Chapter 10
A School for All? Different Worlds: Segregation on Basis of Freedom of Choice

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10.1 Introduction and Background

The three general principles of parity, equal access and equality of qualifications governed Swedish school policy since the 1950s. Lundahl (2002) has examined these principles and characterised Swedish education policy up to the end of the 1970s as centralised and regulated through collective interests. Reforms that included mechanisms such as detailed national curricula, earmarked State subsidies and tight central control over the constitution of organisational resources, curricula, staff time and learning practices have been noted. State strategies are now depicted in opposite terms. Things are becoming less collectivistic with more individualised instruction and increasing moves towards deregulation, decentralisation and also re-centralisation (Gustafsson 2003; Dovemark 2004a; Wass 2004; Dovemark and Beach 2004; Henning-Loeb 2006; Båth 2006).

From 1990s onwards, there has been a period of neo-liberal economic restriction within welfare State education. The public sector as a provider and regulator of services has been questioned (Wass 2004), even within the field, amongst practising teachers (Henning-Loeb 2006), and the highly egalitarian system of strongly State funded and regulated education was no longer officially expressed as a politically and economically feasible project (Lindblad et al. 2005). This marked a clear break with past ideologies and democratic interests in Sweden (Båth 2006) and in the Nordic countries in general (Gordon et al. 2003). The Swedish school system was transformed from being one of the most highly regulated education systems in the world to being amongst the least regulated. Through new discourse on schooling (Lindblad et al. 2005), the cultural production of education was

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materialised in new ways (Dovemark 2004a, b). The changes in the education policy/system have had significant implications for the work, responsibilities and roles of teachers and schools. Aspects such as the image of a school, its education and claims and how it is talked about and materialised in everyday work will be explored below as well as interaction between pupils, teachers and school managers where responsibility, flexibility and freedom of choice are keywords in policy and organisation (Dovemark 2004a, b, 2007, 2008; Beach and Dovemark 2007, 2009, 2011). It is particularly interesting, I argue, to shed light on conditions for pupils of different social backgrounds. What has become of 'a School for All' in this neo-liberal area of education? Although Sweden is still officially claimed to have a cohesive school with general principles of parity, equal access and equality of qualifications, the outcome of the education system shows a strong differentiation based on class, gender and ethnicity (Broady and Börjesson 2006; Svensson 2006; Bunar and Kallstenius 2007). Even though schools are complex and incoherent social assemblages (Ball et al. 2012:3), my understanding is that the data explored and discussed below is relevant and useful beyond the specific cases and shows how the discourse of freedom of choice works and materialises within a Swedish school context.

The current chapter is based on an ethnographic Swedish Research Council project (VR: 2004-7024). Using long-term participant observation and interviews, it investigates how pupils provide different frameworks for the acquisition of skills depending on which school/classroom they belong to. The chapter consists of five sections. The first one gives an overview of researched settings; the second one introduces the theoretical toolbox used. In the third and fourth sections, the knowledge content and organisational principles of knowledge are studied and compared in relation to the two researched settings. In the final section of the chapter, the limits established for the acquisition of skills and consequences for the social distribution are discussed.

10.2 Studied Settings

The research has been conducted in two 8th-grade classes in two secondary public schools, called Pine and Spruce school, located just about half a kilometre apart in a middle-sized (60,000 inhabitants) town on the Swedish west coast. The schools, both with about 350 pupils and grade 1–9 intakes (ages 6–16), highlighted, on their websites, their characteristics as being schools with a 'great atmosphere and fantastic facilities', and descriptions of 'security' and 'comfort' were frequently used. According to their websites and at a first glance, the schools looked similar to each other in many areas. The school buildings were about 30 years old; the facilities were partly renovated with bright open spaces with easily accessible libraries as hubs in the middle of the schools. The external environment consisted of green spaces with surrounding woods. According to field notes, the indoor environment at the two schools can be summarised as open with a permissive atmosphere

expressed through humorous commentaries and intimate conversations between pupils and staff.

