

Education for deliberative democracy

Theoretical assumptions and classroom practices

Martin Samuelsson

Thesis for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD)
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Scientific environment

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Abstract

It is often said that education is closely linked with democracy. This may refer to different things, however. It may refer to the idea that the educational system should be consistent with democratic values, for instance equal access. It may also refer to classroom practices that allow students to express their opinions and be at least partially in control of their school life. A third interpretation is as a preparation for future democratic participation. This involves teaching students common knowledge along with more specific democratic skills and values. This notion is often referred to as ‘education for democracy’, and this is the topic of the present dissertation. Here, *education for deliberative democracy* is investigated in a qualitative and explorative manner. The aim is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the specific knowledge, skills, and values that future citizens should acquire to be prepared to participate in deliberative democracy, and to identify the pedagogical practices that should be applied to achieve this.

I investigated education for deliberative democracy in different phases, each phase corresponding with a different research focus. In the ‘pre-phase’, I addressed how scholars of political philosophy conceptualize deliberative democracy. According to the ideal of deliberative democracy, citizens and their representatives should justify their positions through public reasoning, in which they seek mutually justifiable reasons for the laws they impose on one another. It is not majority rule per se that justifies political decision but the reason-giving process that precedes voting, where citizens weigh arguments and alternatives against each other and strive toward mutual agreement.

In ‘Phase 1 – Literature review’ I investigated how scholars of education describe and define the project ‘education for deliberative democracy’. What are the skills and values they advocate? Do these coincide with what scholars of political philosophy argue for? Furthermore, do they present ideas concerning how an education for deliberative democracy should be implemented? Two findings are particularly interesting. First, there is widespread agreement in the field about how future citizens

should learn deliberative skills and values – through participation in democratic deliberations. Second, the field contains a gap. Articles arguing for deliberative democracy as an educational aim on the one hand, and articles investigating pedagogical practices on the other, are often far removed from one another. The problem lies mainly at the pedagogical end of the spectrum, where articles investigating pedagogical practices often fail to ground their studies in the political definition of deliberative democracy. This causes them to lose their immediate relevance to questions related to education for deliberative democracy. Thus, when the argument is made that deliberation as a pedagogical method fosters certain skills and values, the question that remains to be answered is what makes these relevant for deliberative democracy (article 1).

In ‘Phase 2 – Empirical study’, I conducted a short-term ethnographic study. I found that many classroom discussions appear to be examples of democratic deliberations, but when scrutinized, they are found to lack one or more crucial features. In these cases, they often include either a reason-giving process and a reflective process or a search for a conclusion, but usually not all three simultaneously. However, at other times, they may include all three aspects and qualify as democratic deliberations. In this regard, the *type* of question discussed is important because different types of questions are associated with different types of discussions. Discussions including reason-giving and reflection, but lacking a search for a conclusion, are structured around open questions, whereas discussions including a search for conclusion but lacking reason-giving and reflection are structured around closed questions. Discussions including all three aspects, however, are structured around questions with a ‘suitable’ balance between openness and closeness. Based on this, a practical implication is articulated: in order to steer classroom discussions in the direction of democratic deliberations, teachers should pose questions open enough to give students the possibility to disagree on the matter while at the same time closed enough to give them the opportunity to reach a collective conclusion (article 2). Furthermore, I found that consensus as a criterion for classroom discussions can be problematic, according to teachers experienced in conducting classroom discussions. It can alter the pattern of

communication in undesirable ways and cause emotional strain in students. However, by defining consensus as a regulative aim and a multifaceted concept with different meanings, I argue that many different types of agreements and disagreements can coexist and that it should be possible to retain consensus as an ideal in classroom deliberations without necessarily creating the negative side effects declared by the teachers (article 3).

In the ‘concluding phase’, I formulated my version of an education for deliberative democracy. Grounded in the political understanding of deliberative democracy, I argue that an education for deliberative democracy should focus on teaching future citizens how to give each other reasons for the positions they hold, how to weigh different arguments and alternatives against each reason offered, and how to strive for mutually acceptable decisions on how to act. Furthermore, I argue that they should learn this by practicing democratic deliberations (in the classroom). In this regard, the teacher’s task is to moderate the classroom discussion, to reflect on a number of contextual factors, and to steer the exchange of ideas in the direction of democratic deliberations. This will give students the opportunity to practice giving reasons, reflecting over others’ statements, and striving for collective conclusions. This formulation can be regarded as a minimalistic model of an education for deliberative democracy. There are arguably other skills and values that are also important for deliberative participation. However, in order for such skills and values to be relevant in a deliberative sense, they need to be firmly connected to the core activity of deliberative participation. I therefore argue that even though this formulation is a minimalistic one, it is the necessary starting point for an education for deliberative democracy.

List of publications

Article 1

Samuelsson, M., & Bøyum, S. (2015). Education for deliberative democracy: Mapping the field. *Utbildning och Demokrati*, 24(1), 75–94.

Article 2

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ENCLOSED

Article 1: Education for deliberative democracy: Mapping the field

Article 2: Education for deliberative democracy: A typology of classroom discussions

Article 3: Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus

APPENDICES (in Norwegian and Swedish)

Appendix 1 – Formal approval from the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD)

Appendix 2 – Information letter and informed consent

Appendix 3 – Interview guide

Appendix 4 – Observation guide

Appendix 5 – Extract from data analysis

1. Introduction

The term democracy means ‘rule of the people’. It refers to a form of governance in which ‘the people’ make the decisions regarding their shared society (Cohen, 1971). Democracy is an ideal that can be traced throughout the history of Western societies but perhaps is most notably found in the historic periods of the Enlightenment and ancient Greece. To further demonstrate the central role of democracy in our Western civilization, a number of our most famous philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato, Rousseau, Kant, Mill, and Dewey, to name only a few, all spent portions of their academic careers discussing democracy. During the 20th century, a worldwide consensus has been reached, establishing democracy as the preferred form of governance, and nowadays, when talking about the level of development of a country, democracy is frequently used as a point of reference.

During the latter half of the 20th century, however, a growing dissatisfaction emerged. Scholars within the field of political philosophy began to criticize contemporary views of democracy, along with modern democratic practices, for failing to account for the original meaning of democracy. There is something wrong with democracy when it is viewed mainly as an arena where fixed preferences compete against each other and when democratic participation is defined largely by the practice of voting, they argued. Instead, public deliberations should be placed at the heart of democracy, a reason-giving process in which citizens, along with their representatives, weigh different arguments and alternatives against each other. This will make citizens more actively involved in the governing of their own society, pluralism and moral disagreements will be more seriously addressed, and the legitimacy of democratic decisions will be enhanced (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; Chambers, 2003; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004; Held, 2006; Dryzek, 2010; Chappell, 2012). This conception of democracy became known as *deliberative democracy*, and during the 1990s, it became so popular within academic circles that there was talk of a deliberative turn in democratic theory.

It is often said that education is closely connected to democracy. Democratic education, however, may refer to different things. It may refer to the idea that the

educational system should be consistent with democratic values, that everyone should have access to it, and that everyone, including representatives, parents, and citizens, should be allowed to influence its direction. It can also refer to day-to-day classroom practice, allowing students to ‘be heard’, to express their opinions, and to be at least partially in control of their everyday school life. This interpretation is closely linked to the children’s convention as formulated by the UN and UNICEF¹. A third interpretation of democratic education is as a preparation for future democratic participation. This involves teaching students common knowledge and facts about the world along with more specific democratic skills and values. This interpretation is often referred to as *education for democracy* and it is from this perspective that the present dissertation takes its point of departure. As expressed by Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson (2004, p. 35), a democracy cannot thrive without a well-educated citizenry. This is especially true in the case of deliberative democracy since asking citizens to participate in public deliberations and to provide reasons for their opinions while at the same time reflect over the arguments made by others arguably demands a lot of the citizenry. Critics have even gone as far as to claim that deliberative democracy is a utopian project that is impossible to implement in the real world due to the shortcomings in ordinary citizens’ deliberative skills. However, the fact that such doubt exists only shows the importance of accompanying deliberative democracy with an *education for deliberative democracy*, an education that teaches the future generation how to participate in public democratic deliberations.

1.1 Aims and research questions

In this dissertation, I take a closer look at the concept of education for deliberative democracy. The overall aim of this project is to formulate a comprehensive understanding of such an education, from the aspect of its key focal points to the aspect of how it should be implemented. This aim is captured in the project’s overarching research question:

¹ For more, see Lansdown (2011):

https://www.unicef.org/adolescence/files/Every_Childs_Right_to_be_Heard.pdf

To prepare the next generation of citizens for deliberative democratic participation, what kind of knowledge, skills, and values do they have to acquire, and, what kind of pedagogical practices should be applied to achieve this?

In order to capture and describe education for deliberative democracy comprehensively, I explore it from different angles. First, I look at the theoretical foundation of deliberative democracy as a democratic theory formulated by scholars of political philosophy. What constitutes deliberative democracy, its form of democratic participation, and what are the skills and values necessary for deliberative democratic participation? Second, I investigate educational assumptions made by scholars within the educational field. What skills and values do they argue for as vital for deliberative democratic participation and do these coincide with the skills and values expressed by scholars of political philosophy? Furthermore, do they have ideas about how an education for deliberative democracy should be structured, grounded in either empirical research or theoretical reasoning? For example, are there specific pedagogical practices that prove themselves favorable for the development of deliberative skills and values? Finally, I use self-collected empirical data to scrutinize, discuss, nuance, problematize, and further develop theoretical ideas and pedagogical practices related to an education for deliberative democracy. I believe that by examining education for deliberative democracy from these different angles, I create a comprehensive understanding of what it is and what it could be and should be.

1.2 Research design and structure of the dissertation

The research project that this dissertation is built upon was carried out in different phases. Each phase corresponds with a different underlying research focus. The results from these phases are distributed throughout different parts of the dissertation, in the synopsis and in the three research articles respectively. A visualization of this design is presented below.

Table 1: Overview of the research project 'Education for deliberative democracy'

	Data and method	Aim and main research question	Article and title
Pre-phase	Traditional review of the field of political philosophy	<i>What are the main ideas of deliberative democracy according to the field of political philosophy?</i>	Synopsis
Phase 1 Literature review	Conceptual literature review of the field of education for deliberative democracy	<i>What are the main ideas, assumptions, and controversies in the field of education for deliberative democracy, and what are the shortages and challenges?</i>	Paper 1. Education for deliberative democracy: mapping the field
Phase 2 Empirical study	Qualitative observations of classroom discussions	<i>What does a democratic deliberation taking place inside a classroom look like, and what distinguishes it from other similar types of discussions?</i>	Paper 2. Education for deliberative democracy: a typology of classroom discussions
	Qualitative interviews with theoretical argumentations	<i>How can deliberative democracy's aim of consensus be formulated in order to adress the criticism it has been facing within the educational field?</i>	Paper 3. Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus
Concluding phase		<i>In order to prepare the next generation of citizens for deliberative democratic participation, what kind of knowledge, skills, and values do they have to acquire, and, what kind of pedagogical practices should be applied in order to achive this?</i>	Synopsis

In the ‘pre-phase’, I addressed the question of how scholars within the field of political philosophy conceptualize deliberative democracy and deliberative democratic participation. I conducted a traditional (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006), or classical (Krumsvik, 2014), literature review where I started by reading one of the most influential and comprehensive formulations of deliberative democracy, Gutmann and Thompson’s Democracy and Disagreement (1996), and then used the ‘reference method’ to guide the process forward. Gradually, this shaped my understanding of deliberative democracy, which served as a foundation for the whole research project. The explicit description of this understanding is found in the second chapter of the synopsis and in the early parts of each article.

During ‘Phase one – Literature review’, I turned to the question of how educational scholars understand and describe the project frequently referred to as education for deliberative democracy. I conducted a conceptual and critical review, aiming at identifying the main ideas and assumptions in the field, along with the main shortcomings and challenges (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). I also incorporated aspects

more commonly found in a systematic approach, such as a structured and focused search process, but carried out the analysis and the composition of the results in a less formalized way. A more detailed description of the research process is found in the third chapter of the synopsis. The results are presented and discussed in the article "*Education for deliberative democracy: Mapping the field*". For the project as such, two findings are particularly important. First, the field of education for deliberative democracy is founded on the assumption that the skills and values necessary for deliberative democratic participation are learned through participation in democratic deliberations. Second, the field contains a gap in which articles treating deliberation as a political concept on the one hand, and articles treating it as a pedagogical concept on the other, talk past each other. The problem lies mainly at the pedagogical end of the spectrum, where articles investigating deliberative educative practices are frequently too far removed from the political understanding of deliberative democracy. The result is that the pedagogical research within the field fails to be of immediate relevance to an education for deliberative democracy.

The aim in 'Phase 2 – Empirical study' was to bridge the gap identified in the previous phase, and to produce empirical research that explicitly connects findings of a pedagogical nature to the theory of deliberative democracy. I conducted a short-term ethnographic study (Pink & Morgan, 2013) that included four teachers, classroom observations, interviews, and informal conversations. I used Tomas Englund's (2006) notion of deliberative communication as a theoretical framework. According to this, deliberative communication is communication in which (a) different views confront one another and arguments for them are articulated, (b) there is tolerance and respect for the concrete other and participants listen to each other's arguments, and (c) there are elements of collective will-formation, a desire to reach consensus or a temporary agreement. Furthermore, (d) authorities and traditional views can be challenged and there are opportunities to challenge one's own tradition, and (e) there is a scope for students to deliberate without teacher control (p. 512). This framework directed my focus during observations, it was an explicit topic of conversation during teacher

interviews, and I used it actively during the analytical processes. I describe this research process in detail in the fourth chapter of the synopsis.

The findings from phase 2 are presented in two of the articles. In the article “*Education for deliberative democracy: A typology of classroom discussion*”, I develop an empirically based typology of classroom discussions and use it to make salient the character of a democratic deliberation and what such a discussion might look like in a classroom. Additionally, I highlight the difference between democratic deliberations and other closely related types of discussions that appear to be examples of democratic deliberations but that lack one or more crucial features. Finally, I offer practical suggestions concerning how one can turn classroom discussions into democratic deliberations, and thus, how one can construct the desired deliberative learning situation in which students are given the opportunity to practice democratic deliberation. In the article “*Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus*”, I defend consensus against the criticism that it is unfit as an aim in democratic education and unfit as a criterion for classroom discussions. Based upon Dryzek and Niemeyer’s (2010) typology of consensus and the idea that multifaceted conceptualization is what allows many different types of agreements and disagreements to coexist, I argue that consensus is unproblematic both as an aim in democratic education and as a criterion for classroom discussions. I also present a practical implication for how the idea of ‘meta-consensus’ can allow us to reinterpret competitive and conflictual classroom discussions as deliberative learning situations in which students are allowed to practice turning them into productive democratic deliberations.

In the final phase of the project, the ‘Concluding phase’, I revisited the overarching research question of the project concerning what kind of knowledge, skills, and values an education for deliberative democracy should focus on and what kind of pedagogical practices it should be based upon. This discussion is found in the final chapter of the synopsis, where I present and articulate my version of an education for deliberative democracy – a minimalistic model of an education for deliberative democracy

centered on reason-giving, listening, and reflection. I also discuss limitations and possible shortcomings of this version.

1.3 Methodological foundation

The project is methodologically grounded in a constructivist research paradigm. This means that (social) phenomena are regarded as human constructions that are unique, specific, complex, and dynamic and should be studied as such, because breaking them down into smaller parts would mean losing the whole they represent (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009). This description suits the phenomenon of education for deliberative democracy. The latter is structured around abstract human ideas such how to organize society (democratic theory) and how to prepare future citizens for participation in that society (pedagogical ideas). Furthermore, it is a young phenomenon in a theoretical sense. The development of deliberative democracy as a democratic theory started during the 1980s, which means that education for deliberative democracy as a theoretical concept has to be younger than that. Studying this phenomenon in a broad and explorative manner therefore makes sense, because the groundwork of systemizing and organizing the thoughts represented within it has presumably not yet been conducted.

While the aim of a constructivist approach is to study phenomena as complex wholes, qualitative research methods provide the means to do so. These methods allow researchers to ground projects in a broad and general wondering about a phenomenon and investigate them without breaking up their complexity or distorting their larger meaning, instead of having to rely on predefined hypotheses or clearly articulated research questions (Hatch, 2002; Brinkmann, 2012). They are characterized by a systematic search for meaning but the driving force is found in ‘abductive breakdowns’, because, it is from the moment when things fail to make sense, such as the theory used or the realities investigated, that the desire to search for meaning emerges (Brinkmann, 2012; Tavory & Timmermans, 2014). For example, when I discovered that consensus was criticized as an aim in democratic education and as a criterion for classroom discussions, I started to critically examine the formulation I

used. To restore the meaning of this criterion, I turned to an alternative notion of consensus and incorporated it into the formulation I used, and thus, created a new more nuanced version of the consensus criterion. Understanding a qualitative project in this manner, however, means that it will never be finished in an absolute sense because it will always be possible to dig deeper into the material and generate new occurrences of abductive breakdown. Thus, at one point, one simply has to decide that the understanding presented represents a meaningful description of the phenomenon (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014).

Furthermore, understanding qualitative research in this way has implications for the knowledge produced – it needs to be considered as a product of construction rather than one of absolute ‘truth’ (Hatch, 2002), and the researcher needs to be regarded as a producer of that knowledge (Brinkmann, 2012). For instance, if I had decided to use another theoretical understanding of deliberative democracy, the investigation of an education for deliberative democracy would have been different. A different focus would have emerged, different breakdowns would have occurred, different research questions would have been articulated, and in the end, a different picture of the phenomenon of education for deliberative democracy would have been painted. Thus, the choices and decisions I made throughout the project shaped the knowledge product I produced. However, in a constructivist perspective, this does not necessarily pose a problem, because the point is not (necessarily) to prove one version of the phenomenon as more correct than another but rather to present a credible, reasonable, and trustworthy understanding of it – a version that makes sense, is reasonable, and useful. In other terms, a version that is valid and reliable in a qualitative sense (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In order to do this, qualitative researchers need to describe what they have done and why, to provide users with enough insight into the research process to evaluate the choices made and conclusions reached in order to determine whether they are credible, reasonable, and trustworthy or not (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Brinkmann, 2013). I will elaborate further on my own process of knowledge construction along with other methodological considerations throughout the synopsis.

In the spirit of constructivism, my aim in this dissertation is therefore to present a formulation of education for deliberative democracy that is credible, reasonable, and trustworthy. Furthermore, I hope that scholars, researchers, and classroom practitioners find it useful in some way, as a theoretical model or as a practical tool. However, I also invite the readers of this dissertation to critically examine and problematize the formulation of education for deliberative democracy that I put forth so as to continue the development of theoretical assumptions and classroom practices for an education for deliberative democracy.

2. The theory of deliberative democracy

The overarching research aim of this dissertation is to investigate an education for deliberative democracy. However, in order to investigate an education for something, one first has to understand what that ‘something’ is. Naturally, my first aim was therefore to investigate, understand, and describe what deliberative democracy and deliberative democratic participation is. I attended to these issues in the ‘pre-phase’ by conducting a traditional literature review (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). A traditional review, contrary to a systematic review, is a review that does not make use of systematic methods of inquiry but still aims at providing an overview of a field, concept, or phenomenon. I used the ‘reference method’ to guide my process. I started reading Gutmann and Thompson’s *Democracy and Disagreement* (1996), one of the most comprehensive formulations of deliberative democracy to date, and then followed the references that appeared to be significant and essential. By repeatedly applying this method, I gradually increased my understanding of deliberative democracy.

In this chapter, I account for this understanding. First, I present the origin of deliberative democracy along with a short description of its most central characteristics. Second, I account for two different interpretations of deliberative democracy, the European view and the North American view. In this section, I account for their respective theoretical foundation, their different focus, and their different ideas of how to implement deliberative processes in existing societies. However, I also account for agreements that exist across the two branches. Third, I present some of the criticisms that theories of deliberative democracy have been facing and argue that the controversies underscore the need to accompany deliberative democracy with an education for deliberative democracy.

2.1 The origin and essentials of deliberative democracy

The deliberative conception of democracy developed during the latter period of the 20th century. The term was first used by Joseph Bessette in 1980 (Held, 2006, p. 232)

and refers to a view of democracy that places public deliberations at the center of democratic theory and democratic participation, a reason-giving process in which citizens, along with their representatives, weigh different arguments and alternatives against each other in order to weigh alternative courses of action. The word deliberate is derived from the Latin word *libra* and means ‘to weigh’ (Parker, 2003, p. 80).

During the 1980s and 1990s, scholars of political philosophy began to criticize contemporary liberal views of democracy along with modern democratic practices. There is something wrong with democracy when it is mainly understood as an arena where fixed preferences compete against each other via mechanisms of aggregation, and when democratic participation is primarily defined by the practice of voting followed by majority rule (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; Chambers, 2003; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004; Held, 2006; Dryzek, 2010; Chappell, 2012). They argued that by limiting democratic participation to the process of selecting representatives, the people is not involved enough in the governing of their own society. Furthermore, it contributes toward making the people uniformed and biased (Held, 2006; Fishkin, 2009; Chappell, 2012). They also argued that this view fails to sufficiently address the complex issues of pluralism, moral disagreement, and democratic legitimacy (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; Bohman, 1998; Habermas, 1998; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004; Dryzek, 2010; Chappell, 2012). In relation to democratic legitimacy, majority rule is insufficient because decisions based upon it can only be said to represent the will of the ‘winners’ and not the will of the people (Bohman, 1998; Habermas, 1998; Eriksen & Weigård, 2003). Regarding moral disagreement, the practice of voting is inadequate because to only allow the people to select among pre-established alternatives means that the many different viewpoints, arguments, and positions existing in society are not taken into consideration (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; 2004). Contrary to the voting-centered view of democracy, they argued for public deliberations to be placed at the center of democratic theory and democratic practice. By focusing on the communicative process of reason-giving that precedes voting, a period during which different positions and alternatives are thoroughly discussed, citizens can be more actively involved in the governing of their own

society, pluralism and moral disagreements can be more seriously addressed, and the legitimacy of democratic decisions can be enhanced.

By the mid-1990s, deliberative democracy had become so influential that there was talk of a deliberative turn in democratic theory (Dryzek, 2002; 2010). Some of the most comprehensive formulations were articulated during this period, by scholars such as John Dryzek (*Discursive Democracy*), Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson (*Democracy and Disagreement*), and Jürgen Habermas (*Between Facts and Norms*). Since then, the interest in deliberative democracy has only continued to increase with a constant growth in publications devoted to discussing the theoretical foundation of it, empirical studies investigating practical implications of it, and actual political practices demonstrating it. With such an expansion, however, comes the end of comprehensive models and the deliberative conception is nowadays mostly developed by smaller contributions from a growing number of scholars and researchers (Dryzek, 2010).

2.2 Two branches of deliberative democracy

Deliberative democracy developed in two different branches, the European branch and the North American branch, and can broadly be divided accordingly. The European view is referred to as such based upon the centrality of Jürgen Habermas' theory, but is also represented by scholars located outside of Europe, such as John Dryzek. The North American view is based upon John Rawls' political liberalism and notion of justice, and is represented by scholars such as Amy Gutmann, Dennis Thompson, James Fishkin, and Joshua Cohen. Both approaches see public deliberation as the solution to modern-day democratic challenges but have different starting points for arriving at this solution (Chappell, 2012). They also have slightly different approaches and focuses to the study and development of the theory of deliberative democracy.

2.2.1 Habermas (the European view)

Habermas is one of the most influential theorists of deliberative democracy. However, he seldom uses the phrase deliberative democracy but instead tends to use terms such as deliberative politics, procedural mode of democracy, and discursive democracy. His formulation of deliberative democracy is based upon two (historic) democratic models, the liberal model and the republican model.

The liberal model of democracy

The liberal model of democracy stems from the Enlightenment (Held, 2006). It grew out of the process in which the people challenged the position and power of the church on one side, and of absolute monarchies on the other, and demanded freedom of choice and the opportunity to pursue life as they saw fit according to their own preferences in religious, economic, and political affairs. For the liberal model, however, the question has always been how to reconcile the centrality of individual rights with the concept of the state as a structure of power. How can individuals pursuing their own private interest reach collective decisions about their shared society? Many historic philosophers, such as Thomas Hobbs, John Locke, and John Stuart Mill, contributed in the construction of a solution to this problem. They argued that authority was to be given by the people to the government for pursuing the interest of the governed. The people should select their own governors who in turn should represent the people and their interests, and if these interests were not met, the people should then dispose of the government in question and select a new one. This paved the way for modern liberalism and representative government. As modern societies continued to develop, so did the formalization and institutionalization of liberal and representative governing, both in theory and in practice (Held, 2006). Today, the liberal model is often considered the prototype of democracy.

According to Habermas (1996), however, the liberal interpretation contains some problematic aspects. First, the view of the democratic process, as a power struggle between different competing private interests where citizens select the representative(s) that best agrees with and are willing to fight for the values they hold,

is problematic. It means that the state only will be a compromise between different competing interests, and not a constituted whole. Furthermore, the centrality of individual rights and the focus of allowing citizens to live life as they see fit without interference, creates a distance between the private and the public that is too great. According to Habermas (1996), this makes the liberal model struggle with the essential democratic aspect of how to construct a common will for the society as a whole. In order to address these problems, he turns to the republican model.

The republican model of democracy

The republican model is the classic model of democracy that flourished in ancient Greece and that is found in the writings of Plato and Aristotle (Eriksen & Weigård, 2003; Held, 2006). It had a revival during the 11th century in Italy and during the Renaissance and is found in the works of Rousseau. However, it was later replaced by the liberal model. In this view, the democratic process is defined as a process of public discourses or deliberations in which every citizen has an equal right to speak their mind, where the decisions made derive from the better argument, and where the aim is to formulate a collective will based on the common good (Held, 2006).

According to Habermas (1996), this model preserves the original meaning of democracy in terms of the institutionalization of a public use of reasons exercised by autonomous citizens striving to construct a collective will. However, it is not without problems, especially not in relation to modern pluralistic societies. In ancient Greece, the deliberations and the reasons used were grounded in an already established cultural consensus. The creation of the collective will was therefore rather unproblematic because citizens largely shared the same values. Today, however, this is less likely, which means that getting people to agree with one another is more challenging. Furthermore, in the Greek communities, the private sphere and the state were closely connected, and private interests were often the same as public interests. Thus, while Habermas (1996) argues that the liberal model presents a view of the private and the public as too far apart, he also argues that the republican model presents a view of them as too close together. In his formulation of deliberative democracy, Habermas

(1996; 1998) strives to find a suitable balance between the positive aspects and the problematic features of these two classical models. In many ways, his conception of deliberative democracy can therefore be understood as an integration of the liberal model and the republican model.

Deliberative democracy

When formulating his notion of deliberative democracy, Habermas (1996) takes the republican view of the democratic process as a process of public deliberation in which autonomous citizens use reasons to construct a collective will, and locates it at the center of his model. By this, he presents a more harmonious view of democracy than what the liberal model offers.

However, as shown, the republican model contains some problematic features in relation to modern pluralistic societies. First, public deliberations and public decisions cannot be grounded in an already established cultural consensus. In order to solve this problem, Habermas turns to the idea of rationality, although not the positivistic interpretation of rationality of the early and mid-20th century as the product of certain scientific methods, but as the product of a subject-to-subject communicative process (Rehg, 1998; Eriksen & Weigård, 2003). Habermas refers to this as *communicative rationality*. A communicative rationality is reached when people make true statements, have sincere intentions, and where the impact implied by the statement is right in regard to the normative context in question (Eriksen & Weigård, 2003, p. 36; Chappell, 2012, p. 54). This allows people to create their own rationality and to reach a higher level of inter-subjectivity that spans across cultural differences, and it allows them to fabricate their own institutions, norms, and laws (Habermas, 1998; Eriksen & Weigård, 2003). Furthermore, by ensuring that everyone capable of making a relevant contribution is included in the process, that everyone has an equal voice and is allowed to speak freely without internal or external constraint, and that the process is free of coherence (*the ideal speech situation*) (Chappell, 2012, p. 27), the norms and laws constructed can be regarded as reasonable, fair, and just (Habermas, 1996).

A second problematic aspect of the republican model is that direct participation in public deliberations seems unrealistic today. Modern societies are too large to permit everyone to participate directly in the making of every decision. Furthermore, it seems unreasonable to demand that citizens devote such large portion of their everyday life to democratic participation. Therefore, parliament and representation are necessary parts of modern democracies (Habermas, 1998). However, in order to preserve the democratic ideal of an active public realm of discussions, Habermas (1998) locates democratic deliberations within the public realm as well as in parliament. What he envisions is a weaker, or wilder, public realm of discussions generating the (many) more or less rational public opinion(s). The deliberations in the wild public are accompanied with lower criteria in relation to the ideal speech situation, in order to include more citizens, voices, arguments, and positions. Will-formation, on the other hand, is located within parliament. These deliberations are coupled with stricter criteria, which makes them less “wild” and places them closer to the ideal speech situation. Thus, in Habermas’ version of deliberative democracy, public deliberations serve as opinion-formation while deliberations inside parliament are associated with decision-making. It is crucial, however, that the representatives pay close attention to the people’s opinions, consider them and explicitly respond to them when making their decisions (Habermas, 1998).

Habermas’ model of deliberative democracy, based on the placement of deliberations in the public realm as well as in parliament, has become known as the ‘two-track model’. Furthermore, the focus on the development of a complex and abstract social theory is an important characteristic of the Habermasian model and for the European view that stands in contrast to the North American approach.

2.2.2 The North American view

Contrary to Habermas and other scholars representing the European view, scholars within the North American school of thought have been less interested in developing elaborate social theories of deliberative democracy. Instead, they have studied micro-level examples of real democratic deliberations and from this, developed ‘mid-level’

theories of deliberative democracy. Furthermore, the theoretical foundation they use differs from that of Habermas. Whereas Habermas draws on two traditional models of democracy, the liberal model and the republican model, scholars of the North American view draw on the work of John Rawls and his notion of justice.

Rawls asked the central democratic question of how a deeply pluralistic society can reach stable agreements to collective problems (Chappell, 2012). How can citizens who follow different doctrines of beliefs and have different conceptions of the good, make collective decisions in public matters? His answer to this question was that they should strive for an overlapping consensus. An overlapping consensus is reached when citizens can accept a norm, policy, or law based on their own competing, yet reasonable, comprehensive doctrine. In order to do so, however, citizens need to strive to use arguments that are acceptable to other reasonable citizens regardless of which doctrine they follow. Thus, they should strive to transform their private moral positions into public values that can withstand the test of scrutiny. Rawls argued that this process should take place in the public space (Chappell, 2012).

Gutmann and Thompson

Two of the most influential scholars representing the North American view are Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson. They continue where Rawls left off and in two highly influential works, 'Democracy and disagreement' and 'Why deliberative democracy', they argue that the best way to handle moral disagreements is by discussing them in public. Furthermore, as they provide arguments for why this is so, they simultaneously articulate criteria for how such deliberations should unfold.

