. (2002) are still a shining example in this field:[6]

Werner Schiffauer; Gerd Baumann; Riva Kastoryano; Steven Vertovec, eds.: Civil-Enculturation, Nation-State, School and Ethnic Difference in four European Countries. Oxford, New York: Berghahn)

"*What I liked most about our discussion was, that we didn't know, what the result may be. It was a surprise. That's the way, discussions should be in reality.*"
(Teacher from Rotterdam/Netherlands, p. 240)

It is an excitingly intercultural research project: For one year, four social science researchers spend time at school in the 9th and 10th grade in order to do research in the field. The schools are situated in the centres of Berlin, London, Rotterdam, and Paris.

Their research is based on a combination of methods, such as participative observations, analysis of curricula and textbooks, single and group interviews. The results – limited to observations on Turkish teenagers – are consolidated to dense and very readable reports and portraits of schools. In order to have an intensive and international exchange of the observations, a team of two researchers stays at one school.

There are a lot of fascinating observations to point out: the descriptions of how each school seems to be situated differently in the specific urban area, when you get closer to these every morning (p. 23-36). Or, which taxonomies of cultural differences can be observed on the school's playgrounds and in the secretaries (p. 67-100). Moreover, in terms of the textbooks on history, the way a concept of a "nation" is constructed methodologically, shows the way forward to refer to the use of these books in classroom discourse. As far as educational policy is concerned, the observations on and the lively scenes regarding religion and multilingual reality at schools are vital to it.

In comparison to Paris' Lycée, at the school in Berlin the concept of cultural differences is regarded as legitimate concerning awareness and interpretation. In particular, uttering of the other cultures were not valued in Berlin – which is close to the example of Paris –, whereas pointedly serenity can be observed in Rotterdam, or an affirmative atmosphere in London. "The other's cultures are odd" (p. 96); therefore, the high proportion of foreign pupils is regarded as

6   There are a few explorative start ups, like Nonnenmacher et al. (2008) comparing lessons on migration in Italy, France, UK and Germany; or Schelle (forthcoming: 2011; 2012).

problematic. At the same time, there is a double-bind, because the fault of German self-assertion must not be repeated in the group of foreigners. Due to this ambivalence, sensible and pedagogical professional work cannot be done.

The chapter about "argumentative strategies" describes the instructor–lead lesson by scenes and vignettes and aims at knowledge-based teaching of how to set standards in grading (Berlin). At a school in Rotterdam, researchers find a form of "open" discussion, still keeping the topic in mind, in which the teacher has more a role of a mediator than a judge.

The authors ask themselves self-critically, what are the reasons for the German school to be rated more poorly than the others? Does the German school-system not take into account the realities of a multi-ethnic present and future? The study is a pioneering basic text to connect school research, political socialization, and intercultural-explained citizenship education – highly recommendable for reading! Furthermore, the study can be used for discussion in teacher training seminars.

For example, the concepts of democracy are culturally different as political culture research informs. Democracy can either be considered as more conflict orientated (concurrent democracy) or more harmony orientated (concordant democracy). Thus, the related styles of public communication of politics, of boarders between the public and the private, of formal and informal speech are inter-culturally different (Forum: Qualitative Research (2009-1 http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/issue/view/30[7]). This influences the ways of communication and the culture of teaching and learning. For example, one could question if the Toulmin format of argumentation used by Petrik in this issue represents an universal epistemology. For an outline of a research design compare Hahn's (1998) vision of a comparative video study which to realize would need a team effort in research. Social science education could profit from a "big" subject here, the field of the subject matter "teaching mathematics" where the TIMMS video study prepared the ground.

TIMMS Videostudy

The TIMSS Videostudy differentiates ideal-typical mathematic learning cultures and teaching styles comparing 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, 86 ff.).

However, cultural comparison of classroom teaching styles and learning has a lot of methodological obstacles to overcome (see Lopez-Real 2004 within the paradigm of phenomenological educational learning study developed by the school of Ference Marton). A future research task will be the Chinese learning culture in civic and moral education. Concerning maths education, the Chinese concept first has been widely misunderstood as deficient rote learning ("The Chinese learner"). It is now seen as a different cultural form of gaining deep understanding ("The Chinese

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7 Hiller 2009 for example uses the critical incident method. This qualitative research method could be very interesting for qualitative research in citizenship education.

learner revisited"). This research task applies to Arabic and Islamic teaching and learning styles as well. Here the westernized misconception might be that it is bound to rigorous textual understanding which is anti-hermeneutic and in contradiction to an open democratic discussion culture (Wulf et al. 2010).

6. References

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Appendix 1
Selection from recent qualitative research from German origin which is accessible in English
Thematic connections to citizenship issues and informal political socialization are marked in bold:

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