Both Spruce and Pine profiled themselves as working for a 'good environment for learning' where 'everyone's opportunities' would be the starting point' (Spruce's and Pine's websites). Concepts such as 'responsibility', 'flexibility', 'freedom of choice' and 'influence' occurred frequently in the descriptions of each school. The schools promised 'stimulating learning environments' in which pupils were inspired to 'take responsibility for their own learning', in other words a commonly used profiling amongst today's Swedish schools (see, for instance, Dovemark 2004a, b). The importance of collaboration with parents was also mentioned.

A number of similarities between the two schools were found in their official policy. However, Spruce was newly established at the time of study and regarded as a 'magnet school'.[1] It was located in a predominantly middle-class area of privately owned 'low-rise' houses, while Pine was situated in an area of 'high-rise' rented accommodation. One third of the pupils at Pine had moved to Spruce during the first years of establishment. According to one of the headmasters at Pine, '100 % of those pupils had Swedish as mother tongue', while: 'Pine had been drained of its successful pupils'. Left at Pine were those pupils with another ethnical background than Swedish, and according to Swedish Statistics (Statistiska Centralbyråns kommunfakta, school year 2005–2006), 60 % of the pupils at Pine had migrant backgrounds. In the 8th-grade studied at Spruce, there were twice as many pupils in year eight (31) as at Pine (15), and while 9 of the 15 pupils at Pine had a non-Swedish ethnical background, there were none at Spruce.

Even though there were many similarities in terms of physical conditions, it turned out that the differences dominated. When checking the websites of the Swedish National Agency for Education regarding school performance statistics (siris.skolverket.se/reports), a number of variances between the schools were found. One quarter of the pupils in grade 9 at Pine, for instance, had not received a pass mark in Swedish regarding written production, one third had not passed in English and in Mathematics, the corresponding figure was 10 %. Even the rating level of current core subjects was low by national standards. The picture of Spruce was a complete contrast with its high-grade level and almost 100 % effectiveness. Performance statistics showed differences, so did socio-economic background factors including family average income (Swedish Statistics, Statistiska Centralbyråns kommunfakta), which was significantly higher at Spruce than at Pine, and as mentioned, the absence of migrants at Spruce was conspicuously compared to Pine.

The schools' different opportunities, conditions and constraints were also something that both teachers and pupils pointed out. On my very first visit to Spruce,

[1] Spruce was not only attractive to those pupils who lived in the neighbourhood but also for pupils who lived relatively far from the school. Spruce can in this respect be regarded as a 'magnet school', a school within the public education, but is said to have something special to offer beyond the 'normal school'. Schools simply are seen as examples and models and are therefore likely to attract pupils from outside the normal neighbourhood.

several teachers said that the school was ‘special’ just because the pupils were ‘very motivated and ambitious’ (Sune). Siri, another teacher at Spruce, even stressed that there might be a problem with the high level of ambition amongst pupils (and parents), since they had unrealistic demands on themselves. The pupils ‘focused too much on marks’ feeling an ‘explicit peer pressure about the need to succeed in school and get high ratings’, she said. The teachers also expressed that they expected, due to the pupils’ social and cultural capital, that they could get help from their parents: ‘Parents show such an interest. They even phone us if we don’t make clear what’s up’. With few exceptions, pupils were highly motivated and ambitious as numerous field notes illustrate. The one below was written down on an occasion when the teacher met the pupils the day after an exam:

> The teacher stands in front of the white board. The pupils pose a lot of questions about yesterday’s test in science. There is a rollicking and fun atmosphere in the classroom. The teacher says: ‘You wrote the science test yesterday and it really is a fantastic result/…/ several of you didn’t end until 3.30 (pm) even though your schedule ends at 2.30… many of you will get the highest degree. (Field-notes, Spruce)

If motivated, ambitious pupils embossed Spruce, the picture of Pine was something quite different. Here, the pupils and teachers identified their school as a ‘problem school’ (Paula, student) with ‘unruly and unmotivated’ (Paul, teacher) pupils, a ‘school with a lot of migrants with a dissimilar cultural background with their roots in other countries than Sweden’ (Peter, student), a school for ‘those children we use to call socio-economically disadvantage groups’ (Patric, teacher). Pia, another teacher at Pine, even emphasised that Pine ‘lacked secure pupils with secure families’. She actually made a clear distinction between ‘secure families’ and those ‘families with children at Pine’. Considering schools as successful or not, depending on whether pupils are identified as ‘Swedish’ or ‘migrants’, was not uncommon (Dovemark 2011), and both pupils and teachers constructed differences in relation to ethnicity (see also Gruber 2007).