There are different types of moral disagreements in modern societies (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996). One type is moral disagreement over scarce resources. Some resources only exist in limited amounts, which means that not everyone can have an equal share or not have as much as they want. Another source of moral disagreement is disagreement over incompatible values. A common example is the case of abortion where one side argues for the right of the woman while the other argues for the right of

the unborn child. Both positions are morally justifiable but they cannot coexist (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996). Gutmann and Thompson's (1996; 2004) position is that all types of moral disagreements should be addressed through public deliberations, in which citizens and their representatives provide reasons and arguments for the different positions they hold and courses of action they suggest. This will solve some moral disagreements simply by virtue of providing for a better-informed public. Yet, even in cases where deliberations do not solve the moral conflict, the process is still valuable, because, it helps clarify what the disagreement is about and it helps citizens recognize the moral position and merit of the opponent's claim. In the end, this will increase the likelihood that the decision made will be accepted, even when it is the product of a vote. Based on arguments such as these, Gutmann and Thompson (1996; 2004) argue that public deliberations is the best way to deal with moral disagreements in pluralistic societies.

In order to live up to their potential, however, public deliberations need to be framed with certain criteria. According to Gutmann and Thompson (1996), both procedural criteria (criteria for the deliberative process) and substantial criteria (restrictions on moral positions) are needed. The most fundamental procedural criterion is the reason-giving requirement. Citizens and their representatives should provide each other with reasons for why they prefer one course of action to another. However, it is also vital that they strive to formulate these preferences in terms that are acceptable to other reasonable citizens, and that they are willing to listen to arguments presented by other similarly public oriented citizens. Gutmann & Thompson (1996; 2004) refers to this as the *principle of reciprocity*. Moreover, the reasons they use should be accessible to all, comprehensible and publicly stated, and address everyone affected by the decision. Finally, Gutmann and Thompson (2004) also stipulate that decisions made should be binding for some time, yet always open to re-investigation in the future. The purpose of these procedural criteria is to make sure that the deliberative process unfolds as desired.

Substantial criteria, on the other hand, refers to restrictions on moral positions and democratic decisions. According to Gutmann and Thompson (1996), citizens have some predefined rights that are off limits to the democratic process, rights that cannot be taken away from them even through a democratic process. In 'Democracy and disagreement', they define three such rights: basic liberty, basic opportunity, and fair opportunity. Citizens should strive to make decisions (and use arguments) without violating each other's possibility to live life as they see fit or depriving each other of the opportunity to do so. Furthermore, if a decision made has this effect, that decision should be considered unjust and illegitimate. The inclusion of substantial principles distinguishes their notion of deliberative democracy from Habermas', which relies solely on procedural principles. In Habermas' (1996; 1998) version, there are no epistemic restrictions on arguments, positions, or decisions. Instead, as long as the flow of relevant information has not been obscured, the decisions made should be regarded as reasonable and legitimate (Habermas, 1996). As long as the process follows the procedural guidelines, the decisions made are just and legitimate, in a democratic sense (Habermas, 1998). Gutmann and Thompson (1996) is critical of this aspect.

Jürgen Habermas writes that "all contents, no matter how fundamental the action norm involved may be, must be made to depend on real discourses"... Habermas seems to imply that a provisionally justifiable resolution of moral conflicts in politics depends solely on satisfying the conditions of deliberation...

Habermas and other discourse theorists try to avoid this implication by, in effect, building guarantees of basic liberty and opportunity into the ideal conditions of deliberation (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996, p. 17).

The problem Gutmann and Thompson (1996) have with a purely procedural formulation of deliberative democracy is that it does not provide citizens with enough protection in terms of their basic individual rights. In their view, these rights are above the democratic process and to guarantee that they are not violated, we need substantial principles. This emphasis on individual values make Gutmann and Thompson's (1996; 2004) formulation of deliberative democracy more liberal than Habermas', which in turn is more procedural.

The focus on mid-level deliberations

A second difference between the North American view and the European view is their respective focus. While scholars representing the European view have focused on the development of a grand social theory, scholars of the North American view have focused on the development of a ‘mid-level’ theory (Chappell, 2012).

Scholars of the North American view have developed their conceptions of deliberative democracy by investigating real life examples of mid-level public deliberations such as the activity of civic associations, official town meetings, court deliberations, and statements from country leaders and the debates they generate. They embrace virtually any setting in which citizens come together on a regular basis to reach collective decisions about political issues – governmental as well as nongovernmental institutions. For instance, Gutmann and Thompson (1996; 2004) use a vast selection of real-life examples, spanning from cases such as court decisions to allow states to ban abortions in the third trimester to reason-given processes in which President Bush argued for an invasion of Iraq.

Fishkin (2009), however, has gone one step further compared to Gutmann and Thompson and instead of analyzing only real life examples, he has created his own, known as *deliberative polls*. A deliberative poll is a real life gathering of a random sample of citizens with the aim of identifying how the public would think about an issue if they had the time and opportunity to think about it. The randomly selected sample is first asked a number of questions on the issue at hand. Their answer constitutes their original opinion and the baseline poll. They are then invited to a gathering over a weekend to discuss the issue further. A moderator leads the deliberations, experts on the topic are present, and a carefully balanced briefing material is handed out. The deliberations are also televised. Following the deliberations, the sample is once again asked to answer the original poll of questions. The change in opinion is thought to represent the sample’s considered opinion. Furthermore, Fishkin (2009) argues that because the sample is randomly selected and representative of the population as a whole, one can assume that the opinions are also

representative. Thus, the sample's considered opinion is also the public's considered opinion.

According to Fishkin (2009), the problem of modern democracy is that the public is not participating actively enough and that it is uninformed. This makes for a public with little or biased information that can easily be manipulated. Instead, he wants the public to participate more actively, evaluate competing arguments, and in the end cast reflected and considered votes. According to Fishkin (2009), deliberative polls is a way to achieve all of this. It provides citizens with an opportunity to be selected for active participation, and because the process is televised, it gives the general public the opportunity to become better informed. Finally, it gives the governors of society an insight into the public's opinion. Deliberative polls is a real-life example of how one can implement processes of deliberations in a real-life democracy. This leads us to the next topic: deliberative democracy and the representative system.

2.2.3 Deliberative democracy and the representative system

Theories of deliberative democracy have been criticized for being unrealistic and difficult to implement in real democratic societies. The size of modern societies makes it virtually impossible for every citizen to receive an equal amount of time to speak their mind concerning every decision that has to be made. Furthermore, not all problems are solved with deliberation and they can (often) lead to standoffs. Most scholars of deliberative democracy therefore argue that the representative system, along with practices of voting, are necessary in some way. The three formulations of deliberative democracy presented here, the two North American ones and Habermas', have slightly different approaches to how deliberative processes should be implemented in existing democracies and of what their main function should be.

Fishkin (2009) argues that deliberative processes (deliberative polls) should fill two functions. First, they should make citizens better informed, less easily manipulated, and more capable of casting reflected and considered votes. Second, they should provide the governors of society with a representative picture of the public's opinion

on specific issues. Gutmann and Thompson (1996; 2004), on the other hand, have been less clear on this matter. In their work, they provide detailed analysis of a vast selection of real-life deliberative examples such as small mini-publics where the participants make actual decisions, mid-level mini-publics that serve as opinion-formation, and deliberations on a national level where state leaders address the larger public. This has helped them to develop specific criteria for public deliberations. However, it has also made them slightly inexplicit regarding the role and function of such deliberations. Should they generate public opinions or should they serve as decision-making procedures? Should they primarily take place in smaller mini-public samples or should they be used for interactions on a larger national level, and if so, should every citizen serve as one voice or should groups speak on behalf of individuals? It has even made Fishkin (2009) criticize one of their examples, the case of an Oregon health care consultation, because it lacks a random representative sample. Now, there are different functions for public deliberations and if the aim is not to arrive at a representative opinion, having a representative sample is perhaps not as crucial as Fishkin argues. However, the mere fact that Gutmann and Thompson are the object of such criticism is an indicator that their position regarding the role and function of public deliberations in representative governing is a little too vague.

In Habermas' (1998) two-track model, deliberations are vital in both decision-making and in opinion-formation. Deliberations in the wild public, among citizens, are supposed to generate the many more or less rational public opinions. Deliberations inside parliament among representatives, on the other hand, are linked with decision making. At first glance, having public deliberations serve as opinion formation seems similar to what Fishkin proposes. However, Habermas (1998) is critical of the North American focus on 'mini-publics'. In his view, this focus can disconnect deliberative democracy from the bigger ideal of having an active public generating opinions and creating issues, contrary to solely having citizens state their opinion on pre-determined issues. Habermas (1998) envisions a public that, on its own, organizes deliberations anywhere possible, that is engaged in public matters, and that influences the government and the direction of their society. On the opposite side of the spectrum,

scholars representing the mid-level approach have criticized Habermas and the ‘macro-level approach’ for failing to provide enough guidelines for how and where the public deliberations are supposed to unfold. According to them, this makes their approach more realizable. At the same time though, they have also started to gradually incorporate macro-level elements in their formulations of deliberative democracy. For instances, in the book “*Deliberative systems*”, John Parkinson and Jane Mansbridge (2012) argue in favor of smaller instances of deliberative forums, along with non-deliberative processes, being conceived of as clusters of deliberative processes in a larger deliberative system. For example, groups working with an agenda trying to promote their own interest might at first glance fall short of the criterion of being deliberative in a discussion, but placed within a larger picture, they can act as a statement or as an argument input in a larger public debate.

2.2.4 Overarching agreements across the two branches

Despite the differences between the two branches such as their different theoretical foundation and focus, the disagreement on whether to include substantial criteria or not, and the different ideas of how to (best) implement deliberative processes in the representative system, there are vital aspects scholars within the both camps largely agree upon.

First, they all agree that public deliberations should be placed at the heart of democracy and that they are the solution to many challenges of modern-day democracies. Voting per se does not disappear, but is given a more complex and richer interpretation. Voting-centered views see democracy as an arena where fixed preferences compete via fair mechanisms of aggregation, while scholars of deliberative democracy focus on the communicative process that precedes voting (Chambers, 2003). Furthermore, they agree that public deliberations provide a more legitimate way to deal with questions of moral disagreements and pluralism, and that they increase the legitimacy of democratic decisions. It is not majority rule per se that gives democracy its legitimacy but the process of giving defensible reasons, explanations, and accounts for public decisions (Held, 2006). Based upon arguments

such as these, scholars of deliberative democracy therefore claim that public deliberations increase the overall *quality* of democracy (Held, 2006).

Second, they also largely agree on the core procedural features of a public deliberation. Habermas argues that it is important that everyone who is able to make a relevant contribution be included and have an equal voice, that everyone can speak freely and honestly without internal or external deception or constraint, and that everyone should use arguments relevant to the issue at hand (Chappell, 2012; Eriksen & Weigård, 2003). According to Gutmann and Thompson (1996; 2004), participants should strive to formulate their preferences in terms that are acceptable to other reasonable citizens while they simultaneously strive to listen to the arguments presented by other similarly oriented individuals. Finally, Fishkin (2009) claims that it is essential that reasonable, accurate, and relevant information is included, that arguments offered by one perspective are answered after consideration of the other perspective, and that the arguments and reasons presented are considered on their merit regardless of which participant offers them. Thus, according to scholars of both branches, a public deliberation is a discussion in which everybody can participate equally, where different points of view are presented and supported with reasons that everyone can understand and accept, and where they all listen to each other and reflect upon the different arguments put forth.

Third, scholars of both branches also agree to a high extent on the main purpose of public deliberations: they should be directed towards some form of collective will-formation, or opinion-formation related to a will-formation. For a public deliberation to be pertinent in the sense of “relevant to deliberative democracy”, it has to involve a strive towards some sort of solution to a common problem (Habermas, 1998; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). This is the political aspect of a public deliberation, that the participants are in some way trying to reach an agreement to act upon, because, a discussion could be deliberative without being connected to democracy. In a philosophical deliberation, for instance, participants use arguments and reasons in a similar way to try to understand and define a concept, but they are not trying to reach a

collective decision to act upon. As shown above, however, there are disagreements on whether public deliberations among citizens should be connected to actual processes of decision-making. For example, both Habermas (1998) and Fishkin (2009) mainly argue that public deliberations are opinion-formation and the actual process of decision-making is located elsewhere. Furthermore, taking into account Parkinson and Mansbridge's (2012) perspective, a process that does not meet the high standards of a democratic deliberation could still be considered relevant to deliberative democracy on a larger scale. Yet, if we look at the ultimate prototype of a democratic deliberation, scholars within both branches argue that this includes striving towards collective will-formation in some sense.

2.3 Criticism of deliberative democracy

In the final section of this chapter, I account for two types of criticism of deliberative democracy, one claiming that it is flawed as a theory of democracy and another, claiming that it is utopian and, if not impossible, at least very difficult to implement in a real democratic society.

Claimers of the first type can choose either to do as Iris Marion Young (2000) does and reformulate the theory of deliberative democracy to counteract for the flaws identified, or do as Chantal Mouffe (2000) does and argue against it altogether. According to Young (1996; 2000), many formulations of deliberative democracy include structural inequalities. The type of communication advocated favors certain types of citizens, particularly white men with higher education, and disfavors others, particularly women and minorities. Young (2000) therefore argues that deliberative democracy needs to operate with other, or additional, criteria in order to counter the unjust conditions that exist in real-life democracies. For instance, she (1996) suggests that communication types such as *greeting* and *rhetoric* should be included. If citizens are to resolve conflicts together, they need to establish a relationship of trust and respect, and greetings is a way to do this, especially when citizens differ in many ways. Rhetoric is used to broaden the idea of what rational speech is and of what type of communication is relevant in a deliberative sense. For example in Young's (1996)

view, many formulations of deliberative democracy operate with a clear distinction between emotions and rational thinking. However, just because something is said with anger, hurt or passion does not make it any less true, she argues. By focusing on aspects such as these, Young (1996; 2000) argues that more types of reasons, perspectives, and in the end, citizens could be included in public deliberations, and thus, that the structural inequalities existing in theories of deliberative democracy could be weakened.

According to Mouffe (1999; 2000), the main problem with deliberative democracy is not just that it excludes certain types of people from democratic participation, but that its focus on rational arguments and agreements (consensus) suppress any real possibility for disagreement. By this, the most fundamental and essential aspect of democracy – disagreement and confrontation – is left out of the equation, she argues. Furthermore, by leaving out the opportunity for confrontation and dissensus, deliberative democracy favors those in power, disfavors marginalized people, and conceals informal oppression. Mouffe therefore claims that deliberative democracy fails to address pluralism sufficiently. In order for a democratic theory to take pluralism seriously, she (2000) argues that the idea of a rational consensus needs to be abandoned along with the idea of the public sphere as a zone stripped of power relations. Instead of striving for consensus in public communication, she maintains, people should strive to

...construct the “them” in such a way that it is no longer perceived as an enemy to be destroyed, but an “adversary”, i.e. somebody whose ideas we combat but whose right to defend those ideas we do not put into question. This is the real meaning of liberal democratic tolerance... (Mouffe, 2000, p. 15).

In Mouffe’s view, the very nature of politics is conflictual and it should not be regarded in any other way. Now, there might be some truth to the point made by Mouffe, but as I claim (grounded in Dryzek and Niemeyer’s (2010) argumentation) in “*Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus*”, there has to be more to democracy than purely processes of disagreement, confrontation, and disruption. After all, a central task for democratic societies is to find collective

solutions to common problems. Herein lies one of the greatest weaknesses in Mouffe's (1999; 2000) theory: it does not really provide any standards or procedures for how democratic decisions are to be made. Dryzek and Niemeyer (2010) point this out.

...to agonists we say this: if you do not like the standards we have proposed, tell us what you will accept, and exactly how they differ from those of deliberative democracy. And if you refuse to specify any standards at all, and celebrate only disruption, then accept your diminished relevance to core questions of democratic theory and practice (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2010, p. 113).

The second type of criticism directed towards theories of deliberative democracy is of a more empirical nature: deliberative democracy, although a nice ideal, is utopian and difficult to implement in a real society. One such criticism, the one claiming that modern societies are too large for every citizen to receive an equal amount of time to speak their mind in regard to every decision that has to be made, has already been accounted for above with the reference to the representative system. However, claimers of the second type of criticism also argue that ordinary citizens lack the willingness and capability to participate reflectively. Based upon empirical studies, they argue that theories of deliberative democracy ask too much of ordinary citizens in a cognitive sense (Chappell, 2012). In real-life, people tend to engage in deliberations with people of the same opinions rather than people with different opinions (Sunstein, 2000). Such deliberations usually lead to a reinforcement of each individual's initial opinion, based either on a desire to maintain a reputation within the group or on acquiring additional arguments for the initial position. Furthermore, it also makes the group as a whole develop an even more extreme version of that opinion (Sunstein, 2000). Empirical data such as this do not support the promises made by deliberative democracy but rather suggests that ordinary citizens are swayed by things other than reasons, are driven by self-interest, and are reluctant to change their minds.

Furthermore, groups do not seem to form opinions or make decisions based upon reflective reasoning but are instead plagued by phenomena such as groupthink, peer pressure, and conformity (Chappell, 2012). In response to this criticism, Fishkin (2009) argues that deliberative polls weigh up for many of these flaws, because they are based on a randomly selected sample of citizens, are led by a moderator, and

includes experts and a carefully balanced briefing material. However, not all public deliberations can receive the amount of external control that deliberative polls do.

Above, I claimed that there are two ways to address the fact that deliberative procedures do not live up to their promises; one can either redefine the outer boundaries of deliberative communication (as Young does) or present an alternative theory of democracy (as Mouffe does). Additionally, there is a third way. If citizens are incapable of participating in public deliberations in the desired way, one could try to teach them, and this is the problem with the empirically based criticism of deliberative democracy, it is grounded in a static view of people as being unable to learn. Instead, I argue that just because someone is unable to do something does not mean that the individual is incapable of learning how to do it. For example, if one conducted studies with the aim of determining whether humans can swim, the result would probably be very different if one used a sample that has been taught how to swim in comparison with one that has not. The same can be said about deliberative democratic participation. If one teaches (future) citizens' skills and values that are relevant for participation in public deliberation, the likelihood of them being able to participate would increase. The second type of criticism presented here really highlights the need to accompany deliberative democracy with an education for deliberative democracy. If one aims at developing more deliberative practices in exciting democracies, one should also focus on teaching future citizens how to participate within them.

3. Investigating an education for deliberative democracy – ‘Phase 1 – Literature review’

Having established an understanding of deliberative democracy as a democratic theory, my next aim was to investigate an education for deliberative democracy. I started this investigation in ‘Phase 1 – Literature review’, by conducting a conceptual and critical literature review to identify how educational scholars describe and define the project ‘education for deliberative democracy’. What skills and values do they argue for as vital for deliberative democratic participation and do these coincide with the skills and values expressed by scholars of political philosophy? Furthermore, do they have ideas about how an education for deliberative democracy should be structured grounded in either empirical research or theoretical reasoning?

In this chapter, I account for ‘Phase 1 – Literature review’. I begin by describing the concept of a conceptual and critical literature review. I then describe my process of working with the literature, including the process of searching the databases and article selection, the process of analysis, and the construction of a meaningful whole. Following this is a short account of the results and description of how they gave the next phase, ‘Phase 2 – Empirical study’, its direction and focus. Finally, I conduct a short discussion of the research process of the literature review.

3.1 A conceptual and critical literature review

A general aim of a literature review is to provide a researcher, a research project, or a research field with important information about what has been done and what needs to be done (Boote & Beile, 2005; Maxwell, 2006; Boote & Beile, 2006). The review I conducted in Phase 1 is most accurately described as a *conceptual* and *critical* literature review. I aimed at synthesizing the knowledge within the field of education for deliberative democracy in a less formalized way, in order to provide a general map of its main ideas, assumptions, shortages, and challenges (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). Thus, I never aimed to accumulate all the results within the field, nor did I attempt to conduct meta-analysis of them, as is common in a more systematic approach

(Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). However, I incorporated ideas more common in a systematic approach, such as a semi-structured and focused search process, which makes this review more structured and systematic in comparison with the traditional review of the 'pre-phase'.

3.2 Conducting the review

My work with the literature can be divided into three separate yet overlapping stages: searching the database(s) and article selection, process of analysis, and the organization of ideas. A visual overview of this process is presented below.

Table 2: Overview of 'Phase 1 - Literature review'

	Stage 1 Early winter/spring 2013	Stage 2 Summer/fall 2013	Stage 3 Fall/late winter 2013
Phase 1 Literature review	Searching the database (ERIC) and article selection: (1200 abstracts to 99 articles to 67 articles)	Qualitative analysis with a conceptual and critical focus	Organizing the ideas and writing the first draft of paper 1: <i>Education for deliberative democracy: mapping the field</i>

3.2.1 Stage 1: Searching the database(s) and article selection

In January of 2013, I started searching the databases ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center), JSTOR (Journal Storage), and Google Scholar. The aim of these searches was to get an initial sense of the field (rapid review) (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). I found that JSTOR and Google Scholar were unsuccessful in detecting additional articles of interest compared to ERIC. I therefore decided to solely rely on ERIC. There is of course, the possibility that there are articles of relevance not detected by ERIC but it is the most comprehensive database available to educational researchers. One can therefore argue that searches made within it yield a sufficiently comprehensive selection of articles to satisfy the aim of a conceptual review. I started conducting the searches in ERIC in February. I employed a semi-structured process of trial and error, where I used numerous combinations of words and phrases I thought could identify articles of relevance. After a short while, however, I decided to set the word *deliberati** as a necessary criterion and combined it with other potentially

relevant words such as education, school, democra*, classroom, dialogue, and discussion. This gave me 1200 peer-reviewed articles, all of which had deliberati* in either the abstract or the title, or as a keyword, and seemed pertinent to the review. A screenshot of this is presented below.

Figure 1: Screenshot of searches conducted in ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center)

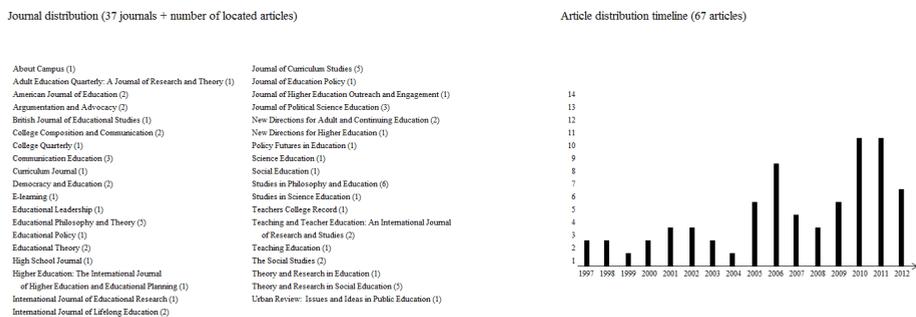
Select Terms	Search	Database	Results	Save Search	
<input type="checkbox"/>	#1	kw: Deliberati* and kw: Education and pr: Yes	ERIC	594	SAVE
<input type="checkbox"/>	#2	kw: Deliberati* and kw: School and pr: Yes	ERIC	185	SAVE
<input type="checkbox"/>	#3	kw: Deliberati* and kw: Democra* and pr: Yes	ERIC	187	SAVE
<input type="checkbox"/>	#4	kw: Deliberati* and kw: Classroom* and pr: Yes	ERIC	91	SAVE
<input type="checkbox"/>	#5	kw: Deliberati* and kw: Dialogue* and pr: Yes	ERIC	55	SAVE
<input type="checkbox"/>	#6	kw: Deliberati* and kw: Discussion* and pr: Yes	ERIC	88	SAVE

If you have saved searches that you want to display, please [login to My Account](#)

Next, I wanted to reduce the number of articles to a more manageable amount. I read all abstracts numerous times. In this process, I used deliberati* and democra* as criteria for inclusion and exclusion. However, not in the same manner as I used deliberati* in the search process, where I used the word itself as the necessary criterion. This time, I used them in the form of concepts. First, I focused on whether the abstracts used deliberati* in the correct sense relative to democracy. What this means is that I included abstracts that used words such as public discourse, public reasoning, citizenship, political participation, and so on, even if they lacked the word democra*, because, I interpreted such words as closely related to (deliberative) democracy. At the same time, I excluded abstracts that used deliberation synonymously with a dialogue or discussion connected to the development of students' reflective capabilities, if they lacked an explicit connection to democracy. Second, I focused on whether or not the abstracts addressed the project of an education for deliberative democracy, as I understood it (as an education preparing future citizens for future deliberative participation). This prompted me to exclude a number of abstracts that focused on the question of how to use deliberative practices in the governing of schools. By reading all the abstracts using these criteria, I narrowed down the number of articles from 1200 to 99. I then went on to read the full remaining

99 articles using the same criteria as described above, which allowed me to further reduce the number of articles from 99 to 67. Thus, the final number of articles selected for the review was 67, all explicitly addressing an education for democracy with deliberation as a central aspect. As shown below in figure 2, most of them were published during the past decade, which indicates that the field is a relatively young field in an academic sense. Furthermore, the articles were spread out over a large number of journals, which demonstrates the need for a comprehensive map of the field².

Figure 2: Article distribution (67 articles)



3.2.2 Stage 2: Process of analysis

Having identified the articles to include in the review, my next objective was to analyze them and to look for systematic patterns among them (Hatch, 2002). When it comes to qualitative research, it is often argued that the process of analysis starts as soon as one starts collecting data, because, one immediately tries to understand and systematize the material one is working with (Hatch, 2002; Silverman, 2014; Tavory & Timmermans, 2014). While this is true, I conducted the more explicit analysis in three different readings.

² The title of each included article is found in the reference list of the article “*Education for deliberative democracy: Mapping the field*”, where they are marked with an asterisk.

The first reading was an explorative reading where I focused on finding the overall meaning of each article. I wanted to get an initial sense of what the articles were saying and to see if there were any immediate rough categories in which I could place the articles. I read all 67 articles from start to finish and wrote a short summary (half a page) of each one. I found that there were different approaches within the field. Some articles approached the question of an education for deliberative democracy from a theoretical and philosophical position where they argued either for or against deliberative democracy as the aim of democratic education (30 articles). Other articles approached it from an empirical standpoint where they used either qualitative methods to investigate deliberative educative practices (24 articles), or quantitative methods to determine the effect of such practices (13). However, beyond this I struggled to create any meaningful categories.

For the second reading, I therefore altered my approach. This time, instead of trying to find the overall meaning of each article, I tried to identify smaller discourses within each article. I uploaded every article into the software Nvivo. Nvivo, among other things, allows you to highlight passages of text and organize them in 'nodes'. Thus, passages one thinks represents the same discourse, theme, position, and so on, can be grouped together in the software. I read the articles electronically, highlighted the passages I thought might represent different discourses, and organized them in nodes. However, I (once again) struggled to organize the material in a meaningful way. Whereas I managed after the first reading to create only three categories, I had the opposite problem this time: I created too many discourses. Before having read all 67 articles, I had generated 19 themes and discourses as divergent as form of governance versus way-of-life, deliberation as an aim in education, deliberation versus other forms of communication, the role of the teacher, where should educative deliberations appear, and teacher perceptions. I therefore withdrew from this approach before having read all the articles this way.

Qualitative researchers often experience breakdowns in understanding. There are times when the data simply fails to make sense (Brinkmann, 2012; Tavory & Timmermans,

2014). At this point in the review process, I had encountered such a breakdown. The articles seemed to address the same project (education for democracy with deliberation as a key aspect) but at the same time appeared too divergent to be organized in a meaningful way. I started questioning the process of article selection. Was the criterion I used not accurate enough? In trying to make sense of the ‘failed’ attempts at organizing the literature, I started glancing at the short summaries I wrote during the first reading. I noticed that most included references to specific skills and values (to be learned). Furthermore, many also included references to pedagogical assumptions for how these skills and values were to be learned. Thus, in one way or another, most articles seemed to address one, or both, of the two questions: ‘what should be learned’ and ‘how should it be learned’. This became my focus for the third reading – to look for answers to these two questions. I read every article and summary with the question ‘what should be learned’ in mind, highlighting the passages of interest with a highlighter marker in a paper copy of each article and summary (instead of using Nvivo), and then followed the same procedure with the question ‘how should it be learned’. This resulted in a vast amount of qualitative data (highlighted passages) saying something about which skills and values scholars within the field emphasized as necessary for deliberative democratic participation, and which pedagogical assumptions they made concerning the development of them.

3.2.3 Stage 3: Organizing the ideas and creating a meaningful whole

The final stage was to organize the analyzed data into a meaningful whole (Hatch, 2002). What did the field of education for deliberative democracy say about what skills and values to teach future deliberative citizens, and what did it say about how such an education should be carried out? In this process, I physically placed all articles in the three rough categories I identified during the first reading: theoretical and philosophical argumentations for (or against) deliberative democracy (30 articles), qualitative investigations of deliberative educational practices (24 articles), and quantitative studies exploring the effect of such practices (13 articles).

I started with the articles in the theoretical and philosophical category. These articles primarily concerned the question ‘what should be learned’. They frequently emphasized skills such as reasoning skills, critical thinking skills, and the ability to listen to others as important, as well as values such as tolerance and respect. There were two different ways of talking about them. One group of articles (16) talked about them as skills and values to be used in political decision-making, while the other (14) talked about them in a broader sense, as a way for fellow citizens to treat each other at all times. From this, I claimed that there were two different conceptions of deliberative democracy present within the literature, one seeing it as a *political* ideal and one as a *way of life*. In order to decide in which category to place each article, I used the most typical example of each conception as a prototype and assessed the other articles against it. Of course, not every article suits these conceptions equally well but to a greater or lesser degree, they all fit one or the other. Furthermore, had there been articles not suited for either one, I would have considered creating additional conceptions.

I then moved on to the articles in the second and third rough category – the pedagogical categories. Among them, there was an overwhelming pedagogical concordance on the question ‘how should it be learned’: the skills and values necessary for deliberative democratic participation were assumed (best) learned through participation in deliberative practices. More or less every article operated with this assumption. However, I also wanted to incorporate the question ‘what should be learned’ into the analysis of these articles. What skills and values did they focus on, and did they coincide with the skills and values emphasized by the political conception or the way-of-life conception found in the theoretical articles? Furthermore, were there any differences in educational practices related to either the the political conception or the way-of-life conception?

Among the articles using qualitative methods (24), skills such as decision-making skills and explorative skills (e.g., being able to look at things from different perspectives), were often described as a desired learning outcome. There are

noticeable similarities between these skills and the skills emphasized by the political conception. However, the ‘qualitative articles’ often relied on a quite broad and vague definition of deliberation. My conclusion was therefore that connecting them to the political conception seemed farfetched. I made a short attempt at constructing additional conceptions of deliberative democracy based on the qualitative articles but was unable to find a systematic pattern. Instead, I reached the conclusion that the qualitative articles relied on such broad definitions of deliberation that the connection to deliberative democracy as a theoretical concept became unclear. I then went on to the articles using quantitative methods (13). Among them, the desired outcome was frequently described as general political skills, knowledge, and values. Thus, even though they emphasized different skills and values compared to the articles using qualitative methods, the unclear connection to deliberative democracy as a theoretical conception was apparent here as well. Thus, their connection to deliberative democracy as a theoretical concept was also unclear.

3.3 Results and conclusion

In qualitative research, it is often difficult to distinguish where one stage of the research process concludes and another begins. I have therefore already presented some of the results in the description of how I organized the literature. I identified two different theoretical conceptions of deliberative democracy, a political conception and a way-of-life conception. Furthermore, I found that articles empirically investigating educational practices tend to rely on general definitions of deliberative democracy and deliberations, which makes it difficult to link them with either conception found in the theoretical articles. This is discussed in detail in the article “*Education for deliberative democracy: Mapping the field*”. For now, let us focus on the conclusions that I used to give the project’s next phase, ‘Phase 2 – Empirical study’, its direction.

First, I consider the field’s tendency to construct new conceptions of deliberation and deliberative democracy problematic. For example, the way-of-life conception is a reconstruction of deliberative democracy based on John Dewey’s notion of democracy. There are similarities between deliberative democracy and Dewey’s

versions, but within the field of political philosophy, Dewey is rarely, if ever, used as a source of inspiration. I argue that the construction of alternative versions of deliberative democracy (only) contributes toward making the field ambiguous and it becomes difficult to compare the different articles to each other.

The problem of not solidly grounding educational articles in the political conception of deliberative democracy is even more evident, however, in articles empirically investigating deliberative practices. They often rely on such a broad and vague definition of deliberation that the connection to deliberative democracy as a theoretical concept becomes unclear. The result is that deliberation becomes a conception in its own right, in the form of deliberative *pedagogy*, not necessarily connected to deliberative *democracy*. The problem is that when it is argued that the pedagogical method of deliberation fosters certain skills, it is an open question as to what makes them relevant for deliberative democracy. Thus, a gap has been created between the theoretically driven articles and articles empirically investigating pedagogical practices, where the latter fails to be of immediate relevance to questions of an education for deliberative democracy. My aim for the next phase of the project was to address this problem. I wanted to produce empirical research that was of immediate relevance to questions of education for deliberative democracy.

3.4 Methodological considerations

Before moving on, however, let us pause and reflect over the research process of the literature review, because, it can serve as an example of the projects underlying constructivist approach, where (scientific) knowledge is understood as a product of construction rather than a product of absolute ‘truth’ (Hatch, 2002).

For example, during the process of article selection, I used the criterion of whether or not ‘deliberati* was used in the correct sense relative to democracy’, to determine if an article should be included or excluded. However, in doing this, I relied on the understanding of deliberative democracy that I had developed during the ‘pre-phase’. Thus, my pre-established understanding of deliberative democracy as a democratic

theory largely affected my perception of the articles I considered relevant to the review and those I considered irrelevant. Furthermore, during the process of analysis, I identified two conceptions of deliberative democracy within the theoretical articles. However, without a prior knowledge of the deliberative conception and of Dewey's conception, identifying these would have been difficult. Thus, my pre-established understanding of different democratic conceptions influenced what I was capable of identifying in the material. Moreover, had my prior knowledge included other conceptual perceptions of democracy, perhaps I would have identified those instead. A final example of how I steered the review and the knowledge produced in a certain direction, is when I concluded that the political conception was the 'correct' interpretation of deliberative democracy and that the way-of-life conception was the 'incorrect' one. Once again, in doing this, I relied on my already established understanding of deliberative democracy as established during the project's 'pre-phase'.

These examples illustrate how I (as a researcher) affected, steered, and constructed the product of knowledge produced in the review. However, the fact that a researcher constructs the knowledge does not have to be a problem. The important thing is to provide users of the information with enough insight into the process of knowledge construction, to allow them to evaluate whether the choices made and conclusions reached are credible, reliable, and trustworthy (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Based upon this line of reasoning, I argue that while I could have made other decisions along the way, such as using other criteria for article selection, analyzing the articles with different questions, and organizing the literature in a different way, I still paint a picture of the field of education for deliberative democracy that is reasonable, credible, and trustworthy.

4. Investigating an education for deliberative democracy – ‘Phase 2 – Empirical study’

Having conducted a literature review of the field of education for deliberative democracy and identified a gap within it, my next aim was to bridge this gap by producing empirical pedagogical research of immediate relevance to questions related to an education for deliberative democracy. I did this by conducting an empirical study.

The empirical study that is Phase 2 can be divided into four different stages. In the first stage, I developed the design, applied for approval from NSD (Norwegian Centre for Research Data), and contacted schools and teachers. In the second stage, I collected and transcribed the data. In the third stage, I conducted the first set of analysis, organized the data a meaningful way, and wrote the first draft of the article “*Education for deliberative democracy: A typology of classroom discussions*”. In the fourth stage, I conducted a secondary set of analysis and wrote the first draft of the article “*Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus*”. A visualization of this process is presented below. In this chapter, I account for these four stages. In addition, I also conduct two short discussions, one concerning ethical considerations made during the study and one concerning the validity and reliability of the results.

Table 3: Overview of 'Phase 2 - Empirical study'

	Stage 1 Winter/spring 2014	Stage 2 Spring/summer/fall 2014
Phase 2 Empirical study	Developing the design, seeking approval from NSD, and recruiting participating schools and teachers	Collecting data from four cases/participating teachers in the form of classroom observations, qualitative interviews, and informal conversations, and transcribing the data
	Stage 3 Fall/winter 2014	Stage 4 Spring/summer 2015
	Conducting the first set of analysis and writing the first draft of paper 2: <i>Education for deliberative democracy: a typology of classroom discussions</i>	Conducting secondary analysis and writing the first draft of paper 3: <i>Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus</i>

4.1 Stage 1: Developing the design, seeking approval, and contacting schools

I started working with the first stage of ‘Phase 2 – Empirical study’ in January 2014. During this stage, I worked with three aspects of the study simultaneously: developing the design, getting approval from NSD, and recruiting participating schools and teachers. These aspects are closely related to each other. The approval from NSD is based on a sound and accurate description of the design as is the recruiting of teachers suitable for the project.

4.1.1 Developing the design

In an empirical study, it is common to make use of a literature review for designing the project. The review I conducted revealed that the field of education for deliberative democracy contains a gap where articles empirically investigating practices related to an education for deliberative democracy fail to ground their work sufficiently enough in the theory of deliberative democracy. This precludes them from immediate relevance to an education for deliberative democracy. However, the review revealed that there is an overwhelming pedagogical agreement within the field – future citizens learn the skills and values necessary for deliberative democracy by participating in democratic deliberations. I located these findings at the core of my study – the gap as the overall aim, and the pedagogical agreement as an underlying assumption.

Based on the pedagogical assumption of the field, I decided that the focus for Phase 2 would be to investigate classroom discussions through the lens of deliberative democracy. However, so as not to fall into the same problematic position I claim many other empirical studies in the field do – namely, the loss of their connection to deliberative democracy as a democratic theory – I carefully chose a formulation of classroom deliberation clearly and solidly grounded in the theory of deliberative democracy as my theoretical framework, that of Tomas Englund (2006). According to Englund (2006), *deliberative communication* is communication in which (a) different views are confronted with one another and arguments for them are articulated; (b)

there is tolerance and respect for the concrete other, and participants listen to each other's arguments; and (c) there are elements of collective-will formation, a desire to reach consensus or a temporary agreement. Furthermore, (d) authorities and traditional views can be challenged and there are opportunities to challenge one's own tradition, and (e) there is a scope for students to deliberate without teacher control (p. 512). I used this formulation as a theoretical framework during data collection and data analysis.

I also, however, wanted to keep the broad and explorative approach I used during the earlier phases of the project. I wanted to be able to spend a few weeks with each participating teacher to follow them around, observe their classroom practices, conduct formal interviews, engage in informal conversations and not be restricted to a pre-determined number of observations or interviews. I wanted stay with each teacher for as long as I found necessary to yield data of interest (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Furthermore, I wanted to be able to go back and forth between the different components of the study and to gradually narrow the focus as the study progressed. I therefore framed the study as a short-term ethnography. The idea behind ethnography as a research approach is that one gains valuable insight into a phenomenon by spending time in a field or a context using different (qualitative) methods. The difference between a traditional ethnography and a short-term ethnography is mainly that a short-term ethnography is temporally constrained, that is, it is carried out in a shorter, more compressed time period (Pink & Morgan, 2013). This approach allowed me to be explorative within the boundaries of Englund's (2006) theoretical framework and to approach each teacher as a case (Brinkmann, 2012).

Within this broad and explorative approach, however, it is possible to distinguish specific qualitative methods such as qualitative classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and informal conversations. During classroom observations, I revealed to the students my role and my reason for being there. However, I did not take on the role of the teacher but remained on 'the outside' seated in the back of the room, taking notes. Thus, I participated in some way but not as a full-fledged member

of the group. The observations can therefore be categorized as partial participant observations (Merriam, 2009). In the methodologically of empirical research, the role of the observer is considered important because the presence of the observer might affect the participants and the data generated (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009). As true as this might be concerning the validity and trustworthiness of the results, the important thing is not necessarily to ascertain whether the data are affected but instead that the data are used appropriately. During observations, I used a pen and a notebook in which I described the classroom practice I witnessed, wrote down personal reflections, possible analytical perspectives and further directions of the study. I also used two sound recorders to capture the classroom discussions in detail. The interviews I conducted with the teachers were semi-structured interviews. I used open-ended questions, or broad topics of conversation to explore the teachers' opinions, interpretations, and viewpoints (Hatch, 2002; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Merriam, 2009). Each data collection period began with a 'first interview' in order to (1) get to know the teachers in question and to establish a good relationship with them, (2) describe the overarching project 'Education for deliberative democracy' and 'Phase 2 – Empirical study', and (3) discuss Englund's (2006) criteria. Furthermore, in addition to the numerous informal conversations I engaged in, I conducted a second interview, which I grounded in questions developed during the process of data collection. The combination of interviews and informal conversations allowed me to record some conversations in detail, because I used a sound recorder during interviews, and to follow up on some ideas immediately.

4.1.2 Seeking approval

I applied for approval from NSD by describing the project similarly to the way I have described it above. I explained that I was going to use a pen and a notebook along with sound recorders. I opted not to use video recordings based on ethical assessments of aspects that might have made the process of data collection more difficult.

Furthermore, I explained that students who were uncomfortable with me observing and recording them in class would be given the option to discontinue participation. Finally, I explained that all parents and principals would be informed about the project.

Although getting approval from NSD took longer than I first had envisioned, it was still a rather straightforward process.

4.1.3 Contacting schools and teachers

To identify participating schools and teachers I used a purposeful sample (Brinkmann, 2013). I explicitly looked for teachers interested in democracy and education and in classroom discussions. I did not look for teachers interested in education for deliberative democracy specifically, because I had previously found the deliberative conception to be absent in the Norwegian national curriculum, and teachers appeared to be unfamiliar with it (Samuelsson, 2011; 2013). I started by reading online profiles of schools to see if any of these matched my focus. Simultaneously, I also asked colleagues of mine if they knew of any teachers or schools suitable for my project. The first teachers I contacted, although they were interested in the project, lacked the time required for participation. However, they referred me to other teachers that might be interested in participating. After a month or two using this snowball method, I had four teachers willing to participate in the study, all interested in democracy and education and extensively experienced in leading classroom discussions: Patrick, Margaret, Evelyn, and Susan.

These four teachers were all teaching at schools located on the west coast of Norway, in or just outside one of the bigger cities in the region. They taught various subjects in schools with different profiles. Patrick taught at several different schools, in various grade levels, in various subjects. In addition, he led seminars where he taught other teachers how to conduct classroom discussions. Margaret was the head of her own class of fifth graders, and thus did all of her teaching in that class, which involved subjects such as math, English, Norwegian, religion, and social science. Evelyn taught English, social science, and math to students in grades six to nine at a school with a large amount of ethnic diversity. In addition, she was engaged in activities related to the student council. Finally, Susan taught psychology, English, and religion to upper secondary students at a parochial school. These teachers were all interested and experienced in leading classroom discussions. Margaret and Patrick both had a

background in ‘philosophy for children’ and to some extent used this idea as a foundation for conducting classroom discussions. Susan and Evelyn, however, can be described as more self-taught. They were all unfamiliar with the concept of deliberative democracy prior to participating in this study.

4.2 Stage 2: Data collection

In stage 2 of the empirical study, I carried out the process of data collection. I did this in two periods, one in the spring, including Patrick’s, Margaret’s and Evelyn’s cases, and one in the fall, including Susan’s case.

4.2.1 Patrick’s case

The first teacher I met with was Patrick. I conducted the first interview at my office. We talked about the overarching project ‘Education for deliberative democracy’, the empirical study of Phase 2, and of his interest in classroom discussions. He talked about his background in ‘philosophy for children’ – the pedagogical method of using Socratic dialogues to develop children’s reasoning skills – and described strategies he used when leading classroom discussions. We also talked about Englund’s (2006) criteria for classroom discussions. For Patrick, the first two criteria made sense. However, he regarded the consensus criterion as problematic because in his opinion, aiming at it can turn classroom discussions in undesirable directions. The interview lasted for an hour and 45 minutes. Towards the end, we looked at possible dates for me to visit him in his classrooms. Due to his schedule, we decided to postpone this until fall. However, when that time came, I had already collected so much data from the other three cases that I decided not to conduct any classroom observations with Patrick. The first interview is thus the only data from Patrick’s case.

4.2.2 Margaret’s case

I met Margaret for the first time the same week as I met Patrick. Data collection with Margaret lasted for two weeks, during which I conducted two interviews, observed her

classroom on four occasions, and was involved in a number of informal conversations and email-conversations. This case yielded 200 pages of transcribed data.

I conducted the first, 40-minute interview at her school. We talked about Englund's (2006) five criteria and, similar to Patrick, she was hesitant about the consensus criterion³. During this interview, she also described her class, which consisted of 25 students, her classroom, along with strategies she used when leading classroom discussions. For example, she had organized the desks in her classroom in smaller groups, each group comprising three to four students, to make it easier to engage the students in group discussions. The following week, I observed her classroom for the first time. During my first day of classroom observation, I listened to several small-group discussions and I found them interesting. One was about the difference in need between a baby and a child their own age (12); another was about how to solve to the mathematical question, 344 divided by 4 (used as an example in article 2). In both discussions, I thought the students reasoned with each other in a sincere manner; they seemed to listen to each other, and they seemed to respect each other as well as differences of opinions. The second day involved fewer interesting discussions. The students did not engage in the same kind of discussion as the day before. Instead of listening to the discussions, I started to reflect on my impressions so far – on the type of questions that seemed to generate discussions and why the discussions were less interesting today than the day before. Furthermore, why did I interpret the way they interacted with each other as respectful and genuine? I waited a week before I met with Margaret again for a third day of classroom observation. The third day featured a few interesting discussions involving the whole class. One discussion was about how to solve a hypothetical problem of how to make pancakes for a group of friends if they had lost the recipe. Another was about an actual 'problem' of what to do at a class party (used as an example in article 3). In both cases, I thought the question that was posed was interesting and I found that both questions gave the students an opportunity

³ The critique of the consensus criterion is discussed in detail in the article "*Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus*".

to both disagree and reach solutions. The fourth day, like the second day, did not yield any discussions of interest as far as I was concerned. Once again, I used the time to reflect over what I had witnessed so far. I also started preparing for a second interview to be held later that day. During this interview, we talked about our experience so far. Moreover, she described an assignment the class had worked with during the previous week on a day when I was not there. They had taken the weekly test in groups. The test involved questions such as, “How was the Norwegian constitution developed?” and “Why was it important?”. I thought these questions really provided the students with an opportunity to present different ideas while simultaneously asking them to collectively formulate an answer, and thus, was eager to witness a similar activity later on. Margaret and I kept in touch during the summer and fall exchanging words via email. We kept the possibility open for conducting additional classroom observations. However, just as with Patrick, when that time came, I had collected so much data that I my desire to start working with what I already had was greater than the desire to collect more data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Thus, I did not meet Margaret again for yet another session of data collection.

To summarize the discussions I witnessed in Margaret’s classroom, some were conducted in smaller groups and some involved the whole class. Some started in smaller groups but then culminated in discussions involving the whole class. Some were of an explorative nature without striving for conclusions, some pursued the intention of reaching an agenda (such as identifying alternatives to put up to a vote), and some were used to make the students reach a conclusion that was pre-determined by Margaret. The data collected from Margaret’s classroom, added to the data from her two interviews, provided me with essential source data for this empirical study.

4.2.3 Evelyn’s case

Following data collection with Margaret, I met with Evelyn. Contrary to Patrick and Margaret, Evelyn did not have a background in philosophy for children. She explained that she used her classroom discussions to introduce students to national and global problems such as injustices, poverty, climate change, and so on, so as to make them

aware of these issues and to inculcate a desire to make a difference. Evelyn was not the head of her own class as Margaret was, but moved from one classroom to another teaching English, social science, and math to various classes from grade six to nine. The classes varied in size but all of them included fewer students than the 25 in Margaret's class. In all classes I attended, the students were seated in small groups.

The process of data collection with Evelyn lasted for two weeks. I conducted two interviews, observed her in her classrooms on two occasions, and was engaged in a few informal conversations and email-conversations. The case yielded 60 pages of transcripts. The reason for the lower number of transcripts compared to Margaret's case is because I did not use a sound recorder in Evelyn's classrooms. It will be recalled that in all classes, I had given the students and their parents the option to leave the classroom if they were uncomfortable with me observing and recording them. In Margaret's class, none expressed such a desire, but among Evelyn's students, three students said they did not want to be recorded. During our first interview, Evelyn and I talked about how to handle this. She suggested that I would give her a hint whenever I wanted to start to record something, at which time she would ask the relevant students to leave the classroom. However, I did not want the students to leave their own classroom just because I wanted to record a conversation. Furthermore, I did not want to alter the flow of a good discussion by creating a pause. I therefore chose not to use sound recorders in Evelyn's classrooms. This means, however, that the data collected from Evelyn's case contains fewer detailed transcriptions of classroom discussions.

For my first day of observation, I attended a combined sixth and seventh grade English class. Evelyn tried to engage the class in a discussion but ended up doing most of the talking herself. It had been a hectic few weeks for me going from one case to another with little time to reflect in between. Following this day of classroom observation with Evelyn, I therefore decided to spend the next couple of days at my office to sort out my impressions. For example, I found the classroom climate to be different in Margaret and Evelyn's classrooms. Evelyn's classrooms were louder and the students, along with Evelyn herself, had no qualms about making fun of each other. This made

her classroom climate seem more boisterous compared to Margaret's. This made me think about what it meant to treat each other with respect. Furthermore, it got me thinking: what would have happened if one of Margaret's students were placed in Evelyn's classroom; would he or she be comfortable there? During one of our conversations (we had later on), Evelyn explained that she was aware of this characteristic and tried to remain attentive to ensure that the students were not offended. I waited until the following week before I met Evelyn for a second day of observation. This time, I attended a ninth grade social science class. The topic for this class was human rights, and the pedagogical method was classroom discussion. The discussion followed the same pattern as the discussion I had witnessed the previous day with Evelyn doing much of the talking. However, towards the end of class she asked the students how they wanted to continue working with the topic. This question instantly got the students engaged and almost everyone had an opinion about it. Based upon this experience, I started to elaborate on the idea that perhaps the question asked is a crucial factor for how classroom discussions unfold (this is used as an example in article 2). The summer break was approaching and I decided to conclude this period of data collection with Evelyn with a second interview. The aim was to continue data collection in the fall. However, just as with Patrick and Margaret, this did not happen because of the amount of data I had collected when that time came.

During the summer, I transcribed the data collected from the first three cases. From this, I got a sense that many of the discussions I had witnessed, which I considered to be examples of classroom deliberation at the time I witnessed them, were perhaps not deliberations at all. I started to develop an idea of where to go with the material and a specific focus for the second period of data collection – to specifically look for discussions fulfilling the three core criteria of Englund's (2006) formulation of deliberative communication: (a) reason-giving, (b) reflection, and (c) consensus.

4.2.4 Susan's case

I collected data from Susan's case at the start of the fall of 2014. I observed her classroom practice on four different occasions, conducted one interview and was

engaged in many informal conversations. The case yielded 200 pages of transcripts. Susan taught in different classes at an upper secondary school and, like Evelyn, she therefore moved from one classroom to another. During my time with her, I met two different classes, one class of juniors and one of seniors.

For my first day of classroom observation, I attended English and psychology. In English, I witnessed ten senior students discussing the concept of beauty (excerpts from this discussion are used in article 2). However, there were mainly two male students along with Susan doing most of the talking. Still, I found this discussion to be interesting because of the way they reasoned, responded, and interacted with each other. They clearly stated their opinions, they gave reasons for their position, and they questioned each other's ideas. It therefore seemed relevant to me in conjunction with Englund's (2006) criteria. Later the same day, I observed a psychology class that involved both the senior class and the junior class. They were involved in a number of different dialogical activities. For example, Susan asked them to construct a timeline of the development of psychology as a field. This exercise consisted of working in small groups at first, each group assigned to a specific period of time. They were then asked to compile the different periods so as to construct a complete timeline. I thought this exercise was perfect in terms of letting the students construct something together and to reason with each other. However, for some reason the discussion never really unfolded. Compared to the English class, there were fewer presentations of different perspectives and fewer confrontations of different ideas. For my second day of observation, the following day, I attended the same English class once more. They continued the previous day's discussion, following the same pattern as the day before. I waited a week before I met with Susan again for a third day of observation. This time, I attended religion and psychology lessons. As far as I was concerned, neither class yielded any interesting data related to Englund's (2006) criteria. For my fourth day of observation, I observed English once again. This time, they discussed a blog they were going to write, a discussion that did not really take off in any interesting direction. After my fourth day of classroom observation, I felt I had a sense of how the discussions unfolded in Susan's classrooms. I concluded the period of data collection

with an interesting informal conversation. We agreed to keep in touch and that I would contact her again if I needed to conduct any more observations or interviews with her.

4.2.5 Concluding the process of data collection

There are different indicators for when to stop collecting data in a qualitative project. These do not include, however, the amount of data collected nor the number of hours spent interviewing or observing per se (Brinkmann, 2012). This would be categorized as ‘qualitative positivism’ and represents a misinterpretation of the explorative aim of qualitative research (Kvale, 1997). Instead, proper indicators emerge when a study, or a case, starts to reproduce itself, or when one starts to find the same data repeatedly (Brinkmann, 2012). Another indicator is when the amount of data collected starts to feel overwhelming. Too much data means jeopardizing the possibility of conducting in-depth analysis (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Brinkmann, 2013). Having finished collecting data at Susan’s school, both indicators were present.

4.3 Stage 3: The first set of analysis and the first draft of article 2

It is commonly held that in qualitative research, the process of analysis starts before the actual analytical process takes place (Hatch, 2002; Maxwell, 2005; Brinkmann, 2013). This is because all the decisions made along the way steer the project down certain paths. The decisions made during the ‘pre-phase’ determined my view of deliberative democracy, which in turn affected how I regarded the literature field of an education for deliberative democracy. In Phase 2 specifically, the process of transcribing the data from the first three cases largely influenced the direction of the study. I got a sense that many of the discussions I had witnessed that I thought represented examples of classroom deliberations, perhaps lacked one or more crucial features. This influenced the focus of my attention for the second period of data collection and it set the agenda for the first set of analysis – to identify classroom

discussions that fulfilled the three core criteria of Englund's (2006) formulation of deliberative communication: (a) reason-giving, (b) reflection, and (c) consensus.

I used printouts of all transcripts and read them from start to finish up against Englund's (2006) core criteria – (a) reason-giving, (b) reflection, and (c) consensus). I highlighted those passages I considered relevant with a highlighter pen. For example, in the transcripts from Patrick's interview, I marked all passages I could identify where either he or I talked about the criteria, where he described classroom practices related to them, or where he in some way argued for or against any of them.

It is not all dialogue I have with my students where I do exactly what you describe here. There are perhaps some dialogues of that character, where I want an open dialogue but at the same time want them to practices giving reasons for their positions, listen to each other's opinions, and to reach a conclusion... (p.11).

and:

Yes, and that is an aim of mine with this type of dialogue, that they feel as a part of something bigger and that it is ok not to reach a conclusion. When it is like 'oh but it is just starting to get fun' and 'we were just starting to go somewhere', that is a good place stop... we do not have to reach a conclusion regarding for example power, that is not the aim. The aim is to start questioning the concept... (p.17).

In the first example, he states that he sometimes conducts classroom discussions that include processes of reason-giving, reflection, and striving for a conclusion. However, in the second example he argues that it is sometimes preferable not to strive for a conclusion but to only focus on reasoning and listening. From the observational data and the transcripts of classroom discussions, I highlighted all passages where I thought the core criteria were displayed. In the extract below, for example, from one of the discussions in Margaret's classroom, I consider all three core criteria to be present to some extent

Margaret – Ok, can you try to reach an agreement, because you all have different opinions, but can you try to find out how long you, as a ten-year-old, wait for different things?

Hanna – Ok, should we start with sleep or with food?

Tobias – Food

Hanna – Ok, food

Adrian – A couple of hours

Sara – Maybe

Hanna – Yes

Tobias – Three hours, three hours

Hanna – Yes, two to three

Tobias – Two if you are in a restaurant or something like that...

Adrian – But if you are very hungry, then your stomach can really hurt

Tobias – ... then you have to wait and then you can perhaps wait for...

Hanna – One hour

Adrian – Yes

Tobias – Yes, an hour before there is food on the table...

Hanna – Yes

Tobias – ... if you are at a fancy restaurant, but that's one thing

Hanna – At home, you can wait for three hours but then...

Sara – Two hours maybe...

Tobias – If you are hungry in the morning, for example, if you are hungry in the morning....

Hanna – But it's not three hours

Tobias – ...in the morning and you would rather do something else than eat, you think it is boring to eat, than you can wait for a very long time... (pp. 34–36).

In this discussion, the students articulate different opinions, they listen to each other, they reflect and respond to each other's statements, they seem willing to change their initial positions, and they show a desire to work towards some form of agreement.

Having identified a number of interesting passages showing both the teachers viewpoints regarding Englund's (2006) criteria and numerous exemplifications of how they manifested themselves in classroom discussions, I wanted to systemize this. I created a new document for each case (except Patrick's) including only highlighted passages. In addition, I wrote a small one-page summary of my initial impressions of each case and attached it to each document. This resulted in a 52-page document for Margaret's case, a 27-page document for Evelyn's, and a 53-page document for Susan's.

I decided to hold off on the interview data for the time being and instead focused on identifying the best example of a classroom discussion that fulfilled all three core

criteria. Searching through the newly composed documents for this, I found that many of them included criteria a and b or criterion c. I decided to construct a continuum on which I placed the marked discussions. On one side I placed the discussions characterized by a strong sense of reason-giving and reflection (a and b) but that lacked a drive to arrive at a conclusion (c). On the opposite side, I placed discussions that showed a clear direction towards a conclusion (c) but lacked a genuine reason-giving process (a and b). In between, I located discussions that included all three core criteria and defined them as *democratic deliberations*. Thus, in addition to identifying examples of classroom deliberations and showing what these (might) look like in a classroom setting, I also clarified the difference between these and other closely related types of classroom discussions that lack one or more crucial features in relation to democratic deliberations (inside classrooms). Furthermore, I also noticed that the different types of discussions were structured around different types of questions – open and closed questions. The discussions lacking the (c) consensus criterion were organized around questions that were too open. They allowed students to disagree but gave them little guidance toward making a conclusion. The discussions lacking the (a) reason-giving criterion and the (b) reflection criterion, on the other hand, were organized around questions that were too closed, which clearly gave students a direction but provided them with few opportunities to genuinely disagree. Democratic deliberations were organized around questions with a good balance between openness and closeness. From this, I outlined a practical pedagogical implication, namely that to steer classroom discussions in the direction of democratic deliberations, the teacher should pose questions that allow students to genuinely disagree on the matter but that also guide them toward a conclusion. I shall return to a more detail explanation of what this means later.

4.4 Stage 4: Secondary analysis and the first draft of article 3

Having finished the analysis of the observational data and having composed a first draft of the second article “*Education for deliberative democracy: A typology of*

classroom discussions”, it was time to start working with the interview data. The corpus contained statements and opinions regarding Englund’s (2006) three core criteria. I once again worked with the newly composed documents, the 52-page document for Margaret’s case, the 27-page document for Evelyn’s, and the 53-page document for Susan’s. However, this time I also included Patrick’s interview. Thus, I did not go through all transcripts again from scratch but continued where I left off when I decided to move along with the observational data. My initial impression from the interviews was that the teachers seemed to regard the reason-giving criterion and a reflection criterion as sensible criteria with which to frame classroom discussions, but that they were skeptical of framing them with the consensus criterion. Based upon this impression, I decided to look closer at the passages I had highlighted concerning the consensus criterion. Below are a few examples:

In many ways, if democracy is present it’s going to be confrontational, isn’t it? Cause if we’re all passive and accepting and tolerant, then we’re not really confronting each other with true ideas (Susan, p. 10).

and:

It is an exploration, exactly, but never consensus, because I think that means to compromise and I am not going to compromise. I have spent a lot of time reading, being at school myself, thinking, and talking and I am not going to just throw that out to compromise. But I don’t expect them to compromise either, to give up something they hold dear just because it is against what the majority believes (Susan, p. 15).

and:

... but in regard to choices, thoughts about important aspects in life, and opinions, and so on, I don’t think consensus is the aim. The aim is to respect each other’s opinions (Margaret, p. 6).

and:

That can be difficult . . . I do not want to force anyone in the classroom to agree that “this” is the only right thing . . . I think it is important that those who reserve the right to disagree should be given time and space to reflect on why they disagree but not be forced into making decisions then and there . . . I cannot really picture how those two are related because for me, in a classroom discussion, it is not a matter of life and

death whether everybody agrees or not. I think agreement is difficult to achieve and striving for it only makes the discussion artificial (Evelyn, p. 9).

I organized their concerns of consensus in four categories: ‘view of democracy’, ‘desired learning outcome from participation in classroom discussions’, ‘democratic critique of consensus’, and ‘pedagogical critique of consensus’ as shown below:

Figure 3: Findings from the secondary analysis

View of democracy	Desired learning outcome	Democratic critique	Pedagogical critique
1. Freedom of speech is a right 2. Everyone has a voice and the right to an opinion 3. Democracy is about living with disagreement 4. Without confrontation there is no democracy 5. Civic engagement is necessary 6. Critical thinking is important 7. Decisions are made by voting practices	1. Critical thinking 2. Be able to make reflected decisions 3. Reason, listen, and justify opinions 4. Become enlightened in regard to the different positions and perspectives available in different matters 5. Learn that not all questions have correct answers 6. A desire to want to make a difference 7. Understand that everyone has the right to an opinion 8. Be comfortable expressing their own opinions 9. To tolerate others opinions	1. Democracy is about more than consensus, it is about living with disagreement and tolerating that others have different opinions 2. One is not suppose to agree on 'big' questions 3. Consensus means to compromise and it is wrong to ask people to compromise their beliefs 4. It is wrong to force people into agreements. One has to be allowed to have an opinion and others need to respect that	1. To strict criteria means that many discussions relevant in a democratic sense, will 'fall out' 2. If a discussion has to lead to a conclusion, the question of power comes into play because students will then try to get it 'their way' 3. If students are forced into agreeing with a teacher, they can loose the respect for that teacher 4. It can be difficult to create a safe classroom climate if students are expected to reach consensus, it becomes difficult for them to express their opinions 5. They should not feel that their opinions are a burden, they need to be allowed to express them without being 'corrected'.