To sum up, both staff as well as pupils talked about each other and themselves in terms of Spruce as a popular high-performance school with highly motivated pupils, while Pine was described as a ‘problem school’ where the labelling of pupils as ‘problematic and weak’ with ‘insecure homes’ (Pia, teacher) was especially evident.

A large portion of research has given attention to pedagogical circumstances in relation to social class reproduction and persistently maintained inequalities (see, for instance, Beach and Dovemark 2009, 2011; Bunar 2010; Öhrn et al. 2011). What processes and organising principles result in such different outcomes? What factors lead to the production and reproduction of a culture and society? Education is one of these factors, and the current study illustrates how social relations, identity, knowledge and power are constructed in the ongoing process of education where a strong neo-liberal agenda has taken place. What different processes and organisational principles do pupils meet within a strongly decentralised school? The organisational principles and the content of knowledge were clearly produced differently at Spruce and Pine. Before clarifying my results, I will go through the theoretical tools used.

10.3 Horizontal and Vertical Discourse: Unequal Social Distribution of Knowledge

Bernstein's theoretical framework has been central in the research process both for finding, interpreting and understanding the patterns that appeared in the specific educational practice under study. An important point in Bernstein's theory building is how differences in educational outcomes can be explained by children's backgrounds (Bernstein 1990). In his analysis, Bernstein interconnects the student's family with school: Children understand and value the codes of a classroom in different ways depending on what social and cultural capital they bring into the school practice. In that way, he has been able to show variations both within and between social classes. Bernstein sees the educational outcome as a result of the ability to interpret regulations and codes in order to understand the educational context rather than the result of the cognitive ability. In other words, pupils' success or failure in school can be seen as a result of their ability or lack of ability to 'decode the grammar of school's classification' (Hultqvist 2001:33).

Historically there has always been an unequal social distribution of knowledge amongst different social classes. Already in the early 1970s, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) posed the fact that the education system contributes to a breakdown in manual and intellectual work (see also Bourdieu 1981). We can see that this division will strengthen its positions in Sweden today with the new upper secondary school reform with special apprenticeship programmes (SOU 2008:27). My point in this chapter is to show the fact that working class and lower officials' children are destined to vocational training long before they supposedly 'choose' them (Dovemark 2012), due to the way teaching processes and pedagogical organisational principles are made of within different educational practices. In my analysis, I look for assumptions and justifications implicitly or explicitly expressed by teachers and other actors to justify the choice of content and organisational principles of knowledge for the pupils at Pine and Spruce, respectively. Who are pupils anticipated to be? For what positions are they to prepare themselves within the social labour distribution? The field of education is a field of symbolic control, and like the economic field, it can be seen in terms of a division of labour or more precisely as a function of class relations (Bernstein 2000, 2003). According to Bernstein (1990), there is a strong link between the knowledge we acquire and the identity we get (see Young 2008), which has also been recently researched within Swedish upper secondary school (Korp 2006; Norlund 2011; Hjelmér 2011a, b; Nylund and Rosvall 2011; Rosvall 2011a, b; Dovemark 2011, 2012).

By using the concepts of *horizontal* and *vertical discourse* (Bernstein 1990, 2000), I want to analyse the various options pupils from Spruce and Pine, respectively, were offered. Educational institutions exercise symbolic control through different codes. While the restricted code, with context dependency and high predictability, is characteristic for some classrooms, the elaborated code is characteristic to others. According to Bernstein (1971), most working-class jobs are characterised by the restricted code, while middle-class jobs are based on the elaborated

code, characterised by context independency and unpredictability, a code the education system as well as the official language takes for granted. Bernstein thus understands working-class children's relative academic failure *as a social* rather than a cognitive phenomenon.