As I began to formulate my ideas in the third article, however, I decided to use only the pedagogical critique of consensus. I reasoned that the interviewees’ expertise was in how to lead classroom discussions, not how to make democratic decisions. I systemized their pedagogical critique of consensus and concluded that, according to these four teachers, aiming at consensus in classroom discussions can bring about many unwanted side effects such as undesirable patterns of communication and emotional strain in students. The understanding of deliberative democracy I had developed during the ‘pre-phase’, however, locates consensus at the heart of democratic deliberation. Furthermore, since I operate with the pedagogical assumption

that students should learn the necessary deliberative skills and values by practicing democratic deliberation, I was reluctant to abandon consensus as an aim for classroom deliberations. The aim for the third article was therefore to try to formulate a version of consensus that could be used as an aim in classrooms without having to cause the negative side effects cited by the teachers. I tried different formulations of this objective, such as Rawls' (1987) notion of an overlapping consensus and Gaus and Vallier's (2009) notion of convergence but decided to use Dryzek and Niemeyer's (2010) typology of consensus. Based on this, I argued that consensus should be considered a multifaceted concept that allows for many different types of agreements and disagreements to coexist, and therefore, will not necessarily foster undesirable patterns of communication in classroom discussions.

I finalized the first draft of the third article "*Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus*", during the summer of 2015, tying together a one-and-a-half-year-long empirical study that involved the processes of developing the design, collecting and transcribing the data, analyzing the data, and formulating the results in two articles.

4.5 Ethical considerations

Ethics can refer to many things in research, such as responsibility for the quality of the work produced and the responsibility one has in relation to one's colleagues. However, it is most commonly associated with the responsibility one has for individuals participating in research (Alver & Øyen, 2007). In this section, I offer a brief discussion about how I handled the aspect of informed consent in the empirical study of Phase 2. Informed consent refers to the idea that no research should be conducted involving individuals who have not explicitly agreed to participate. Furthermore, their decision to participate has to be based on valid and relevant information concerning the study in question, and the decision has to be made without any form of pressure (Fossheim, 2009).

4.5.1 Teachers and informed consent

Regarding informed consent and the teachers participating in the study, I emailed a description of the overall project and of the empirical study of Phase 2 before we met for our first interview. During the first interview, I once again described the project along with the aim and focus of the empirical study. I explained that my intention was not to evaluate them as teachers, but rather to observe their classroom practices for the purpose of using these as examples in a discussion of issues related to an education for deliberative democracy. To further emphasize the non-evaluative focus, I pointed out that since deliberative democracy is not a formal aim in the Norwegian curriculum (Samuelsson, 2011; 2013), they could not be expected to ensure that this objective was met. Finally, I emphasized that I regarded them as experts in leading classroom discussions and therefore was interested in their opinions on the matter. By this, I strived to be as explicit as I could concerning the nature of the study. However, there are potential ethical dilemmas involved.

I promised the teachers that I would not evaluate their classroom practices. Yet, when I summarized my findings in the second article, I used phrases such as ‘lacking important aspects related to democratic deliberations’ and ‘which diminish the students’ opportunity to practice at the necessary deliberative skills and values’, when referring to some of their classroom discussions. Because the Norwegian educational system does not ask them to ensure democratic deliberations in their classrooms, I did not consider these statements to be evaluations of the teachers’ performance. However, from the teachers’ perspective, it is possible that they found the statements evaluative. The question of evaluation might be even more penetrating when it comes to article 3. During the interviews, I told the teachers that I regarded them as experts and that I genuinely was interested in hearing their views on Englund’s (2006) criteria. Yet, when they expressed a concern about one of them, I ended up arguing with them. In my view, I treated their opinions with a genuine respect, because, based upon their concern, I reformulated the consensus criterion. I used their practical experience to theoretically redefine one of the core criteria of the theory I used. However, it is

possible that this could be interpreted as breaking the promise to treat the teachers as experts.

Having raised these concerns, it might be worthwhile to point out that after I had finished each article, I emailed a copy to each teacher and received nothing but positive feedback in return. Nevertheless, this discussion shows that even if one carefully attends to the aspect of informed consent, ethical dilemmas may arise.

4.5.2 Students and informed consent

Turning to the case of students who participated in the study, one might consider whether they should have a say concerning their involvement in the study. I observed them in their classroom and I recorded their voices. However, I did not collect any sensitive information about them. In fact, I knew nothing about them, not even their names, let alone whose voices I heard on the recordings. One can therefore argue that they belong to a category not subject to providing informed consent:

In some cases, research can be conducted without the use of informed consent if the individuals are not participating actively or when the information collected is of a non-sensitive form (NESH, 2009).

To support the claim that I perhaps was not under obligation to get their informed consent: I did not place them in a situation they would not have found themselves in anyway. I investigated educative practices that would have occurred even if I were not there. Nevertheless, I relied on Fossheim's (2009) interpretation of informed consent – that it is a question of genuine respect for the participants and giving the students, or their parents in the cases where they were under 18, the option to withdraw from the classroom. Among Margaret and Susan's students, no one had any reservations, but in Evelyn's class, three students said they did not want to be recorded. As mentioned, in order to address this situation, Evelyn suggested that I could give her a hint whenever I wanted to start recording something, in which case she would ask the students with reservations to leave the classroom. From my conversations with NSD, however, I had been made aware that if I asked students to leave their classroom on my behalf, I was

responsible for creating an equivalent pedagogical assignment for them in another facility. In addition to not wanting to ask students to leave their classroom on my behalf, I therefore decided not to make sound recordings in Evelyn's classrooms.

However, since so few students had objections to participating, one might wonder how they personally interpreted the words voluntary participation, particularly considering how it was presented to them. The students were given the opportunity to decline to participate by their teachers. I gave the informed consent sheet to the teachers and asked them to pass it along to the students and the parents. Furthermore, I did not collect the informed consent sheets but asked each teacher to inform me if anyone had declined to participate. I do not doubt that the teachers gave the information to their students nor that they genuinely respected the students' choice of whether or not to participate. However, there is a possibility that information coming from schools might appear to be mandatory since schools often ask students to participate in activities they would not participate in voluntarily. Yet, considering the nature of the study, I think this might be more a theoretical example of how careful one needs to be about informed consent than a serious ethical dilemma.

4.6 Validity and reliability

Before moving on, let us revisit the methodological question of validity and reliability first addressed on pages 6–7. In qualitative research, the aim is to explore complex and dynamic social phenomena and to investigate what meaning people bring to their experience. This usually takes place in natural settings in order to investigate the uniqueness and complexity of the phenomena assumed lost in more controlled settings (Hatch, 2002; Merriam, 2009). Furthermore, qualitative researchers use themselves as the tool for collecting and analyzing the data (Befring, 2007).

4.6.1 Validity and reliability as reflexivity and transparency

The features of a qualitative researcher described above have led researchers from a more positivistic paradigm to criticize the objectivity, validity, and reliability of

qualitative research (Hatch, 2002; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). According to their view, qualitative research is too biased to produce *scientific* knowledge (Hatch, 2002). Qualitative researchers affect the phenomena they study too much; different qualitative researchers register the same phenomenon differently, and the knowledge they produce is impossible to generalize. Qualitative researchers have responded to this criticism by claiming that positivistic criteria such as internal validity – the ability to control the effect of independent variables – and interrater reliability – registration by different researchers of the same phenomena in the same way – are unsuitable for qualitative research. In a qualitative perspective, it is difficult to see how breaking down complex phenomena into supposedly discrete dependent and independent variables can reveal anything of interest regarding complex social phenomena (Hatch, 2002; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Furthermore, qualitative researchers need to be close to the phenomena they investigate because the only tool sophisticated enough to truly understand human beings and human interaction is the human mind (Brinkmann, 2013). Some qualitative researchers have gone as far as to totally ignore questions of validity and reliability, while the more common approach is to operate with an understanding of validity and reliability that better captures what qualitative research is about (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

The most common way to redefine validity and reliability in qualitative terms is to refer to them as trustworthiness and reasonableness (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The aim in a qualitative sense is to demonstrate that the understanding of the phenomena presented is a reasonable and trustworthy version of it. In order to achieve this, qualitative researchers need to be both reflective and transparent. By critically reflecting upon every aspect of the project and all steps along the way, such as what research questions to ask, how their presence affects the data collected, and how their pre-determined understandings affect the conclusions drawn, they will have a reflected opinion about the knowledge produced (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). However, this is not enough; they also need to make the process of knowledge construction transparent to the reader (Brinkmann, 2013). By transparently describing what they have done and why, others can critically examine the reasoning behind the results and conclusions

and by this, evaluate if they are credible, reasonable, and trustworthy or not (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Thus, with the concepts of reflexivity and transparency, the quality of qualitative research can be evaluated.

4.6.2 The process of knowledge construction in Phase 2

The aim of redefining validity and reliability as reflexivity and transparency is to better capture what quality in qualitative research is. In qualitative research, the knowledge produced is a product construction (Hatch, 2002) and the researchers are the producers of that knowledge (Brinkmann, 2012), because all choices and decisions made throughout the project determine the end product. On that note, let us look at how I constructed the knowledge produced in Phase 2 and how the decisions I made led me down specific paths.

When I designed Phase 2, I used Englund's (2006) formulation of deliberative communication as a theoretical framework. This framework affected the data I was able to generate and determined what fell outside of my scope (Maxwell, 2005). For example, research questions such as – 'How do Englund's (2006) three core criteria manifest themselves in practice?', 'What does it look like when 12 year olds show each other respect in discussions?', and 'Are there places where deliberative communication is more likely to occur than others?' – would all be understood within the outer boundaries of Englund's (2006) idea of deliberative communication. Furthermore, during the process of transcribing the data from the first three cases, I decided to focus on identifying classroom discussions that fulfilled Englund's (2006) three core criteria. The data collected at that point could have steered me in other directions but I chose this path. A final example is found in how I addressed the teachers' criticism of the consensus criterion. Based on their criticism, I could probably have rejected the aim of consensus as a criterion for classroom discussions entirely and argued that classroom discussions simply would be better off without it. However, based upon my idea of deliberative democracy, I chose to defend it and instead formulated an alternative version of the consensus criterion. Moreover, in this

process I relied on Dryzek & Niemeyer's (2010) formulation of consensus, which shaped the alternative version in a specific way.

These examples illustrate how I as a researcher shaped the knowledge I produced in Phase 2. Thus, the findings and results, along with my practical pedagogical suggestions, should all be considered as a product of my construction. Defining scientific knowledge as a product of construction, however, does not imply that "anything goes" and that all possible constructions are equally reasonable. Instead, it emphasizes the importance that I account for my reasoning as thoroughly as possible in order to let others evaluate my empirical investigation of classroom discussions in relation to an education for deliberative democracy (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Brinkmann, 2013). In conclusion, let me therefore state that I hope recipients of the knowledge I display find it both reasonable and trustworthy, and not the least, useful in some way.

5. Results, findings, and practical implications

In this chapter, I present the main findings along with the practical implications from the two phases ‘Phase 1 – Literature review’ and ‘Phase 2 – Empirical study’ as presented across the three articles “*Education for deliberative democracy: Mapping the field*”, “*Education for deliberative democracy: A typology of classroom discussions*”, and, “*Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus*”.

5.1 Article 1: Education for deliberative democracy: Mapping the field

In Phase 1, I investigated how educational scholars understand and describe the project education for deliberative democracy. Two findings are particularly important. First, the field of education for deliberative democracy contains a widespread overall agreement about how future citizens should learn the skills and values necessary for deliberative democratic participation – they should learn them through participation in democratic deliberations. Second, a number of different understandings and conceptualizations of deliberative democracy and democratic deliberations characterize the field. The field, which at first glance appears to be coherent, is on the contrary characterized by a number of significant, underlying disagreements. Furthermore, there is a gap between theoretically driven articles arguing for deliberative democracy as an educational aim and articles empirically investigating pedagogical practices related to this aim. The main problem lies at the pedagogical end of the spectrum where articles investigating deliberative educative practices are frequently too far removed from the political understanding of deliberative democracy, making the empirical research lose its immediate relevance to questions related to an education for deliberative democracy. The problem is that when it is argued that the pedagogical method of deliberation fosters certain skills, it is an open question as to what makes them relevant for deliberative democracy.

Based upon the analysis of the field, I suggested that scholars empirically investigating pedagogical practices related to an education for deliberative democracy should

ground their research more solidly in the definitions of deliberative democracy formulated by scholars within the field of political philosophy.

5.2 Article 2: Education for deliberative democracy: A typology of classroom discussions

In Phase 2, I attempted to bridge the gap I identified in Phase 1 and aimed at producing empirical research of immediate relevance to questions related to an education for deliberative democracy. In order to solidly ground my empirical research in the theory of deliberative democracy, I used Englund's (2006) formulation of deliberative communication as a theoretical foundation. This formulation directed my focus during classroom observations, it was an explicit topic of conversation during teacher interviews, and I used it actively when I analyzed the collected data.

From my classroom observations, I found that there were many examples of classroom discussions that appeared to be examples of democratic deliberations but, under closer examination, lacked one or more crucial features. Based on this finding, I created an empirically based typology of classroom discussions and placed the discussions showing different characteristics along a continuum. On one side, I placed discussions characterized by a strong sense of reason-giving and reflection but that lacked a drive toward a conclusion. On the opposite side, I placed discussions characterized by a clear direction toward a conclusion but that lacked a genuine reason-giving process. In between, I located discussions showing all three aspects and defined them as democratic deliberations. This allowed me to exemplify what democratic deliberations inside classrooms can look like at the same time as it allowed me to differentiate them from other closely related types of discussions. Finally, based upon the typology of discussions I created, I also articulated a practical implication for teachers to use in their classrooms. In order to steer classroom discussions in the direction of democratic deliberations and to let students practice democratic deliberation, teachers should pose questions open enough to give students the possibility to disagree on the matter while at the same time closed enough to give them the opportunity to reach a collective

conclusion. This will provide them with an opportunity to practice giving reasons for their opinions and reflect over others while at the same time being involved in a process that strives toward a conclusion.

5.3 Article 3: Education for deliberative democracy and the aim of consensus

In addition to observing classroom discussions in Phase 2, I conducted interviews with the teachers whose classrooms I had observed. They all expressed a concern about having classroom discussions aim at consensus. According to them, aiming at consensus can alter the pattern of communication in undesirable ways and cause emotional strain in students. However, since consensus is an integral part of deliberative democracy, I was reluctant to totally abandon it as a criterion for classroom deliberations. Instead, my aim became to formulate a notion of consensus that could reconcile both the teachers' concerns and the definition of deliberative democracy from which I was working.

Grounded in Dryzek and Niemeyer's (2010) typology of consensus, I formulated a defense of consensus as a criterion for classroom discussions and argued that by viewing consensus as a multifaceted concept with many meanings, one can retain consensus as an ideal in classroom deliberations without necessarily creating the negative side effects declared by the teachers. Furthermore, based upon Dryzek and Niemeyer's (2010) typology of consensus, I also articulated pedagogical implications to be used in practice. In a deliberative educative sense, the ultimate goal is to make the students practice reaching unanimous agreements on how to act (preference consensus). However, other types of consensus are also valuable to practice striving towards. For example, if a deliberation starts to fall apart or turns into a competition, participants in the deliberation can direct their attention on reaching a normative meta-consensus. By focusing on understanding and acknowledging the different viewpoints present in the deliberation, they can keep the deliberation productive. Transferring this idea to the classroom, we can reinterpret competitive and conflictual classroom

discussions as deliberative learning situations. By having students aim at reaching a normative meta-consensus in cases where the deliberation has turned ineffectual, they can practice turning them into productive democratic deliberations.

6. Discussing a formulation of an education for deliberative democracy

In this final chapter of the synopsis, let us take a look at the project that started out as a broad and explorative investigation of an education for deliberative democracy and see where it ended up. What are the thoughts about an education for deliberative democracy I present in this dissertation? What skills and values do I argue for as essential and what pedagogical practices do I propose we use? Let us look at the formulation of an education for deliberative democracy I propose in this dissertation along with my reasons for it.

In this chapter, I begin by describing and discussing the desired learning outcome before describing the pedagogical methods and implications I propose we use to achieve this. Following this is a short discussion of what it means to be a competent deliberative citizen before I end the chapter by connecting the minimalistic pedagogical model proposed to the challenges existing in the literature field of an education for deliberative democracy.

6.1 Discussing the desired deliberative learning outcome

Based on the understanding of deliberative democracy I developed in the ‘pre-phase’, I argue that the most essential aim of an education for deliberative democracy is to teach students how to participate in, and co-construct, democratic deliberations. After all, since public deliberation is placed at the heart of deliberative democracy, the process by which citizens, along with their representatives, give each other reasons for the positions they hold, weigh different arguments and alternatives against each other in order to reach mutual decisions on how to act (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; Bohman, 1998; Habermas, 1998; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004; Held, 2006; Thompson, 2008; Chappell, 2012), it should also be placed at the heart of an education for deliberative democracy. This makes the educational aim proposed in this dissertation an individual one: to teach each student (or future citizen) the core skills and values needed for deliberative democratic participation.

The next question is what these skills and values are. In order to determine this, I use Englund's (2006) formulation of deliberative communication and extract three desired core skills and values needed for deliberative democratic participation: the (a) ability to give reasons for one's own position, the (b) ability to listen to and reflect upon others position, and the (c) ability to strive towards collective conclusions. But, what do these entail more specifically?

6.1.1 Reason-giving and reflection as desirable learning outcomes

A core aspect of the reason-giving process in democratic deliberations is the principle of reciprocity. According to this principle, participants should strive to formulate their preferences in terms that are acceptable to other reasonable citizens even if they have different worldviews (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; 2004). By striving to formulate arguments in reciprocal terms, the likelihood increases that participants are able to understand each other and keep the deliberation moving forward.

Jennifer Hauver James (2010) has exemplified how destructive non-reciprocal arguments can be in deliberative processes. In a classroom deliberation about global warming that she conducted, two students argued that global warming was the doing of God and that any attempt to find a solution was therefore pointless, after which the deliberation fell apart. Disregarding the fact that they claimed that searching for a solution was useless, an important reason why the deliberation fell apart was the fact that their argument was grounded in an understanding of the world that the other students did not share – a religious worldview. To their fellow students, their argument did not make sense. The problem with this religiously based argument is that in order to understand and accept it, one needs to accept an entire worldview. However, the question of reciprocal arguments is more complicated than just asking religious people to stop using religiously based arguments. In James' (2010) example, the two students arguing from a religious perspective claimed that their fellow students were equally responsible for using arguments grounded in a specific worldview, that of science, and thus asked them to abandon their worldview. Why should they be the

ones, they argued, to have to abandon their core ideas just to keep the deliberation productive? The question of which worldview to use as a foundation for democratic deliberations is beyond the scope of this chapter, however. Let us therefore conclude that in a deliberative educative perspective, an important desirable learning outcome is to teach students to try to formulate their arguments in ways they think others can understand and possibly accept. Without understanding each other and each other's arguments, it is difficult to keep deliberations productive.

To develop an understanding of each other and each other's arguments, however, it is important that participants not only try to formulate their own arguments in understandable terms, but also that they try to understand others as they articulate theirs. Participants in democratic deliberations need to be willing to listen to reasons presented by others and they need to reflect upon them. Furthermore, they need to maintain an open attitude to others as they try to explain why they might be wrong (Young, 2000). They need to be willing to subject their opinions to scrutiny (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; 2004). In James' (2010) example, the two students who argued from a religious position were unwilling to do this. They refused to have their positions evaluated and instead referred to them as coming from 'the core of their faith and that it was therefore impossible for them to stand by and have their position questioned. They articulated their position and when asked about it, shut down and refused to engage in any further communication. In order to keep democratic deliberations productive, it is vital that participants engage with the arguments offered by others in a serious way and that they are willing to subject their own positions to scrutiny. Therefore, in a deliberative educative perspective, I would argue that a second important learning outcome is to teach students how to listen to each other, how to reflect upon each other's arguments, and to have their opinions evaluated.

6.1.2 Consensus as a desirable learning outcome

In addition to being about presenting reasons for positions and reflecting upon those in order to develop an understanding, democratic deliberations are also about striving for mutually acceptable decisions on how to act (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; Bohman,

1998; Habermas, 1998; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004; Held, 2006; Thompson, 2008; Chappell, 2012). This is the practical, political aspect of deliberation – that it is directed towards some form of collective will-formation, some agreement about what to do. Moreover, since deliberative democracy operates with the idea that a political order needs to be justified to and by everyone living under its laws (Chambers, 2003), it operates with an underlying ideal of consensus. Even if reaching actual consensus' is virtually impossible in modern societies, scholars of deliberative democracy nevertheless argue that it is valuable as a regulative aim to strive towards (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2010) because it encourages citizens and representatives to seek solutions across different belief systems and to use arguments they think other reasonable citizens can accept (Gutmann & Thompson, 1996; 2004).

The third desirable learning outcome in a deliberative perspective is to teach students to strive for consensual agreements in collective will-formation. Now, there are different types of consensus. I argue that the most urgent one to strive for is preference consensus – agreements on the actual decisions of 'what to do'. Preference consensus does not imply that participants have to agree on aspects such as the underlying reasons for a preferred choice (a normative agreement) or which reason to value the most (epistemic agreement). Preference consensus is less invasive because it does not ask citizens to give up their values. However, in the example used above, we saw how important it is that participants in a deliberation recognize each other's positions and arguments as legitimate. The students in James' (2010) classroom were unable to continue the search for possible solutions to problems of global warming because neither party recognized the other's perspective as a legitimate position to reason from. They failed to reach a normative meta-consensus. A normative meta-consensus is therefore valuable because it helps to keep the deliberation productive, especially if participants are having a difficult time reaching a preference consensus. Thus, even though I argue that preference consensus is the most urgent type of consensus one needs to learn how to attain, other types are far from valueless. For example, in order to learn how to keep deliberations productive in a deliberative sense, and how to turn

conflictual, competitive discussions into productive deliberative discussions, learning to strive for a normative meta-consensus would be important.

6.2 Discussing the desirable learning situation

Having inquired into the desirable learning outcomes, let us look at the pedagogical idea of how to teach students these skills and values. At the very basic level, I operate with the idea that deliberative skills and values are learned through participation in democratic deliberations (in classrooms). The pedagogical idea is thus rather straightforward – to learn something, one must practice at it, and the more you practice, the better you become. Corresponding with the understanding of deliberative democracy presented above, I argue that classroom deliberations should include three requirements: (a) the reason-giving requirement, (b) the reflective requirement, and (c) the consensus requirement. If only one or two requirements are present, the conditions for democratic deliberations are not met, which means that the students are not made to practice at the core deliberative skills and values. However, if all three are present, they are given the opportunity to practice them and gradually develop them. The next question is how to create classroom deliberations that meets all three core requirements. In this dissertation, I propose several pedagogical implications that could be useful for steering classroom deliberation in the direction of democratic deliberations (deliberations that fulfill all three core requirements).

6.2.1 The teacher as a reflective moderator

In the article “*Education for deliberative democracy: A typology of classroom discussions*”, I propose the idea that the type of question discussed is important for establishing a communicative pattern that allows students to give reasons, reflect on others’ arguments, and work towards reaching common conclusions. It should be open enough to allow them to genuinely disagree on the matter but at the same time closed enough to clearly direct the deliberation toward a conclusion. A question that is too open gives them a genuine possibility to disagree but few opportunities to strive toward a conclusion. A question that is too closed provides a clear direction for the

deliberation but few opportunities for disagreement. A question with the right amount of openness and closeness, however, gives them the opportunity to practice giving reasons, reflect on others' arguments, and work towards a common conclusion. Yet, one classroom full of students does not behave exactly alike from one time to another and different students and different classrooms certainly do not behave exactly alike. One question directing one classroom discussion in a desirable direction will not necessarily have the same effect in another classroom or in the same classroom at another time. Thus, teachers leading classroom deliberations have to constantly reflect on the amount of openness and closeness of the question in order to find a suitable balance at any given time.

I make a similar suggestion regarding questions of a controversial nature. In "*Education for deliberative democracy: A typology of classroom discussions*", I argue that controversies should be approached with caution, postponed until the students have become more experienced at democratic deliberations, or gradually introduced after the desired communicative pattern has been established. When deliberating controversial issues, students are more likely to be emotionally attached to one specific position, which arguably makes it more difficult for them to listen to the arguments of others and to subject their own to scrutiny. A topic of less importance to their core identity, however, may make things easier. Furthermore, by focusing on less controversial topics, it might be easier to establish a communicative pattern characterized by reason-giving, listening, and reflection instead of one characterized by refusal to engage with others and their arguments (see Crocco et al., 2018). However, once the students become increasingly better at democratic deliberation, questions of a more controversial nature could be (re)introduced. Once again, this identifies the teachers leading classroom deliberations as reflective moderators, because determinations of what constitutes a controversial issue will vary. One topic considered controversial in one classroom at one point in time will not necessarily be considered controversial at another time and place or in another classroom. The topic of global warming discussed in James' (2010) classroom, for instance, would probably

not be considered a controversial topic in all classrooms. It is up to the teacher to ascertain what issues the class is able to handle at any given time.

From this discussion, we can extract a main pedagogical implication proposed in this dissertation: teachers leading classroom deliberations should be regarded as reflective moderators who constantly need to reflect on a number of contextual factors in order to construct the desirable learning situation. For instance, if the students are having a difficult time moving towards a conclusion, perhaps the question discussed is too open. If it does not turn into a deliberation at all, perhaps the question is too closed. If the deliberation becomes too heated, perhaps trying a less controversial topic would help. This is how I argue that teachers leading classroom deliberations need to think.

6.2.2 The first priority – establish the desirable form of communication

From the discussion above, we can also extract a second main pedagogical implication: in a pedagogical sense, the argument can be made that the first priority should be to establish the desired form of communicative pattern. If students are to be educated for deliberative democracy by practicing democratic deliberation, the primary task should be to establish the desirable communicative pattern that includes the processes of (a) reason-giving, (b) listening and reflection, and the (c) search for conclusions.

I argued above that one desirable deliberative learning outcome is the ability to formulate reasons in reciprocal terms. However, in a pedagogical sense it might be wise not to demand that students formulate their reasons in reciprocal terms too soon. If the bar is set too high too soon, concerning which type of reasons may be given, it might be difficult to get any type of discussion going. Students might shy away from making statements because they do not know how to formulate them ‘correctly’ or they might be afraid to receive negative feedback. The point is that if there is no classroom discussion, there is nothing for the student to practice. Thus, the first order of business should be to get them to make any kind of argument. Then, after a while,

one can start to gradually increase the demands on the types of arguments they use. Like the aim of consensus, decisions made through public deliberations are supposed to be deemed justifiable by everyone affected by them. However, in order to establish the desirable communicative pattern inside the classroom, it might be sensible to start by having students aim at any type of solution or conclusion instead of one that is supposedly deemed justifiable by everyone. Because, if the demands are too high, the deliberation might fall apart before the students get a chance to practice it.

However, the story might be very different in terms of listening and reflection. Empirical studies of real-life deliberations suggest that it is important that participants display a willingness to listen to others as they articulate their reasons in order to establish a positive and productive interaction (Hess & McAvoy, 2015; Molnar-Main, 2017; Sprain & Black, 2018). Thus, perhaps teachers need to place extra emphasis on this aspect in classroom deliberations. If one student comes up short in expressing their opinion in a clear and respectful way, others can make up for this by making an extra effort in listening. If someone falls short in making sense, others can help. It is the same basic pedagogical aim as described above – to create a communicative pattern that includes (a) reason-giving, (b) listening and reflection, and (c) a search for conclusion.

Thus, the second main pedagogical implication states that if students are to learn how to participate in democratic deliberations by practicing it, the main vehicle for this should arguably be democratic deliberations in the classroom. This is grounded in the pedagogical idea that one should start at a basic level and then gradually increase the demands or the level of difficulty.

6.2.3 A minimalistic model of classroom deliberation

Responding to these suggestions, however, Lisa Weasel (2017) puts forth the argument that even if a teacher would manage to establish a classroom discussion that fulfilled all three core requirements, they would still not be guaranteed that a suitable deliberative learning situation was established. Below is a comment about one of the

examples I used in the article “*Education for deliberative democracy: A typology of classroom discussions*”, to display what a classroom discussion that fulfilled all three core requirements looked like:

The discussion appears to be a dialogue between the teacher and two very vocal students, Adrian and Christian... both students are male-identified... not everyone seems comfortable with this format... a group of girls sitting in the front who have been quiet the whole time... Sara responds, saying, “I don’t know; it’s difficult to say what you think, to express your opinion”... Adrian has been dominating the discussion... the effect that has on shutting down others’ participation... girls, a group often marginalized in classroom discussions, were silenced... can actually work against the principles of deliberative democracy, as it further reinforces marginalized voices while allowing dominant perspectives to appear as consensual (Weasel, 2017, p. 2).

Weasel’s (2017) argument is that even if a classroom discussion were to fulfill all three core requirements, it can still contain problematic features in relation to an education for deliberative democracy. For example, it can involve only a few students and even if they are deliberating in accordance with the three core requirements, other students might have a difficult time expressing themselves. In an educative sense, this would be problematic because those excluded would be deprived of the opportunity to practice giving reasons and articulating their opinions. Moreover, those participating would be practicing in a situation involving exclusion and marginalization. By letting them practice deliberations characterized by this, they would arguably be taught that it is possible to reach consensus and make decisions by dominating the conversation and suppressing other’s voices, which are arguably undesirable occurrences in a deliberative educative perspective. Finally, those excluded could learn that their part to play in democratic deliberations is a passive one.

Weasel (2017) therefore argues that the ‘minimalistic interpretation of democratic deliberation’ (p. 2) I present needs to be accompanied with additional requirements. Based on Young’s (1996) criteria for democratic communication, she argues that for instance ‘greetings’ should be included as a requirement in classroom deliberations. By giving participants in classroom deliberations the opportunity to present themselves and their context aside from the topic discussed, an atmosphere of respect and

acknowledgement could be established. This could make it easier for more students to participate verbally. Moreover, 'rhetoric' should be a requirement. This broadens the type of argument and speech that is considered appropriate in deliberation, which according to Weasel (2017) would lessen the risk of having problems such as 'having someone dominate the verbal space with their aggressive speaking style' (p. 3). With the inclusion of these requirements, Weasel (2017) argues that a more suitable form of classroom communication would be established. With the inclusion of additional requirements, however, we have not just redefined the desirable learning situation but also the desirable learning outcome. If we extract the desirable learning outcomes from the newly formed definition of the desirable learning situation, we see that students now are also expected to learn how to strive to include everyone in democratic deliberations, not to suppress other's voices and opinions when engaged in deliberations, and not to dominate the conversation and solely push for their own agenda.

I agree that even if a classroom deliberation were to fulfill all three core requirements, we still could find ourselves in an undesirable learning situation. Furthermore, I agree that if students, for instance, learn that it is possible to make decisions and promote one's own agenda by dominating others in deliberations, we would have an undesirable situation in relation to an education for deliberative democracy. Thus, there are good reasons for including additional criteria that more accurately capture what a desirable deliberative process looks like. Moreover, adding to the equation: studies of real-life deliberations suggest that the way people approach one another and each other's positions is extremely important for establishing a communicative interaction that contains reason-giving marked by disagreement (Sprain & Black, 2018). Thus, I agree that we should not underestimate the importance of developing a social climate characterized by respect and inclusion in classroom deliberations. However, questions of inclusion and exclusion are not exclusive to deliberative democracy. Thus, to focus only on including everyone in the classroom is strictly speaking irrelevant in relation to an education for deliberative democracy, if what we are including them in is unrelated to deliberative democracy. For example, if we

managed to include everyone in a soccer practice, they would not practice democratic deliberation. Thus, it is important to recognize values such as respect and inclusion, both as desirable learning outcomes and as factors influencing the possibility of establishing a communication that includes (a) reason-giving, (b) listening and reflection, and (c) a search for conclusion. However, if we do not connect them the core activity of democratic deliberation, they lose their immediate relevance to an education for deliberative democracy.

Based on this reasoning, I argue that the additional criteria proposed by Weasel (2017) constitutes a valuable contribution to the minimalistic model of an education for deliberative democracy that I have proposed. However, I still claim that in order for such criteria, or aspects, to be relevant in a deliberative sense, they need to be firmly related to the core deliberative activity of reason-giving, listening and reflection, and a search for conclusion.

6.3 A competent deliberative citizen

A final question to be discussed in this chapter is how this minimalistic model corresponds with the broader project of education for deliberative democracy. Will it prepare students for future deliberative democratic participation? Our answer to this question will vary depending on what understanding of deliberative democracy and deliberative democratic participation we use.

If we look back at the different theories of deliberative democracy presented in chapter 2, we see that they have different ideas on how to implement deliberative practices in modern democratic societies. For example, if we use Fishkin's (2009) formulation, deliberative democratic participation becomes primarily a matter of participating in deliberative polls. In deliberative polls, participants are asked to evaluate competing arguments and positions and consider their relevance and accuracy in relation to the problem at hand. Furthermore, they are asked to make a reflected and impartial suggestion concerning the decision of 'what to do'. This understanding of deliberative democratic participation closely resembles the situation I argue students should

practice in the classroom, and thus, we could argue that the proposed minimalistic model serves this understanding of deliberative democracy well. Habermas (1998) has a slightly different interpretation of how citizens should participate in a deliberative democracy. At the core of his formulation is a similar reason-giving process we found in Fishkin's (2009) formulation. However, he distinguishes between deliberations inside parliament and deliberations in the public realm. The ones ordinary citizens are to participate in, those in the public sphere are coupled with lower criteria in relation to the deliberative process. Moreover, they are not connected to processes of will-formation per se. Their main function is to generate (the many) public opinion(s). In this view, a deliberative competent citizen would not necessary have to know how to deliberate their way to actual decisions with people holding very different views. They would mainly be asked to formulate their ideas, positions, arguments, and reasons in understandable terms and then 'present' them to their representatives. Grounding an education for deliberative democracy in this understanding of deliberative democratic participation, could make us claim that it is more important to teach students to formulate their opinions clearly and, less importantly, teach them to strive for consensus.

If we further broaden our idea of what deliberative democratic participation entails, we could claim that ordinary citizens do not even have to know how to deliberate per se in order to take part in a deliberative democracy. Gutmann and Thompson (1996), for example, made the point that the speeches made by Martin Luther King could be regarded as a contribution in a national deliberation. Because, King spoke on the behalf of a group of people, not every individual in that group had to participate verbally in the national deliberation to have his or her opinion heard; they only had to pass it on to someone speaking on their behalf. If we would use this interpretation as our foundation for an education for deliberative democracy, we could say that students do not have to learn how to formulate their opinions in terms 'others' can understand. They only have to learn to make them understandable to someone who already speaks 'their language'. If we continue further down this road, and do as Parkinson and Mansbridge (2012) do – argue that practices of a non-deliberative character can serve

as an input in a public deliberation – we might argue that students do not even have to learn how to express their opinions in a reasoned or verbal form at all. They could express opinions through practices such as demonstrations, protests and boycotts.

However, we are starting to drift away from the discussion of an education for deliberative democracy, and are instead talking about how to incorporate already existing democratic practices under the umbrella of deliberative democracy. We are also talking about how to include more citizens in a deliberative democracy that lacks the essential deliberative skills and values necessary for participation, and the opportunity to participate. These questions are not issues of an educational nature. Issues of an educational nature concern how future citizens are to be taught to participate in deliberative democracy. In that spirit and in this dissertation, I have argued, by referring to the core activity of deliberative democracy, that the most crucial skills and values in a deliberative sense are: the (a) ability to give reasons for one's own opinions, the (b) ability to listen to and reflect upon others arguments, and the (c) ability to work towards common conclusions. By acquiring these abilities, I argue that students will possess the most essential skills and values needed for deliberative democratic participation. Put differently, without mastering these they will have a difficult time participating in democratic deliberations let alone contributing productively toward the establishment of additional deliberative practices.

6.4 Conclusion

In this final chapter of the synopsis, I have given pedagogical and educational reasons for why I think we should use a minimalistic model for an education for deliberative democracy that centers on the absolute core of deliberative democratic participation. However, I also have a third reason. In the article "*Education for deliberative democracy: Mapping the field*", I argue that a problem in the research field of an education for deliberative democracy is that empirical studies that investigate deliberative educative practices are not connected to the theoretical framework of deliberative democracy solidly enough:

The unclear connection to deliberative democracy is perhaps even more apparent in the quantitative literature. These articles are first and foremost interested in measuring the effect of participation in deliberations. However, deliberation is here understood as a pedagogical method designed to teach students general political skills, knowledge and values: “deliberation about policy and politics in the classroom increases students’ knowledge, efficacy, interest, and opinion arrangement” (Luskin et al. in: Latimer & Hempson 2012, p. 374)... the effect of deliberation is measured against general political skills, knowledge and values (see for example Gastil & Dillard 1999, Feldman et al. 2007, Gershtenson et al. 2010). Again, the results are interesting, but they are not of immediate relevance to deliberative democracy in particular (Samuelsson & Bøyum, 2015, p. 86).

When deliberation as a pedagogical method is evaluated by its ability to develop skills such as general political skills, self-efficacy, and opinion arrangement, or when it is seen ‘as a way to teach students social skills such as taking responsibility for the consequences of one’s actions’ or emotional skills such as anger management’ (Samuelsson & Bøyum, 2015, p. 87), it is an open question as to how this is relevant for an education for deliberative democracy. It causes the results to lose their immediate relevance to an education for deliberative democracy. In a deliberative educative sense, why is it important to teach students skills such as self-efficacy? Self-efficacy could be relevant for deliberative democratic participation, and thus, for an education for deliberative democracy, but it is not obvious by itself. The connection to practices of deliberative democracy need to be made explicit. I argue that the minimalistic model I propose can help do that. By connecting the more peripheral skills and values to the core activity of deliberative democratic participation, they can be given meaning. If self-efficacy would be explicitly connected to the process of reason-giving that strives for consensual conclusions, we can begin to discuss how these skills are relevant to participation in democratic deliberations.

I have presented three different arguments for why we should place this kind of minimalistic model at the heart of an education for deliberative democracy. In a deliberative educative sense, it helps us identify the most essential and desirable learning outcomes. In a pedagogical sense, it helps us construct pedagogical practice of relevance for an education for deliberative democracy. Finally, it helps us bridge the gap between empirical studies investigating deliberation as a pedagogical method and

theoretical articles arguing for deliberative democracy as the aim for a democratic education. It helps make peripheral findings more relevant to questions of an education for deliberative democracy. I would not argue that this approach to an education for deliberative democracy solves every question relevant to such an education, there are countless topics still to be discussed, but I do argue that this is the place to start.

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Education for deliberative democracy: Mapping the field

Martin Samuelsson and Steinar Bøyum

The notion of deliberative democracy has been widely discussed in political theory the last twenty years. Deliberative democracy has also made an impression in educational research. Many who are interested in democratic education have started to ask how the skills and values characteristic of deliberative democracy can be taught and learned in the classroom. This work, however, is being done in different parts of the academic universe, and consequently the field of education for deliberative democracy can seem fragmented, which makes it difficult to achieve genuine progress. Building on a review of the literature, this article tries to structure the work in this field, by pointing out main lines of disagreement and differences in emphasis, as well as suggesting where work is needed to fruitfully translate the idea of deliberative democracy into an educational setting. Our main claim will be that there is a need for research on education for deliberative democracy that more thoroughly integrates the philosophical literature with empirical studies.

Keywords: education for democracy, deliberative democracy, deliberative pedagogy, literature review.

Introduction

Within political philosophy, deliberative democracy has been widely discussed during the last decades, even to the point that several authors now talk about a deliberative turn in democratic theory (Dryzek 2002, p. 1). Although ideas characteristic of deliberative democracy can be traced throughout the history of democratic thought, it is now most commonly associated with the work of contemporary authors like Jürgen Habermas, James Fishkin, Joshua Cohen, Amy Gutmann, and

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Dennis Thompson. Deliberative democracy has also made an impression in the field of democratic education, where writers have started to ask how the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and values required by deliberative democracy can be taught and learned in the classroom. However, it may seem as though these two bodies of literature, deliberative democratic theory and deliberative democratic education, tend to talk past each other, to the detriment of both. The aim of this article is to investigate how and why this is so.

Deliberative democracy and education

Deliberative democracy can be seen as a response to some of the challenges facing both contemporary democracies and conceptions of democracy. How do societies deal with growing and deepening pluralism? How can citizens become more actively involved in the governing of their communities? How may democracies live up to the ideals of democratic legitimacy so that decisions really do represent the will of the people and not just the will of an elite? Supporters of deliberative democracy see public reasoning as a crucial part of the answer to these questions, and accordingly they place public deliberation at the heart of democratic theory and practice.

According to the ideal of deliberative democracy, citizens and their representatives should strive to justify their positions and decisions through public reasoning, in which they seek mutually justifiable reasons for the laws they impose on one another (Gutmann & Thompson 2004). In this way, deliberative democracy can usefully be characterised as opposed to voting-centred views of democracy. Whereas the latter see democracy as an arena where fixed preferences and interests compete via (hopefully) fair mechanisms of aggregation, deliberative democracy instead emphasises the communicative process of will-formation that precedes voting. In the deliberative view, a legitimate political order is one that can be justified to all those living under its law (Chambers 2003). It is thus legitimised not by majority rule *per se*, but by the process of giving defensible reasons, explanations, and accounts for public decisions (Held 2006). Voting will still be needed, since even deliberation can lead to stand-offs, but deliberation takes the place of voting as the guiding idea of democracy.

Deliberative democracy lends itself nicely to educational treatment. Democracy in general “cannot thrive without a well-educated citizenry”, but that applies even more so to deliberative democracy (Gutmann & Thompson 2004, p. 35). The ability to give reasons for one’s views is not inborn, but has to be learned. This is especially so if it is held that

the reasons to be given in deliberation should be publicly acceptable, appealing to the common good instead of self-interest. Furthermore, the ability to listen carefully to others and to engage respectfully with views different from one's own seems to be a capacity perfectly suited for development in the classroom. In short, deliberative democracy seems to require what Paul Weithman (2005) calls a deliberative character, a cluster of skills, attitudes, and values that both can and should be cultivated in the classroom. Hence, it is no surprise that the last decade has seen the appearance of a considerable body of literature which addresses education for deliberative democracy. It is perhaps no accident that one of the leading theorists of deliberative democracy, Amy Gutmann, is also a leading educational theorist. As Gutmann and Thompson (2004, p. 35) say, "an important part of democratic education is learning how to deliberate well." It is plausible to assume that schools, as microcosms of society, are the best arena for children to learn this.

Yet just as there are conflicting conceptions of democracy, there are conflicting conceptions of democratic education. One's view of democratic education will depend on one's view of democracy (as well as of education), since different conceptions of democracy have different ideas of how citizens should participate in democratic society. And just as there are different ways to understand democracy, there are different ways to understand deliberative democracy, and this might lead to different ideas about what an education for deliberative democracy should look like, and which skills and values it should cultivate. In this article, we aim to highlight the main ideas and assumptions, as well as the main differences and disagreements characterising the field of education for deliberative democracy.

Method

It is difficult to get an overview of the field of education for deliberative democracy. It is located where many academic disciplines converge. Relevant work is being produced within fields such as philosophy, pedagogy, sociology, psychology, and others, and articles are being published in many different journals in different areas. Consequently, the various publications build on each other only to a limited extent. We therefore thought it necessary to perform a review of the literature, in order to take stock of where the field is now, and where it is headed. This article is thus based on what is called in the methodology of literature reviews a *conceptual* review. Unlike a systematic review, a conceptual review does not attempt to answer particular research questions by

summarizing the results of the existing literature, but instead strives to synthesize a particular field of knowledge in a less formalized way (Petticrew & Roberts 2006). The aim is to give a map of the field in question, its main ideas, assumptions, and controversies, in order to understand it better, rather than to summarize (all) its results. Yet our conceptual review also has aspects of what Petticrew and Roberts (2006, p. 41) call a “critical review”, in that we critically examine this literature, trying to point out its main shortages and challenges.

In our work with the literature, we limited the search process to articles detected with ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center). Articles in languages other than English are thus not included, nor are books and book sections. The reason for leaving out books and book sections is, beside pragmatic concerns, that the thoughts presented within these sources have usually been published in articles before being printed as books (Fernández & Sundström 2011). There may be articles of relevance not detected with ERIC, but it is the most comprehensive database available to educational researchers. The case can thus be made that it will yield a sufficiently comprehensive selection to satisfy the aim of a conceptual review: to present the main ideas and controversies in a field.

The searches were carried out in February of 2013. In the search process, the search term *deliberati** was set as a necessary criterion: all the articles in this review have *deliberati** either in the abstract, the title, or as a keyword. This term was combined with other relevant words and phrases, such as education, school, democra*, classroom, dialogue, and discussion. This gave us 1200 peer-reviewed articles that seemed pertinent to the review. Many of these were not concerned with deliberative democracy, however, so after reading the abstracts, the number was narrowed down, first from 1200 to 99; and then, after reading the full articles, to 67; all explicitly about education for democracy with deliberation as a central aspect. Thus, the findings presented in this article are built upon the review of 67 articles, marked with an asterisk in the reference list. Most of these articles were published in the last ten years, indicating the relative recentness of the field. As mentioned, they were also spread out over a large number of different journals, thus demonstrating the need for a comprehensive map of the field.

General points of agreement

The field of education for deliberative democracy can be structured around two overarching points of agreement and three main lines of

difference and disagreement. We will focus on the lines of disagreement, since these are the most consequential, but we will nevertheless start out by stating the two general points on which the reviewed articles concur.

First, there is an underlying agreement in the literature that deliberative skills, knowledge and values are learned through *practice*. This amounts to a shared pedagogical assumption: it is by partaking in deliberative situations that students/future citizens learn the skills, knowledge and values necessary for participation in deliberative democracy. Technically expressed, there is an assumption of parallelism between the object of learning (what is to be learned) and the method of learning (how to learn it). Even though this assumption seems eminently plausible (“to learn something you have to practice it”) and may to some even sound like a tautology (“deliberation is learned through deliberation”), it is not necessarily true in all areas. James Murphy (2004), for instance, refers to studies that seem to show that democratic skills and virtues are not learned, or at least are not best learned, by democratic education as it is typically conceived by theorists, but by the acquisition of traditional knowledge embedded in subjects like history and the social sciences. Hence, one should not dismiss out of hand the possibility that deliberative skills and values are best learned not by practicing deliberation, but by imparting historical and social scientific knowledge. Still, this possibility is not considered in the existing literature on education for deliberative democracy.

Second, there is a general agreement about what a deliberative situation is: a dialogue where different voices and perspectives can be heard and expressed, and in which the participants listen to and treat each other with respect. This is the common core of deliberation shared by major theorists like Habermas, Fishkin, and Gutmann and Thompson. A deliberative democratic process is one where everyone can participate equally, and where the participants listen carefully and respectfully to each other. It is also a process in which the participants articulate reasons that they think others can understand and accept, thus directing it towards some form of collective will-formation.

However, when this shared core of deliberation is transported into educational research, the agreement disappears. Different ways of talking about deliberation and education emerge, giving rise to multiple conceptions of deliberative democracy, as well as multiple ideas about the role of deliberation in education for democracy. What Dennis Thompson says about empirical studies of deliberative democracy within political science also applies to parallel studies within educational research:

While claiming (correctly) that deliberative theories share a common core of values, the empirical studies actually adopt diverse concepts of deliberation and examine different consequences under a range of conditions. The variations make it difficult to compare the findings of the studies and relate them to the theories (Thompson 2008, p. 501)

In other words, beneath the agreement there lurks a confusing disagreement, to which we now turn.

Dimensions of disagreement/difference

The overarching difference in the field, and the most substantive one, is that between theoretically driven articles and practically/empirically driven articles. The theoretical articles are primarily concerned with deliberation as a political concept, while the practical articles are primarily concerned with deliberation as a pedagogical concept. There are also disagreements within the different camps. In the theoretical camp, there is a disagreement concerning the scope of deliberative democratic ideals. Here, articles range from what we have called “political conceptions” on the one hand and “way-of-life conceptions” on the other hand. Within the practical camp there is a wider range of differences than in the theoretical camp. The various articles have different assumptions about what a deliberative process is supposed to teach students, such as decision-making skills, explorative skills, and general democratic skills. All of them, however, describe these skills as democratic skills fostered by participation in a deliberative process.

We shall now explain the differences in the field in greater detail, starting with the overarching one, followed by a more detailed description of the variations within the main camps. Of course, it is not the case that all articles fall neatly into the categories we have constructed, but we still find it a useful and adequate map of the field, giving us what Wittgenstein (2001) famously called a “perspicuous representation”.

Theoretical vs. practical

The main division in the literature is between what we might call theoretical and practical approaches. The first body of work starts from a theoretical conception of deliberative democracy and reasons from there towards the skills and values future citizens should develop. The second set of articles starts from a pedagogical conception of deliberation,

that is, deliberation as a (classroom) practice, and moves from there towards the skills and values that participation in such practices is expected to generate. These latter articles are either qualitative investigations of deliberative pedagogy or quantitative empirical articles focusing on measuring the effects of such pedagogy. Based on these results, researchers in the practical camp are trying to answer whether deliberative pedagogy “works” or not, and which challenges and opportunities it opens up.

This might at first seem a perfect fit: the theoretical and the practical articles meet halfway in a shared view of the skills and values essential to the practice of deliberative democracy, the theoretical articles justifying the necessity of cultivating these skills and values by grounding them in philosophical ideals of deliberative democracy; and the practical articles showing how these skills and values are best cultivated in the classroom. Yet even though the literature appears at first glance cohesive, beneath the surface it is considerably more fragmented and disjointed. The two sets of articles operate with seemingly similar words, concepts, and assumptions, but these are given different meanings within each set.

The main reason for this discontinuity is that within education, deliberation has become a conception in its own right, in the form of deliberative *pedagogy*, which is not necessarily connected to deliberative *democracy*. In other words, a gap has opened up between deliberation as a democratic concept and deliberation as a pedagogical concept. This distinction runs parallel to one formulated by Tomas Englund in relation to his concept of deliberative communication:

[There] is an important difference between deliberative communication and deliberative democracy. In the latter constellation, a close relationship to one or other formal democratic decision-making process is central, whereas deliberative communication does not presuppose this closeness (Englund 2006, pp. 506–507)

According to Englund, deliberative communication may be connected to a deliberative democratic ideal, but it can also be connected to other educational aims, such as the formation and transmission of values and knowledge more generally. Deliberative communication can thus be seen as contributing to either deliberative democratic aims or more general educational aims.

The distinction between deliberative democracy and deliberative pedagogy is not a problem in itself, but it becomes a problem when “deliberation” is used in both senses as though there were no distinction.

Hence, when the concept of deliberation is placed within a pedagogical context, one operates with a general idea of deliberation that can fit into almost any conception of democracy. So when it is argued that the pedagogical method of deliberation fosters such-and-such skills or values, it is an open question what makes these skills and values relevant for deliberative *democracy*. We shall return to this overarching disagreement, which is our main concern, later in the paper, but first we shall go into greater detail about the differences within the two camps.

Differences within the theoretical approach: political vs. way of life

There are significant variations within the two main approaches. As mentioned, the more theoretical articles start from normative ideals of deliberative democracy. However, the ideals employed differ, and thereby also their accounts of the skills and values that ought to be cultivated in education. The main dividing line is between those that see deliberative democracy as a *political* ideal, and those that see it as an entire *way of life*.

Political conceptions of deliberative democracy see it primarily as a way for citizens to make political decisions together. These conceptions are those that will be most familiar for people coming from the philosophical debate about deliberative democracy. Articles in this vein commonly take the works of Jürgen Habermas and/or Amy Gutmann as their points of departure. Reasoning skills, critical thinking, and the ability to listen to others are skills often emphasised, as well as values such as reciprocity, tolerance, and respect in the deliberative process (see for example Costa 2006, Englund 2006, Fitzpatrick 2009, Hanson & Howe 2011).

Now it should be mentioned that although most articles in this camp are supportive of deliberative democracy, there are also critical voices. The most common point of criticism in the educational literature on deliberative democracy concerns the role of emotions (see for example Ruitenberg 2009, Peterson 2009, Griffin 2012). Both Habermas' and Gutmann's views on the deliberative process are castigated for being overly rationalistic and for not taking sufficient account of the role that emotions could and should play within deliberation. This kind of criticism is succinctly put by Martyn Griffin (2012):

Deliberative democracy ... is built upon an assumption that citizens will be capable of constructing and defending reasons for their moral and political beliefs. However, critics of deliberative democracy suggest that citizens' emotions are not

properly considered in this process and, if left unconsidered, present a serious problem for this political framework... There has been little consideration of how these capacities might be educated in children so that emotionally competent deliberative citizens can be created. In this paper, emotional intelligence is presented as an essential capacity that can fulfil this role for the deliberative citizen and deliberative democracy more generally (Griffin 2012, p. 517).

This kind of criticism is usually grounded in the thoughts of Chantal Mouffe and radical democracy, which seems to have been quite influential in the educational literature. As a response, some authors try to modify and incorporate the role of emotions into the deliberative conception, while others instead argue for the ideas of radical democracy as the educational aim. It is not our aim here to defend deliberative democracy, but it should be noted that a prominent deliberative theorist like Thompson (2008, p. 505) claims that this criticism is based on a caricature of deliberative democracy: no major deliberative theorist has ever held that deliberators should rely on pure reason alone and avoid all appeals to emotion. Still, this type of criticism is frequently met with in the field of education.

Whereas political conceptions of deliberative democracy attend more narrowly to decision-making, what we have called way-of-life conceptions see deliberation and its attendant skills and values as constituents of a comprehensive *moral* ideal, a way people should behave towards each other *in general* (see for example Parker 1997, Yeager & Silva 2002, Laguardia & Pearl 2009). The important difference between the two types is thus one of scope. In the former, deliberation is seen as a process of political decision-making, whereas in the latter it is seen as a mode of communication that should ideally suffuse our ways of being and living together. In their exploration of how “children can learn to deliberate democratically”, Yeager and Silva (2002, p. 18) emphasise that although “an understanding of political democracy is important... we believe that there are broader meanings of democracy that stem partly from John Dewey’s notion of democracy... a form of active community life – a way of being and living together”. As should be clear from the preceding quote, way-of-life conceptions are usually influenced by the work of John Dewey.

The difference in scope between the two could have different educational implications. The same core skills and values are emphasised in both: verbal reasoning skills, the ability to listen to others, to reflect upon their statements and arguments, attitudes of tolerance and respect, and so on. Yet the difference in scope means that these skills and values

have different meanings in the different conceptions. In the first, they are primarily issue-centred, and in the second they are more relation-centred. In the political conception, deliberative skills and values are justified instrumentally as strategies for (good) political decision-making. Reasoning skills, for instance, are seen as important for exploring different alternatives and different solutions in order to make the understanding of the problem and the subsequent decision as good as possible. Furthermore, values of tolerance and respect are connected with the idea that one should not have predetermined views about which solution, decision, or perspective best fits the situation one is in. In contrast, in the way-of-life conception these abilities are connected to the idea of deliberation as a way for people to interact and live together. Deliberative skills and values are thus not employed merely to explore different alternatives in order to come to the best possible solution, but are justified as manifesting a kinder and morally better way to treat one's fellow citizens.

A further implication could be the treatment of controversial issues in the classroom. A discussion framed with the aim of educating students to “be sensitive to each other's feelings” (James 2010, pp. 620–621) will typically be guided in a direction where the discussion is characterised by these values, whereas a discussion framed with the aim of teaching students to “challenge ideas” will typically be guided in a different direction, and allow for a more confrontational form of communication. This can be extended to the discussion of a safe classroom climate, which is a prominent topic of interest in the literature (see for example Minnici & Hill 2007, James 2010). A discussion framed by a political conception will be more likely to allow a confrontational discussion without interpreting it as an “unsafe classroom climate”, whereas someone viewing the very same discussion from a way-of-life conception might interpret it as “unsafe”. The point is that different conceptions of deliberative democracy would guide classroom practices in different directions, and give deliberative skills and values different meanings.

Differences within the practical approach

The difference in scope noted in the former section was within the more theoretical articles. We now turn to the articles within the practical camp. These start with a pedagogical conception of deliberation and move from there towards the skills and values participation is expected to generate. This part of the literature is difficult to structure, given the variation as to which aspects of deliberation are seen as most important, and thus which skills and values it ought to cultivate. In this section we

look at different ideas about deliberation as a pedagogical method, that is, diverging views both about what to emphasise in the deliberation itself and about the educational benefits of that deliberation. We also intend to show how and why this is a contributing factor to the gap existing in the field.

Within the practical camp, there are both qualitative and quantitative articles. The articles using qualitative methods are usually most interested in how to make deliberative discussions “work”, what possibilities and strategies exist for conducting them, and what the obstacles and difficulties are. A recurring challenge is that classroom discussions too often become confrontational, resulting in an unpleasant atmosphere (Minnici & Hill 2007, p. 202). These challenges are often linked to the question of how to maintain a “safe” classroom climate, a major topic of discussion in this part of the literature (see for example Minnici & Hill 2007, James 2010). Other challenges include how to get everyone involved and how to handle varying class sizes (see for example Parker 2001, Beck 2005). Another topic of discussion is the role and potential of the Internet as an arena in which to conduct deliberative discussions, with several articles expressing enthusiasm for this possibility (see for example Holt et al. 1998, Hall 2008, Jackson & Wallin 2009), while others concentrate on the classroom (see for example Brice 2002, Beck 2005, Reich 2007, Thornberg 2010).

A desired outcome of deliberation is decision-making skills. By participating in deliberation students are assumed to learn skills necessary for making decisions together, essential skills in a competent democratic citizen (see for example Parker 2001, Beck 2003, Beck 2005, Camicia 2010). A closely related desired outcome is explorative skills. According to this view, deliberation should teach students how to discuss and explore different issues together (see for example Parker 2001, Brice 2002, Jerome & Algarra 2005, Camicia 2010). By exploring difficult topics together students are assumed to acquire democratic capacities such as being able to think logically, to argue coherently and fairly, and to consider relevant alternatives before making judgment (Brice 2002, pp. 67–68). Now, there are noticeable similarities between the skills and values emphasised in the qualitative part of the practical camp on one side, and the skills and values emphasised by the political conception described in the theoretical camp on the other. An important difference, however, is that within the pedagogically driven articles the description of deliberative democracy is often quite broad and vague, as is the description of deliberation as an educative process. An example is found in Beck (2003):

While the tools of deliberation are many, Parker and Zumeta (1999) reduce the eight steps of professional policy analysis to three steps that citizens should know. Their steps can be described as civic tools. They are: (1) problem findings – identifying and understanding public problems; (2) solutions generation and analysis – developing and analyzing policy options together; and (3) decision making – making policy decisions together” (Beck 2003, pp. 328–329).

This description of a deliberative process is so broad that the connection to deliberative democracy becomes unclear. When the argument about which desired skills and values participation in deliberation can be expected to generate is based upon such a vague definition, the immediate relevance to deliberative democracy becomes unclear.

The unclear connection to deliberative democracy is perhaps even more apparent in the quantitative literature. These articles are first and foremost interested in measuring the effect of participation in deliberations. However, deliberation is here understood as a pedagogical method designed to teach students general political skills, knowledge and values: “deliberation about policy and politics in the classroom increases students’ knowledge, efficacy, interest, and opinion arrangement” (Luskin et al. in: Latimer & Hempson 2012, p. 374). Deliberative conversational skills are at times mentioned, but the effect of deliberation is measured against general political skills, knowledge and values (see for example Gastil & Dillard 1999, Feldman et al. 2007, Gershtenson et al. 2010). Again, the results are interesting, but they are not of immediate relevance to deliberative democracy in particular.

The empirical studies, both qualitative and quantitative, do not for the most part address the concerns that are central in the theoretical work on deliberative democracy. The practical field’s use of broad and vague definitions of deliberation leads to multifarious notions of what the desired skills and values are, and thus, what deliberation ought to cultivate. The problem is that these vague definitions lead to reinterpretations of deliberative skills and values to the extent that it is possible to question what their connection to deliberative democracy is all together. It is though a gap threatens to open up within the literature, between a more specific political idea of deliberation and a more general idea of deliberation.

An extreme example of how the very broad definitions of deliberation employed in the practical field makes it possible to reinterpret the desired “deliberative” skills and values, is displayed in Dahlstedt et al. (2011). Here various educational programmes, such as Aggression

Replacement Training (ART), are described as educative in a deliberative democratic sense:

Lately, a deliberative conception of democracy has gained influence in policy debates throughout Europe. Individuals are here seen to be fostered into responsible, mature – democratic – citizens by being involved in dialogue... This article analyses two pedagogical models... Social and Emotional Training and Aggression Replacement Training, both teaching students the art of democratic deliberation ... The programmes, through the use of dialogue, aim at educating the pupils in one way or another to become deliberative subjects, characterized by a well-developed ‘social competence’ (Dahlstedt et al. 2011, pp. 399–400).

Like Bergh and Englund (2014) we wonder what this has to do with deliberative democracy as conceived of by political theorists. This article is an extreme example of a general problem in the field: when deliberation is seen as a way to teach students different skills, as in this example social skills, like taking responsibility for the consequences of one’s actions, or emotional skills, like anger management (Dahlstedt et al. 2011, p. 408), what makes these skills and values deliberative-democratic? Are the students learning specifically deliberative-democratic skills or just general skills, placed within a framework of deliberative democracy to earn legitimacy?

Our main conclusion, and our main concern, about the state of deliberative education echoes the one made by Dennis Thompson (2008) in his survey of the relation between deliberative democratic theory and empirical political science: normative theorists and empirical researchers tend to “talk past each other” – the empirical studies often fail to engage with the theoretical ones, and vice versa. The empirical work would be more productive if it had a clearer idea of the distinctive nature of deliberative democracy, in contrast to general democratic ideas. Something similar goes for educational research on deliberative democracy. The empirical studies employ diverse conceptions of deliberation, and moreover, conceptions that are so general that the connection between practical, pedagogical research and theoretical, philosophical research is lost. A tighter integration of pedagogical and philosophical work on deliberation would yield more fruitful research.

Conclusion

Our survey of the field of education for deliberative democracy has shown that it is characterised by some consequential disagreements and differences in emphasis. Despite the underlying agreement that deliberative skills and values are learned through practicing deliberation, and that the core of deliberation is a respectful dialogue where various voices are heard, there are also extensive disagreements. The most significant of these is the one between studies that are concerned with deliberation as primarily a political concept and studies that start from deliberation as a pedagogical concept. Within the first camp, articles range from what we have called “political conceptions” on the one hand to “way-of-life-conceptions” on the other hand. Within the second camp, there is a wider range of differences and articles have various ideas about what a deliberative process is supposed to teach students such as decision-making skills, explorative skills, and general democratic skills.

All of these disagreements contribute to the impression of a disjointed field. On the surface they all seem to talk about the same thing, but different articles intend different things when using the same concepts. Different conceptions of deliberative democracy guide education in different directions, and the empirical articles are not investigating quite the same thing as what the theoretical field is arguing for. Particularly problematic is the divergence between a narrow, political ideal of deliberation and a wider, pedagogical idea, and the way articles often slide from one use to the other, without seemingly noticing the difference, which makes the various authors talk past each other. The result is a field of literature in which it is difficult to compare the different articles, and difficult to evaluate, discuss and use the results and thoughts presented. As a consequence, work within this field fails to be cumulative: articles do not build on each other, and little progress is being made. In order to make the field more cohesive, a clearer attention to the distinction between deliberative democracy and deliberative pedagogy might be productive. Obviously, abstract ideals like those found within the philosophical literature on deliberative democracy will have to be operationalised into more manageable methods and objectives in order to be applied educationally, but still, it would be helpful to connect these operationalisations back to the political ideals, so that the latter are not simply left behind. By thus tending carefully to the interplay between philosophical ideals and pedagogical reality, genuine progress, both in a theoretical and practical sense, might be achieved.

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Democracy & Education

Education for Deliberative Democracy A Typology of Classroom Discussions

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Abstract

The theory of deliberative democracy places public deliberations at the heart of democracy. In order to participate in democratic deliberations, citizens need certain skills, attitudes, and values. Within the field of education for deliberative democracy, it is assumed that these are learned through participation in democratic deliberation. Thus, one way to educate future citizens for deliberative democracy is by constructing democratic deliberations in the classroom. In this article, four strategically chosen examples of discussions taking place inside classrooms are analyzed, in order to flesh out the abstract criteria of democratic deliberations and to create an empirically based typology of classroom discussions. In this article I also aspire to contribute to classroom practices by pointing out how teachers can steer classroom discussions toward democratic deliberation: They can use questions that open up space for disagreement, while at the same time present opportunities to reach collective conclusions.

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THE IDEA OF deliberative democracy has been widely discussed in political theory over the last two decades. It has also made an impression in the field of democratic education. Many who are interested in democratic education have started to ask how the skills and values assumed necessary for deliberative democratic participation can be taught and learned.

In a review of the field of education for deliberative democracy, Samuelsson and Bøyum (2015) argue that it is characterised by both agreement and disagreement. There is an overarching agreement that students and future citizens learn the skills and values necessary for deliberative democratic participation by partaking in deliberative discussions. Yet the field is also marked

by significant disagreements and differences in focus. The most important one is between studies viewing deliberation primarily as a political concept and studies viewing it primarily as a pedagogical concept. The first body of work starts from a theoretical conception of deliberative democracy and reasons from there toward the skills and values future citizens should develop. The second position starts with a pedagogical conception of deliberation, that is, deliberation as a classroom practice, and moves from there toward the skills and values that participation in it is expected to generate. This difference in focus and starting point only becomes a problem, however, when the pedagogical conception is not connected to the political idea of deliberative democracy. Thus, when it is argued that the pedagogical method

of deliberation fosters, for example, general social and emotional skills, it is an open question how and whether these skills are related to deliberative democracy. The result is a field in which empirical articles investigate something different than the theoretical field is arguing for and, thus, that the two bodies of studies tend to talk past each other.

The first aim of this article is to bring the more theoretical, political ideal of deliberative democracy closer to the pedagogical ideas of deliberation as a classroom practice. To do so, it is necessary to flesh out the abstract criteria of democratic deliberation with a concrete pedagogical content, without removing oneself too far from the political conception of deliberation. Using four strategically chosen examples of classroom discussions, I develop an empirically based typology (Kluge, 2000) that seeks to make salient the character of democratic deliberation taking place inside classrooms as well as to highlight the difference between democratic deliberations and discussions that appear to be deliberative in the relevant sense but that lack one or more crucial features. In this way, I strive to bridge the gap between the abstract criteria of democratic deliberations and the discussions taking place in classrooms. A second aim of the article is to contribute to classroom practices by pointing out how teachers can steer classroom discussions in the direction of democratic deliberation with the use of certain types of questions.

I begin by giving an account of the theoretical foundation of deliberative democracy, of democratic deliberations, and of the pedagogical idea of education for deliberative democracy. I then describe the empirical study on which the article is based, before presenting the typology of discussions found within the material. In this section, I also conduct a step-by-step analysis of representative examples of each type in order to show what a democratic deliberation might look like inside a classroom as well as to distinguish it from other closely related types of discussions. Finally, based upon the typology, I discuss possible implications for classroom practices in education for deliberative democracy.

Deliberative Democracy

Theories of deliberative democracy hold that the essence of democratic politics does not lie in voting and representation but in the common deliberation that underlies collective decision making (Chappell, 2012). At the core of these theories is the reason-giving requirement: Citizens and their representatives should justify to each other in a process of public deliberation the laws they impose on one another (Thompson, 2008). Whereas voting-centred views see democracy as an arena where fixed preferences and interests compete, deliberative democracy emphasises the communicative formation of will and opinion that precedes voting. In this view, democracy gets its legitimacy not through majority rule *per se* but through the process of giving defensible reasons, explanations, and accounts for public decisions (Held, 2006). In short, a legitimate political order is one that can be justified to all those living under its law (Chambers, 2003).

A number of different theorists have contributed to the development of the theory of deliberative democracy. It has mainly developed in two branches with slightly different focuses. The

“European view,” led by Habermas, has focused on developing a macrolevel theory of deliberative democracy, while the “North American view,” influenced by Rawls’s political liberalism and primarily represented by Gutmann, Fishkin, and Cohen, has concentrated on exploring real-life examples of actual public deliberation. Despite differences in attention, however, there are some aspects of deliberative democracy that most scholars of deliberative democracy agree on. Two of them are highly relevant to this article: the essential features of a good democratic deliberation and the purpose of such deliberation.

According to Habermas, a good deliberative process is based upon “the ideal speech situation,” a communicative situation where everybody can contribute, where they have an equal voice, and where they can speak freely and honestly without internal or external deception or constraint (Chappell, 2012). According to Gutmann and Thompson (1996, 2004), it is a reason-giving process in which participants use arguments accessible to all citizens and appeal to principles that all reasonable citizens could accept. Fishkin (2009, p. 34) sees deliberation as a process where arguments offered by one perspective are answered by considerations from other perspectives and where the arguments offered are considered on their merits regardless of which participant offers them. Thus, it is possible to discern a common core in these ideals of democratic deliberation. It is a discussion in which different points of view are presented and underpinned with reasons, and participants listen respectfully to each other and reflect on other participants’ claims and arguments.

There is also a rough agreement in the field about the purpose of a democratic deliberation. It is directed toward some form of collective-will formation. This is the practical, political aspect of deliberation: The participants are in some way trying to reach an agreement on how to act (see, for example, Habermas, 1998). We may thus distinguish between deliberation in a narrow, political sense and deliberation in a wide, not necessarily political sense. This means that a discussion can be deliberative (in the wide sense) without being connected to an idea of democracy. For example, in what may be called an explorative deliberation, participants may discuss a certain claim or concept and use arguments and reasons to inquire into it, but without striving to reach a collective decision to act upon. In order for a discussion to be deliberative in the sense pertinent to deliberative democracy, it also has to involve a striving for a collective-will formation, that is, some agreement about what to do.

Despite the overarching agreement in the field, there are also disagreements. For example, what is to count as a deliberative reason? According to Gutmann and Thompson (1996), a reason has to be guided by reciprocity in order to qualify as deliberative in a democratic sense. The principle of reciprocity asks citizens to use reasons other reasonable and similarly motivated citizens could accept, even if they have different worldviews. On the other hand, theorists like Young (2000) have argued that many formulations of deliberative democracy are too narrow. She argued that by using strict criteria for what counts as deliberative, one runs the risk of excluding from democratic participation certain types of reasons, perspectives, forms of conversations, and in the end, citizens.

Therefore, reasonableness should not be restricted to specific types of reasons but rather be defined as a willingness to listen to others and to maintain an open attitude to those who try to explain to you why you are wrong (p. 24). As should be clear, this discussion is not limited to questions about reasons alone but is also related to broader questions of democratic legitimacy, inclusion, and exclusion.

Similar disagreements can be found concerning the aim of democratic deliberation. Some have argued that deliberation should aim for a deep kind of consensus, in which citizens ideally agree on the course of action as well as on the reasons for it (Chappell, 2012), while others, given the challenges of a modern, pluralistic society, have argued for a relaxed notion of consensus, in which participants agree on the course of action but not necessarily on the reasons for it. Important influences for the latter position are Rawls's (1987) notion of an "overlapping consensus," Sunstein's (1995) notion of "incomplete theorized agreements," and Gaus and Vallier's (2009) idea of "convergence."

Education for Deliberative Democracy

Deliberative democracy has been criticized for being unrealistic: People are neither willing nor capable of participating in democratic deliberations (Englund, 2007). They are, so this criticism goes, driven by self-interest and are not willing to make decisions based on the idea of the common good and/or are too irrational and emotional to be capable of listening to reasons and arguments. Hence, they stick to the beliefs they already hold rather than being open to letting them be transformed in deliberation with others.

However, even if one assumes what is already doubtful, that this is true of the current situation, this criticism is based on a static view of people as unable to learn. If future citizens are taught to participate in deliberative democracy, the likelihood that they will be capable of doing so will increase. Furthermore, if citizens were capable of participating in democratic deliberations, the possibility of successfully implementing more deliberative practices in society would also increase, as would the opportunities for citizens to co-construct democratic deliberations on their own. Therefore, an education for deliberative democracy seeks to educate future citizens to participate in and to co-construct democratic deliberations and is, thus, first and foremost interested in teaching them how to state claims, give reasons, listen to and reflect on others' arguments, and strive toward finding a solution in collaboration with other participants.

Within the field of education for deliberative democracy there is a general agreement that future citizens learn the skills and values necessary for deliberative democratic participation primarily by partaking in deliberative situations, and not, for instance, by reading about deliberative democracy (Samuelsson & Bøyum, 2015). But what does this mean more concretely? The common core of democratic deliberation described so far seems too abstract to be applied directly in classrooms. Perhaps the clearest contemporary translation of deliberative democracy into a pedagogical conception is that by Englund (2006). A deliberative educative situation, according to Englund, is one in which (a) different views are confronted with one another and

arguments for them are articulated; (b) there is tolerance and respect for the concrete other, and participants listen to each other's arguments; and (c) there are elements of collective-will formation, a desire to reach consensus or a temporary agreement. Two additional criteria are also formulated, stating (d) that traditions are allowed to be questioned and (e) that deliberative communication should eventually take place without teacher control. However, according to Englund, the first three criteria represent the inner core of deliberative communication. We may summarize these as three requirements: the reason-giving requirement, the reflective requirement, and the consensus requirement. The assumption is that by participating in classroom discussions following these criteria, students will have the opportunity to practice making arguments, giving reasons, listening to others, and so on, while at the same time being part of a collective-will formation process. By partaking in deliberative educative situations, students will, it is hoped, gradually become more and more competent at democratic deliberation.

However, as shown above, there are disagreements about the precise definition of deliberative democratic criteria. Furthermore, if one assumes, as this paper does, that future citizens learn deliberative skills and values by partaking in deliberative situations, specific features of those situations become important because different interpretations have different educational implications. Will the students be encouraged to strive toward a deep or a relaxed notion of consensus? Will they learn that a deliberative reason has to be accompanied by reciprocity, or should reasonableness rather be understood as merely a willingness to listen? In one sense, this article sides with Young (2000) in leaving the concept of reason open, since it does not take a specific stand on what is to count as a reason. By leaving the reason-giving requirement, along with the other two requirements, slightly open, I argue that it is possible to bridge the gap between theories of deliberative democracy on one side and empirical research conducted in classrooms on the other without losing the essence of deliberative democracy in the process. However, as I shall return to, this openness does not stop the students themselves from adopting stricter criteria for deliberation in particular contexts.

Yet even if we are now somewhat closer to fleshing out the abstract criteria of democratic deliberation, we still need to get a more concrete idea of what a classroom discussion that satisfies the three requirements actually might look like. In order to do this, it is important to distinguish democratic deliberations from discussions that are similar but lack one or more characteristic features. Hence, the aim now is to bring the theory of deliberative democracy and the ideas from deliberation as a classroom practice closer together, by analyzing examples of classroom discussions and by developing a practically useful typology.

Empirical Study

The data for the empirical study that this article is based on was collected during the spring and autumn of 2014. The method of collection was qualitative, since the main interest was an in-depth investigation of classroom discussions. Three different schools were visited, all located on the west coast of Norway, in or just outside

one of the bigger cities in the region. I accompanied one teacher at each school for approximately two weeks, observed their classroom practices, conducted formal interviews with them, and was involved in informal conversations. The data contains samples from different grades (five, six, seven, eight, nine, and upper secondary) as well as different subjects (English, math, Norwegian, social science, and psychology). The profiles of the schools varied, with two of them being more ethnically diverse than the third. One school had a religious foundation, while the other two did not. The teachers were all interested in democracy as an educational aim, as well as in classroom discussion as a pedagogical practice. However, they were unfamiliar with the concept of deliberative democracy prior to participating in this study. Furthermore, even though the Norwegian national curriculum does include democratic competence as an explicit aim, the concept of deliberative democracy is absent. Nevertheless, as will be shown, it is fully possible that the discussions in the observed classrooms have democratic deliberative characteristics, even if the teachers were unfamiliar with the concept at the time.

The loosely structured observation guide that directed my attention during data collection was based mainly on Englund's three core criteria. Thus, I intentionally looked for discussions satisfying the reason-giving requirement, the reflective requirement, and the consensus requirement. During data analysis, a number of discussions seemed at first glance to be examples of democratic deliberations. However, upon closer analysis, significant differences between them appeared, allowing for the construction of a typology of classroom discussions relevant to education for deliberative democracy. In the following, I shall present this typology, illustrating each type with a representative example. As will be made clear, only the fourth and last is a case of democratic deliberation in the sense relevant to theories of deliberative democracy (which does not mean that the other three cannot be useful for teaching skills and values essential for deliberative democratic participation). Illustrating the first type is an example from a discussion about beauty, while the second type is exemplified by a mathematical discussion. The third type is illustrated with a discussion focusing on human rights, while the fourth and final type is exemplified by a discussion about how a class is going to work with a topic.

A Typology of Classroom Discussions

1. The explorative discussion.

The first type is a discussion with pervasive disagreement but with little striving toward consensus. To exemplify this, let's look at a discussion taking place in an English class in upper secondary school. Ten students and one teacher were present during the discussion, which focused on the concept of beauty. The debated questions fluctuated from "Why is beauty important?" to "Is modern art beautiful?" At first glance, this discussion seemed to be an example of a democratic deliberation, since the students were presenting different viewpoints; they seemed to listen to each other; and they seemed willing to think about each other's statements and posed replies to them. In the following short extract, the teacher and two students discussed whether people in the Middle

Ages could appreciate beauty in their everyday lives. The teacher argued that they did appreciate beauty, while the students argued the contrary.

Teacher: That doesn't mean their whole universe was deprived of beauty.

Peter: No, but he [Rembrandt] painted city citizens who were more like merchants and people that at least had housing, but I mean, throughout history most of the population have not been that well off.

Teacher: But do you think they were completely deprived of moments where [they asked,] "What are the possibilities of life?"

Peter: I wouldn't think so, but I don't think . . .

Tobias: Yeah, but we're not that . . .

Peter: [But I don't think they] woke up and stopped and felt like, "Oh, wonder what's going on. What am I doing here?" I don't think many people woke up thinking like that in the morning. I think most of them just went straight to . . .

Teacher: You guys, honestly, every day I practically wake up and it's, I mean, [laughs] "What am I doing here?"

Several students: [laugh]

Teacher: "What are the possibilities of this day?"

Tobias: Yeah, like Peter said, it wasn't any better; it was worse back then. In the big cities, if you go back a couple of hundred years, then you didn't have sewers, so what people would do? They would dump the sewage out their windows, meaning you literally had sewage running through the streets. That's not beautiful. You would wake up and: "Oh, there is sewage in the middle of the road."

This type of discussion fulfills both the reason-giving and the reflective requirements. In the example above, different claims were put forward, such as "That doesn't mean their whole universe was deprived of beauty" and "But I don't think they woke up and stopped and felt like, 'Oh, wonder what's going on. What am I doing here?'" The different claims were underpinned with arguments and reasons, for instance, "It was worse back then. In the big cities, if you go back a couple of hundred years . . . sewage [was] running through the streets . . . That's not beautiful." Furthermore, they listened to each other and responded to each other's statements: "But do you think they were completely deprived of moments where" and "Yeah, like Peter said." This shows the presence of the reason-giving and the reflective requirements. However, the consensus condition is not fulfilled. There were instances when they were responding to each other, but overall the discussion was more an exploration of differences than a construction of a common understanding and a striving for consensus. This is not irrelevant for democratic deliberation. Indeed, Parker (2006) sees it as a vital precursor to a deliberative process. It is not in itself deliberative in the sense characteristic of deliberative democracy, however, since it is not channeled toward a resolution that can be made a basis for a collective act. Therefore, this type has the characteristics of an explorative discussion rather than a democratic deliberation.

2. The problem-solving discussion.

The second type is a discussion with a clear striving for consensus but with little real disagreement. The representative example is from a mathematical discussion where 25 fifth-grade students were organized in groups of four trying to find the solution to 344 divided by 4. At first glance, this discussion seemed to be an example of democratic deliberation, because the students were discussing with each other, they listened to each other, and they seemed to collaborate. Furthermore, this discussion satisfied the condition lacking in the previous example: the consensus requirement. Each group had to come to an agreement about the answer, and they were also explicitly encouraged to discuss how to arrive at the answer (e.g., should they start by dividing 300 by 3 or by dividing 44 by something), and so they had to agree upon the calculation as well.

Markus: So, do we know the answer?

Charlotte: What is 300 divided by 4? What is 100 divided by 4?

Oh [sounds disappointed].

Erik: 20, 20 times 4 is 100.

Markus: No, 100 divided by 4 is 25.

Charlotte: 25... [counting out loud by herself]

Erik: It's 20!

Markus: It's 25.

Erik: 20, 40, 60, 80, okay, fine.

Markus: 25 times...

Erik: Okay, 25, I said, fine.

Charlotte: But I have 20...

Markus: Yes, do you understand?

Charlotte: ... More, 100 divided by 4 is 25, so 100... 25 times 3 is 75, then [sounds happy].

Markus: Yes, the answer is 70, ehm.

Charlotte: 75 and then add 11, 86.

Markus: Okay.

Charlotte: But that can't be right.

Markus: Why not?

Charlotte: Oh [sounds happy], I just counted wrong, funny.

Markus: Yes, very [pretends to be laughing].

In this example, the consensus requirement is satisfied. They arrived at a collective answer for the group, and they agreed upon the calculation. However, this agreement was not reached by a deliberative reason-giving process. They disagreed about some calculations ("20, 20 times 4 is 100;" "No, 100 divided by 4 is 25") and about the answer ("But that can't be right"; "Why not?"). However, the discussion included few instances of genuine disagreement. They disagreed, but ultimately one of them turned out to be right, and the others turned out to be wrong. In this example, there was a right answer limiting the disagreement. They could have disagreed about the best way to conduct the calculation, as encouraged by the teacher, which could have resulted in a discussion with a less obvious correct answer, but this group ended up only explaining the calculation to those not understanding it yet. Therefore, this example does not include the reason-giving requirement and the reflective requirement, essential for a democratic deliberation.

Let us pause to compare the first two types. The explorative discussion fulfills the reason-giving and the reflective requirements but not the consensus requirement. Conversely, the problem-solving discussion fulfills the consensus requirement but not the reason-giving and the reflective requirements. Put sharply, the first is too open to count as democratic deliberation, and the second is too closed.¹ Naturally, since the intention behind a typology is to enable us to see recurring patterns in a chaotic world, it has to be simplified somewhat. In reality, therefore, classroom discussions will be placed along a continuum from open to closed, with the two types looked at so far being located at opposite poles.

Note also that even if neither of the first two discussion types is deliberative in the sense pertinent to deliberative democracy, they might very well be educationally beneficial. For example, in an explorative discussion, the students can practice making statements, using arguments, and reflecting upon other's statements. In a problem-solving discussion, they can practice making decisions together using dialogue. This might be beneficial for the development of the various skills, attitudes, and values that are necessary to participate in democratic deliberation.

3. The predetermined discussion.

The third type is also a discussion reaching a conclusion, while showing few instances of disagreement. Thus, it has similarities with the problem-solving discussion, but the starting point as well as the topic of the discussion is vastly different. Fifteen students in ninth grade, one teacher, and one teacher assistant, were discussing different topics related to human rights, such as the treatment of women, the death penalty, and euthanasia, over the course of one hour and a half. The teacher initiated the classroom discussion by presenting the content of three newspaper articles, but the discussion was not limited to those stories. The teacher explained Sharia law to the students. She was interested in their thoughts about it and used the following story to get them involved in the topic.

Teacher: Has anybody heard of the two girls in India who were hanged? First they were raped, then murdered, and then hanged.

Christian: I saw a picture.

Teacher: The two girls were casteless; do you know what that means?

Class: No.

Teacher: In India, they have a caste system, which is a way to divide society into different classes, like in England where you have upper class, middle class, and working class. You can't move from one class to another, not really, anyway, so you are stuck in the one you were born into. In India, you can be casteless, and these two girls were casteless. Two of the persons involved in this crime were police. This was not the first time something like this happened in India in recent years. Do you remember the girl on the bus who wasn't allowed off when

¹ This has, of course, partly to do with the subject matter, mathematics, but note that in other cases, perhaps more so in higher education, a discussion about mathematics could certainly satisfy the reason-giving requirement.

she wanted to and, instead, was brought farther along just to get raped by a group of men?

Class is silent.

Teacher: In India, it has become an attitude that girls are fair game.

What do you think about this?

Class is silent.

Teacher [with a little more urgency in her voice]: You agree that rape is a bad thing?

Adrian: I think we all agree that rape is a bad thing.

At first glance, the topic seems ripe for democratic deliberation. How should women be treated in modern society? How should the raping of women be dealt with? What legal system should be the foundation for a nation? The ensuing discussion, however, lived up neither to the expectations of the teacher nor to those of the democratic theorist. A democratic deliberation includes the consensus condition, but the problem in this type of discussion is that consensus is already there from the start, and not something to strive for: “I think we all agree that rape is a bad thing,” as Adrian said. The case of the Indian girls is both shocking and challenging; it might incite students to political action, but it does not generate a genuine deliberation. The dialogue is not one where different views are confronted with each other in order to collectively find the best argument. Rather, the only argument is: Rape is a horrible thing—there are no competing viewpoints. Surprisingly, therefore, this example has similar characteristics to the problem-solving discussion: The conclusion was preordained, and there was no real discussion. The statement put forward by the teacher—“You agree that rape is a bad thing?”—was intended to get the discussion going, but it was obvious that it was not really up for discussion. Thus, this example also includes few instances of the reason-giving requirement and the reflective requirement.

As in the two previous examples, there are aspects relevant to future democratic participation that students could learn from taking part in this discussion. For example, the students could gain insight into existing injustices and acquire knowledge about human rights, and perhaps they could be stimulated to engage politically with the treated issue. Yet the topic of this article is whether they participated in democratic deliberations in order to practice giving reasons, listening to and reflecting upon other points of view, and at the same time striving to reach a collective conclusion, and in this case they did not.

4. Democratic deliberation.

Right after the attempted discussion in the former section, the teacher asked the students how they would like to continue working with the topic. This question instantly turned the classroom into a forum for democratic deliberation.

Teacher: How would you like to continue working with this topic?

Because I think it is that interesting that we should continue with it. How would you like to approach it? I can see that not everybody has participated equally, and some of you haven't participated at all.

Christian: Two teams and two sides in a debate, where one side is for and the other is against.

Teacher: A formal debate, a debate society, okay. That could be a good thing to have on your CV as well. For example, in the USA that is a pretty big deal.

Adrian: In the USA, math teams are also a big thing, but we don't have to do those just because of that.

Teacher: But if we have two teams debating, do you have to believe the side you are on, or can you just pretend? Can you go into that role just for the sake of the debate?

Adrian: We have to be assigned the different positions.

Christian: If it is going to be a good discussion, it has to be something you stand for.

Adrian: You can argue a case even if you don't personally believe it or agree with their arguments. You can always have pros and cons, understand them, and use them in order to disprove the other side. For example, if you are going to discuss rape, one side can say, “The way she dressed was the reason,” while the other side could answer, “That shouldn't matter—you are not supposed to be raped anyway,” et cetera. In that way, you can use the arguments to disprove the other side.

Christian: I think everybody has similar opinions in here anyway.

Adrian: It could be a good exercise, to participate in a debate even if you're just assigned a position, to argue in favor of something even if you don't personally agree with that point of view.

Teacher: A defense lawyer, for example, he is supposed to do everything in his power to win, use evidence, find loopholes, et cetera, in order to get his client free, because that is his job. Do you have to go into a debate with emotions, or can you keep them out of it and be strictly analytical?

Adrian: Everybody has a price.

Teacher: But I'm thinking that maybe not everybody is equally comfortable participating in a debate. Some of you are shy, some of you will shut down, and some of you are disinterested. [She turns toward a group of girls sitting in the front who have been quiet the whole time.] What do you think?

Sara: I don't know; it's difficult to say what you think, to express your opinion.

Teacher: Would it be easier to write it down?

Sara: Yes, that would be better.

Adrian: I would rather have the debate.

Teacher: In a debate, it is very important that everybody feels comfortable in order for them to participate. Take you [addresses Adrian], for example—not to point any fingers, but you are pretty straightforward with your opinions, and that is your right, but that can make other people insecure, shut down, and shy away from expressing their opinion.

Andrea: A debate is fine as long as the topic isn't controversial.

Teacher: So, as long as the topic isn't too controversial, it would be fine? So, what kind of topic would you like?

Adrian: Pensions, minimum wages.

Teacher: Remember [referring to a point made earlier], not every senior citizen has an easy ride just because they get a pension from the state. If we are going to discuss something like

pensions, you have to have the whole picture, and I don't think we have that, so that will be too difficult a topic.

Teacher assistant: What about school? You can discuss how long pupils should have to be at school, how much homework they should have, et cetera.

Class: Yes!

In this example, three different smaller discussions were taking place: how to continue working with the topic; whether students should be assigned to sides randomly, or whether they need to believe what they are arguing for; and what the topic of the debate should be. All of them fulfil the three requirements for democratic deliberation.

Let us start by looking at the reason-giving requirement. In the discussion about how to work with the topic, two different points of views were presented, one in favor of a classroom debate and another in favor of writing down ideas individually. Both positions were underpinned with reasons, such as "That a formal debate is a pretty big deal in the United States" and "It could be a good exercise, to participate in a debate" on one side, and "Not everybody is equally comfortable participating in debates" and "It's difficult to say what you think" on the other. In the discussion of whether they should be assigned to sides randomly in the debate or should choose the side they support, different points of views were also presented, as well as different reasons for those positions: "If it is going to be a good discussion, it has to be something you stand for" and "You can argue a case even if you don't personally believe it or agree with their arguments." In the discussion concerning the topic of the debate, different suggestions, such as pensions and minimum wages, were put forth. An argument was presented against both of them: "If we are going to discuss something like pensions, you have to have the whole picture, and I don't think we have that." This shows the presence of a reason-giving process.

The reflective requirement is also fulfilled. The students displayed the willingness to listen to and reflect upon each other's arguments and reasons. They were also willing to revise their positions based upon reasons: "A debate is fine as long as the topic isn't too controversial." Furthermore, new suggestions were also presented based upon skepticism to the original suggestions: "What about school? You can discuss how long pupils should have to be in school, how much homework they should have, et cetera." Finally, the striving for consensus is displayed explicitly when Andrea tried to formulate a compromise that all parties could live with—"A debate is fine as long as the topic isn't too controversial"—and when the whole class unanimously agreed upon the topic for that debate. Thus, all three requirements are present and satisfied. This is not to take a stand on the actual quality of the deliberation in this example, but it is nevertheless an example of a democratic deliberation taking place in a classroom.²

This example, besides being an example of a democratic deliberation, also shows the advantage of siding with Young's (2000) strategy of leaving the specific content of "reason" open. By using less strict criteria, this class was presented with the

opportunity to democratically deliberate about the criteria for a classroom debate, such as what role emotions should have, how to get everyone to participate, and whether the topic should be controversial or not. By relaxing the criteria for acceptable reasons on the theoretical level, the teacher opened up for the students themselves to discuss and negotiate the character and structure of deliberation on the practical level. Furthermore, the questions they raised were important for theories of deliberative democracy as well as for deliberative classroom practices.

In the field of deliberative democracy, the role of emotions is a highly debated topic. Leading theorists like Habermas and Gutmann are frequently being challenged and criticized for not placing enough emphasis on emotions. One such critical voice has been that of Young (2000), who has stressed that emotions should not be regarded as a flaw in people's reasonableness but instead as a tool of reasonable persuasion and judgment. The discussion about emotions has also made an impression in the field of education for deliberative democracy, where critics of the Habermasian formulation have used ideas from Mouffe and radical democracy to incorporate emotions into the formulation of deliberative democracy (Samuelsson & Bøyum, 2015).

The class also discussed whether the topic of the debate should be controversial or not. This is an important question, not least to this paper. Hess (2009), a recognized name in the field of democratic education, has been one in favor of controversial topics. She has argued, with the use of empirical studies, that students increase their political tolerance and gain a better understanding of difficult political questions by taking part in controversial discussions. These results are highly interesting, and they are of importance to anyone involved in education for democracy. However, the concern of this paper is the development of the core skills of deliberative democracy, which is not what Hess has focused on. Deliberative skills are assumed learned through practice in democratic deliberation, and in my material, as shown in examples three and four, the topic of conversation was not the decisive factor in whether a deliberative pattern of conversation was established or not.

Furthermore, in the framework of education for deliberative democracy, there might even be pedagogical reasons for postponing the use of controversial topics. A case can be made that highly controversial topics are more difficult to handle than less controversial ones. For example, with highly controversial topics, students might be very emotionally attached to one specific position (again, the question of emotions) and might be mainly interested in getting their points across. These aspects, arguably more present in controversial discussions, could present challenges for creating the desired communicative pattern of reason giving, reflection, and collective-will formation. If the discussion instead concentrated on questions less controversial and emotionally charged, a deliberative communicative pattern might be easier to establish, and then, once the students gradually became better at democratic deliberation, more difficult questions could be introduced. The point is that if students are to be educated for deliberative democracy by practicing at democratic deliberation, the primary task has to be to establish a communicative pattern of democratic deliberation—the topic of that discussion is of secondary interest.

2 For a more thorough discussion of the difference between quality of and criteria for democratic deliberation, see Thompson (2008).

The main aim of the developed typology is to aid in distinguishing democratic deliberation from other closely related types of discussions taking place in classrooms. It is worth noting, however, that there are other typologies of classroom discussions aimed at democratic education. Parker (2006), for example, distinguishes between seminars and deliberations. Seminars are used to develop and explore meanings while deliberations are used for practicing decision making. However, my claim is that a discussion has to include both aspects to qualify as a democratic deliberation. Furthermore, his typology does not provide us with a nuanced enough picture to help distinguish democratic deliberations from other closely related types of discussions. I argue that the typology presented in this paper does that to a greater extent.

Practical Implications: Turning Classroom Discussions into Democratic Deliberations

The examples analyzed in the previous section represent different types of discussions. At first glance, a number of the discussions found in the material appeared to be examples of democratic deliberation. However, upon closer examination, these could be placed along a continuum from open (disagreement) to closed (consensus). On one side are discussions with pervasive disagreement but few instances of striving toward consensus (the explorative type), and on the other side are discussions with a clear notion of consensus but few instances of genuine disagreement (the problem-solving type and the predetermined type). These discussions do not satisfy the three requirements for democratic deliberations. Yet located in between these two poles are discussions that do satisfy them: democratic deliberations.

The different types of discussions do not just have different characteristics but are also structured around different types of questions. The explorative discussion, on one hand, is structured around an open question, such as “Did they appreciate beauty in the Middle Ages?” It has many open parameters, allowing the students to genuinely disagree and to present different viewpoints and perspectives. At the same time, it has several subjective, diffuse, and abstract parameters, making it difficult to strive for consensus. For example, what does it mean to appreciate beauty, and is it possible to know if people in the Middle Ages appreciated beauty or not? The problem-solving discussion and the predetermined discussion, on the other hand, are structured around closed questions. The mathematical question “What is 344 divided by 4?” is directed toward a conclusion: finding the answer to the mathematical problem. However, this question has a correct answer, which makes it difficult to disagree. The discussion concerning human rights has a predetermined conclusion, namely, that rape is bad. This point of view is not up for discussion, and the students have few opportunities to disagree. A closed question directs the discussion toward a conclusion, an essential aspect of a democratic deliberation, but since that conclusion is predetermined, it makes it difficult to disagree. The democratic deliberation is placed in between these outer positions. It is structured around a question open enough to allow for genuine disagreement but at the same time closed enough to clearly direct the discussion toward a conclusion.

The clearest example of the importance of the question asked is when the ninth-grade class moved from a predetermined discussion about human rights to a democratic deliberation about how to work with a topic. The two discussions took place in the same classroom, in the same class, involving the same teacher and the same students. The one condition that changed was the question asked. By changing the question, the teacher turned the predetermined discussion into a democratic deliberation. By using a question that was open enough to allow for an actual disagreement (but not so open that it got difficult to come to a conclusion) and at the same time closed enough to allow for striving toward consensus (but not so closed that it got difficult to disagree on the matter), she steered the discussion in the direction of a democratic deliberation.

This is, however, a highly contextual matter. A question directing one classroom discussion toward a democratic deliberation does not have to do the same in another classroom or at another time. Thus, finding a question with the right balance is up to the person (teacher) leading the discussion and is dependent on a number of contextual factors. It is important to emphasize, however, that finding the right question is only one of many factors contributing to the construction of democratic deliberation in classrooms and will not on its own turn every classroom discussion into a perfect democratic deliberation. Furthermore, even if patterns of democratic deliberation appear, it does not guarantee that every student participates, since there are many different reasons for why students could be left out. Thus, there are numerous obstacles in constructing deliberative democratic patterns of conversation in classrooms, and even if one succeeds at that, getting everyone involved might still be a challenge. The question of involving everyone is important in an educational sense. It is also, however, a question relevant for deliberative democracy in a wider sense. There may be contextual and structural factors required for a deliberation to fully qualify as democratic, as, for example, being at a certain level of equality, inclusion, and nondiscrimination in general. These questions are important and worthy of further discussion and investigation. In this article, however, the focus has been narrower, and in that context, finding a question with the right balance is arguably a crucial factor for constructing democratic deliberations in classrooms.

Conclusion

There are different ways of theorizing deliberative democracy, but scholars within the field agree upon the core of it: a reason-based public deliberation focused on reaching a collective decision. Therefore, an education for deliberative democracy is first and foremost interested in teaching future citizens how to state arguments, underpin them with reasons, listen to and reflect upon what others are saying, while striving to reach a collective conclusion with the other participants. Based upon the pedagogical idea that deliberative democratic skills are learned through participation in democratic deliberations, I have in this article attempted to flesh out the abstract criteria of democratic deliberation. By creating an empirically based typology, I have shown what a democratic deliberation might look like inside a classroom, as well as distinguished it from other closely related types of discussions. Based upon this typology, I have also discussed possible

implications for classroom practices. The conclusion is that by posing a question that gives students the possibility to disagree on the matter, while at the same time giving them the opportunity to reach a collective conclusion, it is possible to steer classroom discussions in the direction of democratic deliberation.

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Democracy & Education

Education for Deliberative Democracy and the Aim of Consensus

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Abstract

The aim of consensus is essential to deliberative democracy. However, this aim has also been frequently criticized. In this article, I present two different forms of criticism against consensus in democratic education. The first, articulated by scholars of education for democracy, claims that the aim of consensus fails to account for the conflictual nature of democracy and thereby disallows disagreement and dissensus. The second, formulated by classroom practitioners, argues that it disrupts the pattern of communication in classroom discussions. I nevertheless attempt to defend consensus on both accounts by arguing that it is a multifaceted concept that allows for different types of agreements and disagreements to coexist and therefore will stand in the way neither of pluralism nor of dissensus. It also will not necessarily foster undesirable patterns of communication in classroom discussions.

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THE VERY DEFINITION of the word *democracy* is “government by the people.” In a democratic society, people with different preferences and different beliefs are expected to collectively make decisions regarding their shared society. Such decisions should, according to proponents of deliberative democracy, largely be based on public deliberation. By placing public deliberations at the heart of democracy, the political order can be justified, they argue. However, they also argue that the political order should be justified to everyone living under its laws (Chambers, 2003). Deliberative democracy is, therefore, often conceived of as operating with a consensus-driven form of democracy. However, scholars who question the deliberative conception of democracy have frequently criticized this aspect.

Deliberative democracy has been widely discussed in political philosophy the last decades, to the point that some scholars even talk about a deliberative turn (Dryzek, 2002). Naturally, deliberative democracy has also been more and more frequently suggested as the aim of democratic education. In a review of the field of education for deliberative democracy, Samuelsson and Bøyum

(2015) argued that there is an overarching pedagogical agreement in this field: Future citizens (should) learn the skills and values necessary for deliberative democratic participation by participating in deliberative democratic situations. By this line of reasoning, consensus becomes an integral part of both the educational practice and the educational aim. It becomes a part of the educational practice based on the logic that if future citizens are to practice at democratic deliberation in, for example, classroom discussions, consensus needs to be a part of those discussions (Englund, 2006; Samuelsson, 2016). It becomes a part of the educational aim in virtue of the fact that the ability to participate in discussions striving for consensus is seen as a necessary skill to master (Samuelsson, 2016). However, as deliberative democracy has been transferred to the educational context, the aspect of

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consensus has again been criticized, this time by educational scholars. They argue that consensus dismisses all possibilities for pluralism and dissensus and is therefore an unfit ideal for democratic education. Furthermore, during fieldwork for a research project I conducted, I found that teachers with lengthy experience in leading classroom discussions were also very resistant to the idea of striving to achieve consensus in classroom discussions.

However, in this paper I defend consensus as an aim both in democratic education and in classroom discussions. My main argument is that consensus is both a regulative idea to guide us and a multifaceted concept that on its own does not dismiss all possibilities for disagreement and, therefore, should not be considered problematic as an aim for democratic education or classroom discussions. Thus, even though consensus is derived from the deliberative conception and that aiming for it in democratic education might first and foremost serve a deliberative purpose, I argue that it nevertheless should be considered unproblematic to those favoring other conceptions of democracy as the aim of democratic education. Before mounting this defense, however, I give a brief presentation of deliberative democracy and its ideal of consensus, followed by an account of some of the scholarly criticism. Next, I provide a short description of the empirical study from which the pedagogical criticism is drawn and outline the main points of criticism. Finally, I formulate and present the defense for consensus, which I base on Dryzek and Niemeyer's (2010) typology of consensus, and discuss how this nuanced formulation may be used to address some of the criticism it has been facing in democratic education.

Deliberative Democracy and Consensus

No conception of democracy has been more thoroughly discussed during the past three decades than deliberative democracy. Deliberative democracy, broadly defined, is any conception of democracy that places public deliberations at the core of democracy (Bohman, 1998). A public deliberation is a process in which free and equal citizens give defensible reasons, explanations, and accounts for laws they wish to impose on their fellow citizens (Held, 2006). In this process, citizens and their representatives to the government are expected to argue for their own perspectives while at the same time carefully listening and responding to counterarguments made by others, regardless of who makes them (Fishkin, 2009). Thus, according to this view, the democratic process is, or at least should be, a process of social cooperation with the aim of communicatively reaching a collective decision about "what to do," rather than a competitive process in which fixed preferences battle against each other (Chambers, 2003).

Theories of deliberative democracy have generally been critical of democracy as merely a practice of voting followed by majority rule. According to these theories, majority rule is insufficient when it comes to democratic legitimacy (Bohman, 1998) because it enforces democratic decisions as the will of the "winners" rather than as the will of the people. Indeed, it is possible to argue that it actually coerces a portion of the population into submission rather than treating them as fellow citizens in a democracy. Therefore, theories of deliberative democracy argue

that democratic decisions are legitimate if, and only if, they are the object of a free and reasoned agreement among equals (Cohen, 1989, p. 22). However, a legitimate political order is not only one that is justified through a process of reason-giving but also one that is deemed justifiable by everyone living under its laws (Chambers, 2003). Consensus is, therefore, embedded in this understanding of democracy as an underlying ideal, because, if every citizen should be able to accept the outcome of the decisions, and/or the reasons for them, the democratic process needs to aim toward some kind of understanding of consensus.

Early accounts of deliberative democracy contain the conviction that it is possible to achieve an actual consensus. Contemporary theories, however, have modified this ideal slightly, but most still hold that discussions should be oriented toward consensus even if it is not always obtainable (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2010). This redefines consensus as a regulative idea, an aim to strive for, rather than an endpoint always to be reached. By aiming toward consensual agreements, citizens and their representatives are encouraged to seek solutions across different belief systems (overlapping consensus) (Rawls, 1987), to use arguments other reasonable citizens can accept (reciprocity), and to use arguments accessible and applicable to everyone affected by the decision (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). This will solve some moral disagreements simply by making people better informed. However, some moral disagreements are more persistent, as are, for example, moral disagreements over incompatible values, to which there are no simple rational superior facts or arguments available. In such cases, the deliberative process can result in a deadlock that would require a vote, or compromise, to break the tie (Habermas, 1998; Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). Yet even in such cases, the process of deliberation is valuable because it helps clarify what the disagreement is about, helps citizens and representatives to understand the problem better, makes them acknowledge the moral position(s) of the opposition, and ultimately, increases the possibility that the final decision will be accepted. Furthermore, contemporary theories of deliberative democracy also emphasize that the decisions made are always temporary and that the issues are always open to further investigation (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004).

Despite the modification of consensus into a regulative idea, however, it is still one of the most frequently criticized aspects of deliberative democracy. The most insistent criticism comes from the perspective of radical pluralists, a notion favoring the confrontational nature of democracy (see, for example, Mouffe, 1996, 1999, & 2000). According to this perspective, consensus is problematic because it conceals informal oppression and precludes any real opportunity for democratic disagreement. Furthermore, radical pluralists argue that deliberative democracy's formulation of consensus often coincides with the interests of those in power and that if one continually strives for consensus, the views and interests of marginalized people will be excluded from democratic discourses (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2010). Therefore, by placing consensus at the center of democracy, one leaves the most fundamental and essential aspects of democracy—disagreement and confrontation—out of the equation and deprives people of being

democratic subjects. Based on arguments such as these, critics argue that consensus, rather than being a desirable democratic characteristic, is a symptom of a dysfunctional society laden with social pressure, conformity and marginalization.

Education for Democracy and Consensus

We now turn to the field of education for democracy where there are several scholars arguing for deliberative democracy as the aim of democratic education and for the placement of reason-giving skills, listening skills, and values such as reciprocity at the center of such an education (Samuelsson & Bøyum, 2015). However, there are also critical voices questioning aspects of the deliberative conception. They often base their criticism on the radical, pluralistic view, and they quite frequently question the aim of consensus. Thus, the same objection that is found in the field of political philosophy is also found in the field of education. One such example is Ruitenberg (2010):

Mouffe and Rancière agree that the currently dominant framework of deliberative democracy does not sufficiently recognize the constitutive nature of disagreement. The deliberative conception of democracy and democratic citizenship emphasizes rational deliberation leading to political consensus. For Mouffe and Rancière, however . . . consensus means erasing the contestatory, conflictual nature of the very givens of common life. (p. 44)

Ruitenberg was skeptical of using deliberative democracy's idea of consensus as an aim for democratic education on the basis that (rational) consensus diminishes any real possibility for disagreement. By focusing on consensus, the essential conflictual nature of democracy is erased, and she therefore argued that consensus is unfit as an aim of a democratic education. One finds a similar example of an argument against consensus in Biesta (2011):

The prime task of democratic politics is not to eliminate passion from the sphere of the public, in order to render a rational consensus possible, but to mobilize those passions towards democratic designs . . . The democratic subject, so we might say, is the one who is driven by a desire for democracy or, to be more precise, a desire for engagement with the ongoing experiment of democratic existence. (p. 151)

In this article, Biesta (2011) was hesitant about the aim of consensus on the basis that it can disrupt other vital aspects of democracy such as passion and "a desire to engage with ongoing democratic processes" (p. 151). According to this argument, striving toward consensus can inhibit the democratic process (of disagreement) and thus should not be the aim of democratic education. Instead, Biesta presented an alternative aim for democratic education and a pedagogical practice to go with it:

The political subject is not so much the producer of consensus as that it is the "product" of dissensus. It is not, therefore, that education needs to make individuals ready for democratic politics; it is rather that through engagement in democratic politics political subjectivity is engendered. (p. 150)

Instead of teaching future citizens specific skill sets used to reach rational consensus, a democratic education should focus on

fostering "the desire to engage in democratic politics" (Biesta, 2011, p. 150), by letting individuals participate in practices of disagreement and dissensus.

These two articles are perhaps the most explicit examples of how critical scholars within the educational field argue in terms of deliberative democracy's ideal of consensus (for other examples, see Griffin, 2012; Ruitenberg, 2009; Waghid, 2005). Their criticism is (often) rooted in the view of radical pluralism, and their arguments are therefore the same as those found in the field of political philosophy; the only difference is that they are now used to argue against the aim of democratic education.

Classroom Discussions and Consensus

Having shown how scholars of education for democracy argue against consensus as the aim for democracy and democratic education, I now turn to teachers' criticism against consensus as an aim of (democratic) classroom discussions.

Empirical study

During the spring and autumn of 2014, I collected data for a research project investigating "education for deliberative democracy." Proponents in the field of education for deliberative democracy commonly assume that the skills necessary for deliberative participation, such as the ability to make arguments and give reasons, to listen to others, and so on, while at the same time being part of a collective will formation, are (best) learned through participation in democratic deliberation (Samuelsson & Bøyum, 2015). According to this argument, through participating in democratic deliberation, people will have the opportunity to participate in democratic deliberation and thereby become gradually and increasingly competent at it. Consequently, a main point of interest in this project was to conduct in-depth investigations of classroom discussions.

I visited three different schools located on the west coast of Norway. I accompanied one teacher at each school for approximately two weeks, observed their classroom practices, conducted formal interviews, and was involved in informal conversations. In addition, I conducted one formal interview with a fourth teacher, but without observing his classroom practices. The four teachers all taught various subjects, and they were all located at schools with different profiles. Susan, a teacher for over fifteen years, was teaching psychology, English, and religion to upper secondary students at a parochial school with a moderate degree of ethnic diversity. Evelyn was teaching English, social science, and math to students in grade six to nine at a school with a large degree of ethnic diversity and was engaged in activities related to the student council. Margaret, in contrast to the other three teachers, was the head of her own class, a fifth-grade class, and thus conducted all of her teaching in that class, involving numerous subjects such as math, English, Norwegian, religion, and social science. Finally, Patrick, whose classroom I did not visit, was teaching at several different schools, at various grade levels, and in various subjects. None of the teachers were familiar with deliberative democracy prior to participating in this study. This came as no surprise since deliberative democracy as a concept is absent from

everyday conversations in Norway, as well as in newspaper articles and public politics. Furthermore, even though the Norwegian national curriculum includes democratic competence as an explicit aim, the deliberative conception is absent there as well (Samuelsson, 2013). The most important aspect in relation to this article, however, is that these teachers were all interested in democracy and education, and they were highly experienced in leading classroom discussions.

During the interviews, the central characteristics of democratic deliberations, and thus also for deliberative classroom discussions, were topics of conversation. The specific formulation used during the interviews was that of Englund (2006), which states that a deliberative (educative) discussion is one where (a) different views confront one another and arguments for them are articulated, (b) there is a tolerance and respect for the concrete other and participants listen to each other's arguments, and, finally, (c) there are elements of collective will formation, a desire to reach consensus or at least a temporary agreement.¹ The pedagogical assumption is that by participating in classroom discussions following these criteria, students will have the opportunity to practice making arguments, giving reasons, listening to others, and so on, while at the same time being part of a collective will formation process that strives toward agreement, and by this, gradually become more and more competent at democratic deliberation (Samuelsson, 2016, p. 3).² Given the teachers' experience, I was interested in listening to their thoughts of having classroom discussions structured around this ideal.

Pedagogical Criticism of Consensus

The four teachers were all positive to the idea of structuring classroom discussions around the deliberative ideals of (a) reason-giving (b) and reflection. However, they all expressed considerable resistance to the idea of having (c) classroom discussions aim at reaching consensus. In their opinion, aiming at consensus in classroom discussions was fraught with serious difficulties. Margaret said:

The teacher should not be evaluative. That is the hardest part, to actually hold back and to stop yourself from giving positive feedback when the students are saying something "really good." You want to, to say, "Very good, that is interesting," but you have to hold back and let the discussion flow among the students. That can be challenging, but if you want a safe classroom climate where the students really listen to each other, then aiming at consensus can be a tricky thing, it really can.

1 For a more thorough discussion concerning these criteria, see Samuelsson (2016).

2 A common criticism of deliberative democracy is that public deliberations often lead to extreme and polarized opinions (Sunstein, 2000). However, as argued in Samuelsson (2016), the fact that real-life deliberations are challenging only emphasizes the need for an education for deliberative democracy. Furthermore, many argue that (public) schools are the ideal site for conducting such an education because, among other things, they contain a great diversity of opinions (Englund, 2006; Hess, 2009).

Margaret presented an argument against consensus based on her experience that it can negatively affect the classroom climate. According to Margaret, striving for consensus would have to involve the evaluation of students' opinions, which often creates an atmosphere in which students are afraid to express themselves. Furthermore, it also makes it more difficult to get them to listen to each other, and in the end, it may be difficult to establish a natural flow in the discussion.

Patrick argued against consensus on a similar ground: that it changes the pattern of communication in undesirable ways. However, he presented an alternative explanation for why. "If a classroom discussion aims at reaching consensus, students will be preoccupied with trying to get their way. If a classroom discussion is supposed to end with consensus, or come to a conclusion, it means that it can have winners." In his experience, this fact makes students alter their approach and instead of listening and responding to each other, they end up trying to win an argument. The discursive pattern is thereby changed into a form of competition rather than one characterized by curiosity and respect.

Evelyn argued that having classroom discussions aim at consensus can force students into agreements:

(INTERVIEWER) You said that everybody has to be able to have an own opinion (in a classroom discussion), but how does that relate to the aspect of trying to reach a collective will formation?

(EVELYN) That can be difficult . . . I do not want to force anyone in the classroom to agree that "this" is the only right thing . . . I think it is important that those who reserve the right to disagree should be given time and space to reflect on why they disagree but not be forced into making decisions then and there . . . I cannot really picture how those two are related because for me, in a classroom discussion, it is not a matter of life and death whether everybody agrees or not. I think agreement is difficult to achieve and striving for it only makes the discussion artificial.

According to Evelyn, consensual agreement is rare in classroom discussions and because of this, having discussions end with consensus implies that some form of coercion has been used. She went on to explain why forcing students into agreements is problematic in classroom discussions:

I have students whose families are from countries where homosexuality has been banned. These students need to be allowed to have, and express, these opinions in a classroom in Norway. It is a big responsibility on my part that, as their teacher, even if I disagree with them, to provide them with the same opportunities for verbal expression as anybody else. I also have to make sure that they do not feel trampled on because of these opinions, because they are so young and they should not be burdened by the opinions they are carrying with them . . . I think that can be a pretty horrible thing in that age, to feel that others are laughing at you.

Similar to Margaret, Evelyn argued that there is a problematic side to consensus, that striving for it has to involve challenging and valuing student opinions. She said this deprives some students—mainly those with unpopular opinions—of the opportunity to express themselves and that one needs to prioritize making students feel secure in classroom discussions. Furthermore, she explained that by challenging students and their opinions, and by forcing some of them to give theirs up in order to come to agreements, she would risk having students feel trampled on and would wind up placing them under emotional strain.

Susan, the teacher at a parochial school, contested the aim of consensus in a similar way:

(SUSAN) It is definitely within a framework of respect but there is not a will formation per se.

(INTERVIEWER) Is it more an exploring of differences?

(SUSAN) It is an exploration, exactly, but never consensus, because I think that means to compromise and I am not going to compromise. I have spent a lot of time reading, being at school myself, thinking, and talking and I am not going to just throw that out to compromise. But I don't expect them to compromise either, to give up something they hold dear just because it is against what the majority believes.

Susan expressed her skepticism toward the idea of having classroom discussions aim at consensus based on the view that consensus means to compromise. Compromising in classroom discussions is problematical, because in her view, it involves asking students to give up something they “hold dear.” She went on to explain the kind of negative consequences this might have:

(SUSAN) You know, here at a religious school, are you for or against abortion? We actually had a woman here from Oslo and she was talking from a Christian point of view about the protection of the unborn and the students were already confrontational after half an hour . . . None of them liked her, whether they were for or against. They thought she was close minded, that she was rude and so on . . . I realized that you have to back off and respect the students and that woman wasn't doing that.

For example, if as a teacher she tried to convince her students to agree with her beliefs, she would likely provoke a confrontational response. Subsequently, this could cause the students to lose respect for her. In her opinion, a teacher leading a classroom discussion should instead back off and respect the students and their opinions and not try to convince them to give those up.

The four teachers interviewed, all experienced in leading classroom discussions, presented pedagogical reasons for not aiming at consensus in classroom discussions. First, aiming at consensus can negatively affect the discussion itself. It can make it more difficult to get the students to express themselves, to get them to participate verbally, and to get them to really listen to each other. Thus, it can create undesirable patterns of communication. Second,

aiming at consensus can also have undesired consequences beyond the context of a specific discussion, such as creating emotional strain in students, making them give up ideals, and making them lose some respect for the teacher.

Defending the Aim of Consensus

So far, I have presented two types of criticism against consensus in democratic education. The first, coming from scholars of education for democracy, criticizes consensus as a democratic ideal and thus as an aim for democratic education as well, on the grounds that it fails to account for the conflictual nature of democracy and thereby disallows disagreements and dissensus. The second type, coming from classroom practitioners, criticizes consensus as a goal for classroom discussions because it alters the pattern of communication in undesirable ways and may have negative effects on the students. In this final section of the paper, I will articulate a defense of consensus on both accounts.

Scholars in education for democracy in their criticism of consensus ground their rationale in radical pluralism. They argue that by striving for consensus, one disallows disagreements, suppresses voices and opinions of marginalized people, and instead promotes the interests of those in power. Therefore, they argue that a democratic education should instead be based on the conflictual platform found in radical democracy and focus on teaching people how to live and cope with ongoing disagreements. By this shift in focus, they argue that their notion of democratic education better preserves the essential democratic aspects of pluralism, inclusion, and disagreement, and is thus more suitable as an aim for democratic education.

As an initial response to this criticism, one might posit that, based on the understanding that democracy is about making decisions together regarding a shared society, there has to be more to democracy than purely disagreement, confrontation, and disruption. Therefore, to focus solely on variants of dissent makes little sense (Dryzek & Niemeyer 2010, p. 93). Secondly, as Dryzek and Niemeyer (2010) argued, theories of radical democracy cannot promote unregulated forms of disagreement but also have to structure their ideas around some standards of regulation that control what is allowed and considered appropriate in public communication. Without such standards, “anything would go,” and for example, any substantive position would be worthy of the respect of others. However, this makes radical democracy open to the same criticism leveled at deliberative democracy and its ideal of consensus: imposing restrictions on moral positions and citizens. For example, anyone who fails to express “the desire for a particular mode of human togetherness” argued for by Biesta (2011, p. 141) would have to be regarded as “undemocratic.” Thus, it is not only deliberative democracy and its ideal of consensus that excludes certain types of citizens, behavior, and positions from democratic participation. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the criticism coming from scholars favoring the radical pluralistic view is slightly misplaced. However, their criticism of deliberative democracy and consensus have been more broadly accepted in the educational field than in the field of political philosophy, in which the defense presented above is frequently recurrent (see, for

example, Erman, 2009; Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2010; Knops, 2007), and therefore, to present this defense in an educational context might be considered relevant.

Defending Consensus as an Aim of Democratic Education

Based on the short discussion above, the more important question to ask is not whether a certain conception of democracy is for or against consensus or dissensus, since both are inevitable elements of any conception of democracy, but rather how to formulate a notion of consensus that takes pluralism, dissensus, and disagreement seriously. Dryzek and Niemeyer (2010) made one such attempt in their typology of consensus. In this typology, they distinguished three different types of consensus: *normative*, *epistemic*, and *preference* consensus. Normative consensus refers to agreement on the values driving the decision process. Epistemic consensus refers to agreement on how particular actions relate to different values in terms of cause and effect, while preference consensus refers to agreement on the actual decision of “what to do.” Let us look at an example of what these types may look like in a classroom discussion.

The following example is from a discussion that took place in Margaret’s fifth-grade classroom. The class was planning a party and discussed various aspects of it, such as the time and date, possible activities, and what to eat and drink. Using the question of what to eat and drink as a starting point, I will elaborate further to show what the three different types of consensus could have looked like had the discussion gone that far. A preference consensus would mean an agreement on what food to serve, for example, tacos. If the class had agreed that tacos was the preferable food to serve, preference consensus would have been reached. A normative consensus, on the other hand, would imply an agreement on the value level. For example, what is the most important feature of the food? Is it that it tastes good or that it is inexpensive? On the other hand, maybe the most important values pertaining to the food to be served at a party for thirty twelve-year-olds are instead that it is easy to prepare, serve, and eat. Agreement on these types of questions would indicate normative consensus. Located in between these two positions is epistemic consensus. This would imply agreement about causal relations, for example, between a desired value and a suggested alternative. If the argument had been made that the food should be easy to prepare, serve, and eat, would tacos satisfy that objective? Maybe pizza would be easier to eat and, therefore, if that value was preferred, would be a better alternative. But then again, maybe tacos would be easier to make in large quantities? An epistemic consensus would mean an agreement regarding this type of “factual” question. The position taken earlier in the article is that democratic deliberations ultimately are about reaching agreements on how to act. Thus, the goal would be to reach a preference consensus and agree on what food to serve. However, a preference consensus does not necessitate a normative or epistemic consensus. The students do not have to reach a consensus on all levels in order to make a decision on what food to serve. If they had reached a preference consensus and decided to serve pizza, they would still have been allowed to disagree about the values underlying that choice (normative disagreement) and/

or what values that choice would fulfill (epistemic disagreement). In fact, according to Sunstein (1995), that is usually how people make decisions based upon deliberations. They value arguments and facts differently but are nevertheless able to agree on a course of action (what he called *incompletely theorized agreement*).

To make this typology more complex, Dryzek and Niemeyer (2010) added a “meta” counterpart to each type of consensus. Consensus at the meta-level means recognition of the legitimacy of the different positions: that they are seen (by the participants) as reasonable, credible, and valid. A *normative meta-consensus* means an agreement regarding the different values present in the discussion and that they are seen as reasonable basis from which to argue. *Epistemic meta-consensus* refers to agreement on the credibility of disputed beliefs and of their relevance to the issue at hand. For example, different participants can disagree on which alternative best corresponds with a certain value, but a meta-consensus of the epistemic kind means that they all agree on the credibility and relevance of the relations being discussed. Finally, *preference meta-consensus* relates to the different possible outcomes and is reached when there is an agreement on the number of choices and/or the validity of the different ways that those choices can be structured.

Returning to the example of what food to serve at the fifth-grade class party, had the class agreed that, for example, the aspects of price, taste, and how easy it is to make, serve, and eat were all reasonable and important values to take into consideration, a normative meta-consensus would have been reached. Furthermore, had they settled and agreed that the most important value was the easiness in relation to preparation, serving, and eating (reached a normative consensus at the simple level) and then moved on to discuss different types of food that possibly could fulfill that value and agreed that both the alternatives of pizza and tacos could do that, meaning they are both relatively easy to prepare, serve, and eat, an epistemic meta-consensus would have been reached. Finally, a preference meta-consensus would have been reached had they all, for example, agreed that the (only) available alternatives to choose among were in fact pizza and tacos. Even though the typology becomes more complex with the inclusion of the meta-level, its main function remains rather uncomplicated: to help structure the ongoing disagreement and to keep the discussion productive in a deliberative sense. By reaching consensus at the meta-level, participants are able to keep the discussion productive in their search for a conclusion. In addition, focusing on consensus at the meta-level means making fewer demands on participants and is thus an additional way to address seriously the challenging aspects of pluralism, dissensus, and disagreement.

How does Dryzek and Niemeyer’s (2010) typology help us defend consensus as an aim in democratic education? Ruitenberg (2010), for example, expressed the view that “a strive for (political) consensus means erasing the contestatory and conflictual nature of the common life.” Thus, to use consensus as an aim in democratic education is problematic because students could fail to learn how to have and to allow others to have different opinions, coexist with people with different values, and participate in ongoing processes of disagreement (also emphasized by Biesta, 2011). However, as

shown with the typology, consensus does not mean that continued disagreement is deemed impossible. A preference consensus does not necessitate a normative or epistemic consensus. Thus, many different forms of disagreements can exist after a preference consensus has been reached. Furthermore, adding the underlying view of consensus as a regulative idea, rather than an endpoint needed to be reached, it can also exist merely in the form of an aim to be striving for. This combination of consensus as a multifaceted concept and as a regulative aim shows that it is possible for consensus and dissensus to coexist and that neither consensus nor deliberative democracy is in conflict with pluralism or disagreement. On the contrary, disagreement lies at the very foundation of deliberative democracy and is what fuels the need to have a discussion in the first place, because if there is no disagreement, there is no reason to have a discussion. Furthermore, striving toward consensus does not mean that the aspects of pluralism and continued dissensus are not taken seriously either. The emphasis on trying to solve moral conflicts with the use of discussions is rather an explicit attempt to try to handle pluralism seriously (see, for example, Gutmann & Thompson, 1996). By encouraging citizens and representatives to seek solutions across different belief systems and to use arguments other reasonable citizens can accept, deliberative democracy argues for an increased acknowledgment of different moral positions. Furthermore, a preference consensus reached and a decision made is always temporary and an issue discussed is always open to further investigation (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). Continued disagreement is, therefore, always possible, even after a decision has been made. Consequently, I argue that deliberative democracy and its ideal of consensus are both suited as aims in democracy and democratic education and that neither constitutes a threat to pluralism and dissensus.

Defending Consensus as an Aim in Classroom Discussions

The more important question, though, in relation to the pedagogical assumptions embedded in this article, is the implications of the typology for the aim of consensus in classroom discussions. How will this typology answer the criticism raised by classroom practitioners, that consensus as a goal in classroom discussions creates several unwanted side effects, such as undesirable patterns of communication and emotional strain in students? Furthermore, is it possible to outline any pedagogical implications that will benefit the further discussion about education for deliberative democracy?

The answer to the first question is, on the surface, rather straightforward and has already been given: consensus is a multifaceted concept that, on its own, will not eliminate all possibilities for disagreement. However, if we use the typology and look at this criticism in greater detail, the answer is much more complex. First, the concern that consensus may cause emotional strain was raised by Susan and Evelyn based on the interpretation that striving for consensus implies having students give up their life values: “Students should not have to compromise and give up something they hold dear just because it is against what the majority believes,” and “They should not have to be burdened by the opinions they are carrying with them or risk having others

laugh at them.” These teachers described a concern for having classroom discussions strive toward normative consensus at the simple level, or of trying to make all students agree on the values presented in the discussion. However, bearing the typology in mind, we can see that to strive for consensus does not have to mean to strive for agreement regarding values. Instead, for example, it could mean to strive for what has been termed preference consensus.

Using the same example as earlier to again illustrate this point, the fifth-grade class could have reached a preference consensus and agreed to serve pizza, without having reached a normative consensus. Some students could have favored this choice because they thought pizza tasted good while others may have favored it because they thought it would be the easiest food to serve. Thus, they could have agreed on what to do (preference consensus) without having agreed on the reasons for that choice (normative consensus) and consequently, a normative disagreement would still be possible. Thus, it is fully possible for a classroom discussion to strive toward consensus without having students give up their values, and thus, avoid causing emotional stress.

Granted, this example is less complex and controversial than the discussions the teachers are skeptical of conducting: These students are not expected to give up, or compromise, their values of life. However, it is perhaps precisely this insight the typology can provide. In a deliberative sense, democratic discussions are ultimately about making decisions about “what to do.” Thus, why someone prefers one alternative to another is, strictly speaking, irrelevant, while reaching an agreement about which alternative to choose is not. Therefore, in a deliberative educative sense, it might be more suitable to strive for a preference consensus because that would allow students to practice at the type of consensus deliberative democracy is most interested in reaching. Hence, the typology shows that it is possible to strive for consensus in a classroom discussion without causing emotional strain, but it also allows us to outline a pedagogical implication: Perhaps the preferable consensus to strive for, in a deliberative educative sense, is preference consensus.

The other main concern the teachers had with consensus was that it might negatively alter the pattern of communication in the discussion. Both Patrick and Margaret expressed this concern and argued that the (other) essential aspects of a good classroom discussion, such as reason-giving, reflection, listening, cooperation, and so on, would be difficult to achieve if consensus was set as an aim: “If you want a safe classroom climate where students really listen to each other, then aiming at consensus can be a tricky thing,” and “Consensus makes students alter their approach and instead of listening and responding to each other they end up trying to win the discussion.” At the core of this criticism is a similar interpretation of consensus as that found in theories of radical pluralism, proclaiming that consensus leaves little or no room for any kind of disagreement. This interpretation is imbedded in both Patrick and Margaret’s quotes and can be rephrased: Consensus makes students focus on finding the right answer as given by the teacher, and consensus makes students become preoccupied with trying to get everyone to agree with their point of view. Hence, to answer

this criticism is, once again, to answer the question of whether it is possible to strive for consensus while at the same time preserving the aspect of disagreement. At the same time, though, the challenges voiced by Patrick and Margaret are challenges deserving of serious and lengthy discussions, to which the answer given above, about having classroom discussions aim at a preference consensus, is unsatisfactory.

To address Patrick's and Margaret's concern, we can turn to the meta-level of the typology. The main function of the meta-level is to help structure the ongoing process of deliberation and to keep the discussion productive in a deliberative sense. Thus, if the deliberative discussion is failing, it is always possible to take a step back and instead of focusing on the decision, try to understand (and possibly agree on) the different values and positions used in the discussion and their relevance to the problem at hand (Dryzek & Niemeyer, 2010). One can apply this principle in a classroom situation as well. If a classroom discussion has turned into a competition and the students are preoccupied with trying to win it, it is always possible to take a step back. By taking a step back and instead having them elaborate on the values and positions being discussed (a normative meta-discussion), or having them discuss the relevance of those positions to the issue at hand (an epistemic meta-discussion), or trying to get them to agree on the relevant alternatives (reaching a preference meta-consensus), it might be possible to get them to start listening to each other's arguments again. Thus, by delaying the decision-making process and instead focus on the meta-level, the concerns raised by Patrick and Margaret could be avoided.

However, we can also use the meta-level to redefine this problematic situation as a possible deliberative learning situation. Aiming at meta-consensus makes participants focus on understanding and acknowledging different viewpoints, and encourages them to seek agreements across their differences. Thus, turning to the meta-level when a classroom discussion has turned into a competitive and conflictual discussion can provide students with a learning opportunity of how to turn a dysfunctional discussion into a productive democratic deliberation. Furthermore, once they have (re)established the deliberative pattern of communication, they can (again) gradually begin to move in the direction of a preference consensus or a meta-preference consensus. However, it is important to remember that not all disagreements are solved with deliberations. Sometimes a vote or a compromise is needed. Yet in a deliberative educative sense, one should not turn to these methods of decision-making too early. That would deprive the students the opportunity to practice turning the conflictual discussion into a deliberative discussion, and of how to use arguments presented in a discussion to accept an outcome determined by a vote or compromise. Thus, the meta-level of the typology allows us to defend consensus against the concern that it might cause undesirable patterns of communication. However, it also allows us to identify a potential deliberative learning situation, one where students are presented with an opportunity to practice turning a dysfunctional discussion into a productive democratic deliberation.

To conclude the defense of consensus against the second type of criticism in democratic education, the one claiming that it is unfit as a goal for classroom discussions, we can again turn to Dryzek and Niemeyer's (2010) complex and nuanced formulation of consensus and argue that it is (fully) possible to strive for consensus in a classroom discussion without subjecting students to emotional stress and without having to give up the essential elements of reason-giving and reflection. Furthermore, we can also use the typology of consensus to outline two possible pedagogical implications—that preference consensus is perhaps the most important type of consensus to learn how to strive for in a deliberative sense and that a conflictual classroom discussion can be seen as a potential (deliberative) learning situation.

Conclusion

The aim of consensus is essential to deliberative democracy. However, this aim has also been one of the most frequently criticized aspects within the field of political philosophy. Furthermore, as the idea of deliberative democracy has been transferred to an educational context, the aim of consensus has again been a target of criticism. In this article, two types of educational criticism against consensus have been presented: one criticizing it as an aim for democratic education on the grounds that it fails to account for the conflictual nature of democracy and thereby disallows disagreement and pluralism, and the other criticizing it as an aim in classroom discussions based on the idea that it affects classroom discussions in negative ways. I have refuted both objections.

The defense of consensus presented in this article is structured around the idea that consensus is a regulative idea and a multifaceted concept that allows for different types of agreements and disagreements to coexist in harmony with one other. Based on this idea, I argue that it is fully possible to strive for consensus in democratic education without dismissing all possibilities for disagreement, dissensus, or pluralism. Furthermore, it is also fully possible to strive for consensus in classroom discussions without risk causing emotional stress, without losing the essential discursive tools of reason-giving, listening, and reflection, and without demanding that students give up their values. However, I do not argue that every classroom discussion must strive for consensus. There are, of course, other types of discussions valuable in a democratic educative sense, but my conclusion is still that consensus should be regarded neither as a problematic aim in democratic education nor in (democratic) classroom discussions, even to those valuing disagreement and pluralism.

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Appendix 1 – Formal approval from the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD)

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



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Vår dato: 20.02.2014

Vår ref: 37373 / 3 / KH

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 31.01.2014. All nødvendig informasjon om prosjektet forelå i sin helhet 18.02.2014. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

37373 *Education for Deliberative Democracy*
Behandlingsansvarlig *Universitetet i Bergen, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig *Martin Samuelsson*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldepliktform, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 01.10.2016, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Kjersti Haugstvedt

Kontaktperson: Kjersti Haugstvedt tlf: 55 58 29 53

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices

OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no
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Personvernombudet for forskning



Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Prosjektnr: 37373

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at det foreligger tillatelse fra ledelsen ved aktuelle skoler før oppstart.

Data samles inn gjennom observasjon i klassen og intervjuer med lærere. Det vil ikke bli registrert personidentifiserbare opplysninger om elevene. Foreldre vil motta et informasjonsskriv om prosjektet og foreldre/elev kan reservere seg mot å delta. Informasjonsskrivet til lærere er tilfredsstillende utformet.

I forbindelse med intervju av lærere vil det ikke bli innhentet opplysninger om enkeltelever, og vi legger til grunn at taushetsplikten ikke er til hinder for den behandling av opplysninger som finner sted.

Prosjektstutt er 01.10.16. Datamaterialet anonymiseres ved at verken direkte eller indirekte personidentifiserbare opplysninger fremgår. Lydopptak slettes.

Appendix 2 – Information letter and informed consent

”Education for Deliberative Democracy”

Bakgrund och föremål

Projektet har som föremålet att undersöka och diskutera den norska (demokrati)utbildningen. I praktiken handlar projektet om att se på, och studera trekk vid klassrumsdiskussioner, klassrumssamtal, samtal mellan elever, och samtal mellan lärare och elever.

Projektet är situerat och finansierat av Universitet i Bergen, Institutt for pedagogikk. Huvudvägledare för projektet är försteamanuensis Steinar Bøyum och bivägledare är försteamanuensis Kariane Westrheim, båda vid Institutt for pedagogikk.

Vad innebär deltagelse i studien?

Studien består av klassrumsobservation, inkluderat informella samtal med elever och lärare, och individuella intervjuer med några av lärarna.

Jag vill utföra löst strukturerade observationer, där jag är närvarande i klassrummet tillsammans med läraren och eleverna. Jag ska följa det dagliga upplägget som klassen/läraren är involverad i, i en period. Under observationen vill jag ha informella samtal med lärare och elever, när det är möjligt utan att det stör det vanliga upplägget. Det vill också kunna vara intressant att följa eleverna i friminuten för att se hur de interagerar och jobbar tillsammans där. Samtalen runt observationerna och de informella samtalen kommer att vara i överensstämmelse med både skolans och lärarnas riktninglinjer. Varken eleverna eller lärarna är fokus för projektet utan det är interaktionsmönstren jag vill fokusera på. Mot slutet av observationsperioden är det önskligt att utföra individuella intervjuer med lärare som undervisar i klassen. I intervjuerna önskar jag att prata med läraren/arna om saker jag har uppfattat som intressanta i observationsmaterialet; vad de tänker kring dessa situationer och vad de har att säga om dessa. I både observationsfasen och i intervjuerna önskar jag att använda lydoptaker. När det gäller de informella samtalen kommer jag i samband med dessa att fråga om det är okej för den/de aktuella personen/erna att samtalet tas upp.

Vad sker med informationen om dig?

Alla upplysningar kommer att behandlas konfidentiellt. Inga av eleverna vill vid något tillfälle av projektet förekomma med namn eller andra identifierbara upplysningar. Skolans namn, geografiska belägenhet, samt lärarnas namn kommer att upp bevaras separat från datamaterialet, och vidare behandlas anonymt. De kommer inte att kunna identifieras, spåras eller kännas igen i förmedlingen av data; doktorsavhandlingen och artiklarna som produceras. Lydoptakken är det bara jag som kommer att ha tillgång till. Projektet avslutas under 2016 och lydoptakken slettes i samband med detta.

Frivillig deltagelse

Det är frivilligt att delta i studien och du kan när som helst trekke ditt samtycke utan att uppge någon grund, eller att detta har konsekvenser för dig. Materialet kommer i sånt fall att slettes. Om du önskar att delta eller har andra frågor kring studien, ta kontakt med Martin Samuelsson, Stipendiat vid Institutt for pedagogikk på 55 58 39 80 eller martin.samuelsson@psyip.uib.no. Studien är meldt in till Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS (NSD).

Samtykke till deltagelse i studien

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

- Jag samtycker till att delta i observation
- Jag samtycker till att delta i intervju

Forskningsprojekt

I en period kommer det att pågå ett forskningsprojekt i klassen till ert barn. Projektet har som föremål att undersöka den norska demokratiutbildningen. I praktiken innebär detta att en forskare från Universitet i Bergen, Martin Samuelsson, kommer att vara närvarande i klassrummet tillsammans med läraren och eleverna för att observera dem i den dagliga verksamheten. Korta informella samtal med eleverna kan också förekomma.

Ramarna runt projektet är i överensstämmelse med både skolans och lärarnas riktninglinjer. Inga av eleverna kommer vid något tillfälle av projektet att förekomma med namn eller andra identifierbara personupplysningar. Om ni önskar att reservera ert barn från deltagelse i denna studie kan ni kryssa av för det i boksen här under och lämna in detta ark till klassläraren.

Jag reserverar mig härmed mot att mitt barn skall delta i observationsstudien.

Appendix 3 – Interview guide

”Education for Deliberative Democracy”

Intervjuguide

De formella, individuella intervjuerna ska utföras mot slutet av de 3 veckorna. I intervjuerna planerar jag att prata med lärarna som undervisar i klasserna, för att få deras syner, tankar och perspektiv av klassrumsdiskussioner, klassrumssamtal och samtalen mellan elever.

Intervjufrågorna och intervjuguiden kommer till stor del bygga på det som framkommer i observationerna. Jag vill veta vad de tänker kring de situationerna jag har bemärkt mig som intressanta, få höra hur de tänker kring dessa, hur de tänker kring mina tankar runt dem osv. Jag är också intresserad i att presentera mitt teoretiska grundlag, antagandet om att deliberativa diskussionsfärdigheter bäst lärs genom klassrumsdiskussioner, och få höra vad de tänker om detta, vad de har för tankar om genomförandet av denna typ av diskussioner i klassrum osv. Tanken är att ha 6-9 intervjuer, d.v.s. 2 - 3 individuella, semi-strukturerade intervjuer med 2 – 3 lärare kopplade till varje klass (lärarteamet). I intervjuerna vill jag använda lydoptaker.

Fokus är det samma som för observationerna; det är interaktionsmönster och samtalsmönster i klassrummen jag är intresserad i, att undersöka hur dessa abstrakta kriterier kan tänkas se ut i ett klassrum. Skillnaden blir att det här är lärarnas uppfattning, förståelse och tolkning av de situationer och händelser jag har bemärkt som intressanta, som är i fokus. Intervjufrågorna kommer därför framförallt att ta utgångspunkt i beskrivelse av dessa situationer.

T.ex.; vid ett tillfälle satt det tre elever och jobbade tillsammans med... Vad har ni för tankar runt denna situation? Hur hade ni beskrivit den? Vad präglades den av etc. här satt två elever och pratade med varandra, eller jobbade tillsammans med en uppgift. Vad var din upplevelse av denna situation?

T.ex.; det är en situation där en elev skrattar åt en annan elev; detta skulle båda kunna vara ett tecken på att de inte visar varandra respekt eller ett tecken på en god relation och vänskap; vad tänker ni om denna situation?

Tanken är här att få lärarnas perspektiv på hur det ser ut när eleverna lyssnar till varandra, hur det ser ut när de visar respekt för varandra i ett samtal, hur det ser ut när de jobbar tillsammans för att lösa problem, hur det ser ut när de bygger vidare på varandras argument.

Andra typer av frågor kommer att gå mer på beskrivelser av situationer ifrån deras håll;

Kan du beskriva ett tillfälle där elever satt och jobbade tillsammans, löste problem tillsammans med hjälp av en god dialog? Vad var det som gjorde att detta fungerade så bra?

Kan du beskriva ett tillfälle där elever satt och jobbade tillsammans, försökte samarbeta och lösa problem tillsammans men inte helt fick det till? Vad var det som gjorde att detta inte fungerade bra?

Kan du beskriva en situation där du la upp till en helklassdiskussion? Hur gjorde du då? Vilka strategier använde du för att få igång diskussionen? Vad hade du för mål för denna diskussion?

Kan du beskriva en politisk diskussion ni har haft i klassrummet? Vad var det som gjorde denna politisk? Vad detta en demokratisk diskussion? Varför var det en demokratisk diskussion?

Frågor av mer abstrakt karaktär kan formuleras så här;

Hur arbetar ni med klassrumsdiskussioner idag? Vad har ni för erfarenheter och tankar ring detta? Berätta!

Uppföljning:

Vad är svårigheter kring klassrumsdiskussioner?

Vad är möjligheterna med klassrumsdiskussioner?

Vad är det som diskutera/Vad är tillåtet/möjligt att diskutera?

Vad tänker ni att elever kan lära sig av klassrumsdiskussioner?

Vilken roll/funktion tänker ni att klassrumsdiskussioner fyller?

Vad var det som gjorde att detta inte fungerade?

Hur ofta är det klassrumsdiskussion?

När finns det utrymme för klassrumsdiskussioner?

Är det speciella timmar/fag avsatta till klassrumsdiskussion?

I "vanliga" timmar, hur mycket e det diskussion som vanligt?

Vad krävs av lärare, elever och klassrumsmiljö för att få diskussionerna till att fungera bra?

Uppföljning:

Har ni någon speciell situation där det varit en klassrumsdiskussion som har fungerat bra?

Har ni ett exempel på det motsatta, en klassrumsdiskussion som inte fungerade bra?

Berätta!

Vidare; säg att lärarna inte har hört talas om deliberativ demokrati, om jag helt enkelt rakt ut frågor dem vad och hur de tänker detta låter, för att sedan se hur de tänker kring det i skolsammahag etc;

- a) där skilda synsätt ställas mot varandra och olika argument ges utrymme
- b) som alltid innebär tolerans och respekt för den konkreta andra; det handlar bland annat om att lära sig lyssna på den andras argument
- c) med inslag av kollektiv viljebildning, det vill säga en strävan att komma överens eller åtminstone komma till en temporär överenskommelse (även om icke-överensstämmelse föreligger)
- d) där auktoriteter och traditionella uppfattningar kan ifrågasättas
- e) utan direkt lärarledning, det vill säga argumentativa samtal för att lösa olika problem respektive belysa olika problem utifrån skilda synvinklar men utan närvaro av läraren (Englund 2007a:155-156).

Det hade varit väldigt intressant att få höra vad de tänker om detta. Kan det fungera? I så fall, hur och på vilka sätt kan man få det att fungera? Varför ser det svårt ut? Vilka antaganden menar de känns felaktiga? Etc.

Appendix 4 – Observation guide

”Education for Deliberative Democracy”

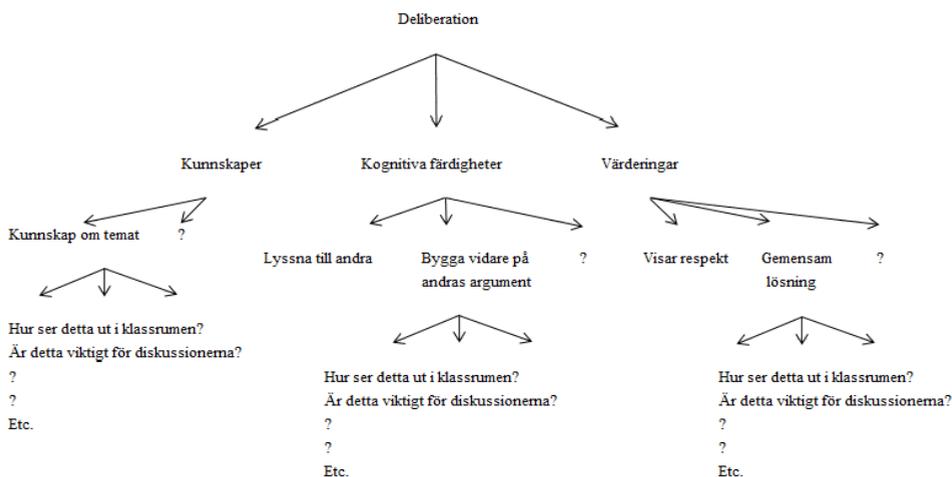
Observationsguide

En (central) teoretisk definition av deliberativ kommunikation är utarbetad av professor Tomas Englund. Han definierar fem kriterier för samtal för att de ska kunna kvalificeras som deliberativa. Dessa kriterier kan även användas för att se och utvärdera om deliberativ kommunikation har förekommit. Deliberativa samtal innebär samtal

- a) där skilda synsätt ställas mot varandra och olika argument ges utrymme
- b) som alltid innebär tolerans och respekt för den konkreta andra; det handlar bland annat om att lära sig lyssna på den andras argument
- c) med inslag av kollektiv viljebildning, det vill säga en strävan att komma överens eller åtminstone komma till en temporär överenskommelse (även om icke-överensstämmelse föreligger)
- d) där auktoriteter och traditionella uppfattningar kan ifrågasättas
- e) utan direkt lärarledning, det vill säga argumentativa samtal för att lösa olika problem respektive belysa olika problem utifrån skilda synvinklar men utan närvaro av läraren (Englund 2007a:155-156).

Fokus för observationerna är interaktionsmönster och samtalsmönster i klassrummen. Föremålet är att kvalitativt se på trekk vid klassrumsdiskussioner, klassrumssamtal, samtal mellan elever, och samtal mellan lärare och elever. Poängen med observationerna i detta projekt är att undersöka hur dessa abstrakta kriterier kan tänkas se ut i ett klassrum. Forskningsfokus blir alltså hur dessa aspekter kan se ut i ett klassrum, på en skola, mer än att evaluera om deliberativ kommunikation förekommer eller inte. T.ex. understryks det att man i en deliberativ diskussion ska lyssna på varandra, att man visar respekt, att man bygger vidare på det andra har sagt, att man jobbar tillsammans för att bättre förstå något etc. Men, hur kan dessa aspekter se ut i klassrumssituationer? D.v.s., hur ser det ut när elever bygger vidare på varandras argument? Det involverar ju någon tanke om att det som kommer från någon, ska tas in bearbetas och att man på bakgrund av detta kan nyansera sina egna argument ytterligare. D.v.s. att bara säga ”ok, men du har nog rätt”, eller bara repeterar det man tidigare sagt, dessa är inte direkt nödvändigtvis tecken på att man har byggt vidare. Så hur ser dessa saker ut i klassrummen? Hur ser det ut när man visar någon respekt? T.ex. det att skratta åt någon kanske inte nödvändigtvis är ett tecken på att de inte visar varandra respekt utan det

kan vara ett tecken på en god relation och vänskap. På detta sätt blir fokus av studien i princip ett försök att **operationalisera** och verklighetsgöra deliberativa diskussioner i klassrum, eller deliberativt utbildande diskussioner. Det intressanta blir alltså hur dessa saker kan se ut, inte om ”deliberativ kommunikation förekommer eller inte”.



Ett möjligt sätt att skissera upp deliberativ kommunikation, i en observationslogg, är på det överstående sättet. Många teoretiker framhäver att för att diskutera deliberativt krävs det, kunskaper om temat, kognitiva färdigheter och värderingar. Här skulle sedan olika handlingar som korresponderar med de olika aspekterna, placeras in. Vidare, handlingar kan delas upp i verbala handlingar och icke-verbala handlingar. Frågan blir då; hur ser handlingar ut som visar deliberativ respekt, deliberativa färdigheter och eller kunskapar? Hur ser det ut när eleverna visar detta i verbal form? Hur ser det ut när de visar detta i icke-verbal form?

Ett alternativt/utfyllande sätt att sätta upp observationsloggen är i ett semi-strukturerat matrix, avbildat nedanför. När och hur förekommer deliberativ kommunikation, och hur ser det ut när detta sker? Sätter läraren igång deliberativ kommunikation explicit, eller någon form av klassrumsdiskussion som kan sammanliknas med deliberativa kommunikation? Sätter lärare igång detta implicit och tänker att aktiviteten de håller på med handlar om något annat? Uppstår det spontant genom elevernas initiativ och i så fall hur ser detta ut, vilka strategier använder de för att få igång detta etc.

	Deliberativ kommunikation	
Explicit	Implicit	Elevens initiativ

Det kan hända att det finns begränsat med fullklass deliberativa diskussioner, men det kan hända det finns upptrappningar till det, att det finns hintar av det i kommunikation i klassrummet, mellan elever sinns emellan etc. Sätter lärare någon gång igång klassen med en intention om deliberativ kommunikation? Kanske läraren gör detta fast kallar det något annat? Kanske förekommer det deliberativ kommunikation mellan eleverna utan att läraren hade tänkt det? Kanske läraren sätter upp grupparbeten som har hintar av deliberativ kommunikation etc.

Appendix 5 – Extract from data analysis

M... men att de ser vilken de (**P**; ja) tycker tillsammans är bäst (**P**; ja), men det kan ju också vara en stark elev...

P; Ja jag tänker det

M... eller barn som säger "nu gör vi så här" och så får de andra underkasta sig, det kan ju också vara ja

Problem
P; Ja men det, det kan säkert hända att det är mer likvärdigt också jag kan inte utelukke det men jag säger att, tänker att ofta när jag ser för mig sådana diskussioner över lek (**M**; mm) så handlar det lite om att komma med argument för att på ett sätt få det lite...

M; För att få leken dit...

P... så som man vill...

M... man själv vill ha den

P; Ja (**M**; okej) och, och jag tänker att det inte är nödvändigtvis en olämpa det är kanske den som kommer med argumenten, klara att på ett sätt få alla till att få väldigt lust till att ha leken så (**M**; mm) sant, alltså att det verkar väldigt förlockande med den "ja låt oss göra det" (**M**; okej), ehm jag tänker inte nödvändigtvis att det är någon sådan bara en olämpa i att det är en viss maktbruk men jag tänker att det har ett element av det då...

M; Men så...

P... ehm...

M... i klassrummet när du har dina typer (**P**; ja) av sokrates då har du möjlighet att upphäva den maktbalansen mellan elever på ett bättre sätt, är det det du tänker?

P; Mja, jag har egentligen det ehm hehe

M; Eller va, varför blir det inte den diskussionen då har i klassrummet på det sättet som du tänker att leken blir?

P; Ehm... nej skillnaden är ju att det är någon där som styr det (**M**; okej) och nu vet ju inte jag hur, jag vet ju inte hur (**M**; nej) diskussioner jag inte styr blir (**M**; nejnej) de kan ju säkert bli (**M**; hehe), jag kan ju fint se för mig att en dialog jag inte styr blev så den blev också när jag styrde den da (**M**; ja), det kan jag ju inte utelukke (**M**; nej) så att det kan gått hända att dialoger elever har för, på egen hand utvecklar sig till bättre eller minst lika goda som de diskussionerna jag (**M**; mhm) ehm deltar i och styr (**M**; okej) så skillnaden är ju att jag styr dem dit att jag menar att de har en kvalitet (**M**; ja okej) ja

M; Och, och då...

P; Och det är ju det som är elementet och manipulationen i det då, det är att även om jag framstår som en deltagare och framstår som om jag ehm undrar mig över detta så har jag ju, på ett sätt har jag en agenda, agendan är inte att vi ska komma fram som Sokrates da, så har

jag den agendan att jag vill inte nödvändigtvis att vi ska komma fram till det som jag hade bestämt mig för (M; mm) men jag vill att vi ska lära något av det

M; Ja och du har en tanke om hur den bör se ut eller vart du vill...

P; Har en viss...

M... dialogen om att...

P; Ja jag har en idé om att liksom "nu tränar vi på ett eller annat bestämt", "detta har", nu, "nu är det bra", den ligger där under så "detta är nyttigt" (M; mm) eller av och till "detta är mindre nyttigt" (M; mm) här tror jag att jag måste göra ett grepp för att få högre relevans in mot det jag egentligen, så jag har ju en sådan skjuld agenda på ett sätt (M; ja) ja, ehm och den vill det ju inte vara någon som har i ehm i en sådan fri diskussion om ramarna för lek

M; Nej... men det som jag då, det som jag tolkar det som är att... där i leken som jag tänkte att det var (P; mm) barn som diskuterar om vilken regel de ska ha, tänker du kanske är mer att det är en lite starkare som kanske får igenom sin typ av regel...

P; Kanske

M... och i ett klassrum så är det mer att, med hjälp av en lärares moderatorfunktion att du kan jämföra alla åsikter på ett bättre sätt?

P; Ja men det, det är jag lite...

M; Eller?

P... skeptisk till om det verkligen går an, låt oss ta t.ex. en, en klassrumsdiskussion så det är klart att jag gör ju försök på det (M; mm) och, och men att jag liksom klarar att likaställa alla parterna, det är ju t.ex. några som har ehm tränat mycket på att snacka (M; okej) som att de t.ex. har väldigt höga pressioener på begreppen sina (M; mm) sant ehm och som därmed ehm, ehm... lyckas på ett sätt, även om att alltså det är ju inte något sådant speciellt man kan vinna fram med i en sådan utprövande samtal (M; mm) så vill det, det ju vara uppenbart för både dem och för alla inkluderat mig att "detta är personer som är duktiga med språket" (M; mm) som snackar gott för sig (M; mm) som uttrycker sig klart och som redogör för argumenten sina (M; mm) på en liksom tydligt sätt da, ehm och det är ju en makt (M; mm) om, om vi ser att visa a vi någon som är mindre tränad och mer klossete och (M; mm) mer, så är det klart att det är ju upplagt att de inte är, att man uppnår ju inte sådant maktvakuum likaväl eller (M; nej) det vill ju vara ett eller annat, det är alltid något sådant

M; Absolut och det här är inom, diskussioner inom den deliberativa demokrati (P; mm) så är det här ett stort, stort (P; ja) topic of discussion (P; ja) att det är väldigt många som är, intar mer kritiska perspektiv som just säger att "vi utesluter för många om vi har för strikta

→ problem
Absoluta mer än
hor ette
med konv?

→ problem
praktik...



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