The horizontal discourse is based on the restricted code and refers to practical everyday knowledge, 'how it is', a kind of 'practical benefit', an organisation strongly related to specific practices in a local context. Context-bound everyday skills cannot easily be used in other contexts and possess a limited potential for a change of conditions outside the context it is bound to, thereby lacking any potential of power. According to Young (2008), horizontal knowledge cannot generate vertical knowledge while there are no principles for decontextualising, except between similar contexts. Organisational principles and content of knowledge within practically oriented upper secondary programmes are identified within a horizontal discourse (see Norlund 2009; Hjelmér 2011a, b; Rosvall 2011a, b). Vertical discourse, based on the elaborated code, is on the contrary characterised by being theoretical and abstract and is by that weakly bound to context. Knowledge organised in a vertical discourse is more indirectly linked to a material world, which in turn opens up more alternative ways of thinking about a phenomenon. This gives the vertical discourse power to think the unthinkable (Bernstein 2000). If the horizontal discourse is a feature of the vocationally oriented upper secondary programmes, the vertical discourse is a feature of the academically oriented programmes (Norlund 2009; Hjelmér 2011a, b; Rosvall 2011a, b).

A basic problem for the social distribution of knowledge is that education in a class society is organised so that already subordinated groups usually meet a curriculum in which knowledge is organised primarily in horizontal discourses with short-term expiration dates (Nylund and Rosvall 2011:87). This is, on a social level, an important pattern to be aware of. Pupils, due to their cultural and social capital, meet and confront different pedagogical organisational principles and knowledge content. The educational class-based outcomes (Svensson 2006) raise social as well as political issues and point to the importance of researching educational practices to find, describe and interpret organisational principles in an effort to understand the educational outcomes. The pattern we see in the Swedish upper secondary school is already founded already in pre- and elementary school.

10.4 Different Demands and Expectations

According to Bernstein (2000), the vertical discourse is hierarchically organised, and through analysing grading criteria, we can see what is considered as valuable knowledge within a school context (Norlund 2009; Nylund and Rosvall 2011). According to Swedish grading criteria, competencies like general universality arguments, like analytically considering cause and effect and demonstrating awareness of the importance of both evaluating and ideological source criticism, are

measured as highly valuable knowledge, all valid competencies within a vertical discourse. This kind of knowledge is the basis of generalisations and exemplifies beyond the specific case giving those who have these skills opportunities to consider alternatives. Those who can generalise their arguments can also obtain power that extends beyond a specific local context which is contrary to horizontally organised knowledge, which can only be useful within the context it is already being used (Bernstein 2000).

The grading criteria looked different at Spruce compared to Pine. While the teachers at Spruce stressed cognitive competencies like ‘critical thinking, creativity, communication and problem-solving within realistic situations’ as Sara, one of the teachers at Spruce expressed it, teachers at Pine more focused on a level of doing. While most criteria at Pine had their focus on ‘describe’ and ‘provide examples of’, the criteria at Spruce had its focus on reflection, discussion, argumentation, analysis of consequences and different perspectives. Criteria and goals written at Spruce were thus more often phrased in a more cognitive and abstract level than those set out at Pine. The criteria below for how to pass an assignment dealing with ethical principles illustrate the expectations of cognitive skills at Spruce:

> You are supposed to: a) reflect for and against an ethical problem; b) know about and use three ethical principles; c) use different texts and articles (do not forget to enter your sources!); d) be able to discuss your own opinions on the matter; e) argue and understand different views; f) discuss diverse impact different views can get. (Grading criteria for pass at Spruce)

Several of the above criteria are aimed at pupils’ self-analysis and metacognitive skills (see also Korp 2006), skills within a vertical discourse. The pupils were in a way prepared for adult life as active citizens when focusing discussing, arguing for their own opinions and understanding (see also Öhrn et al. 2011). They were in a way encouraged to think the things not yet thought of, the unthinkable or what Bernstein (2000) looks upon as the *discursive gap*. Again and again, in my observations at Spruce, I was struck by how consciously teaching was directed towards cognitive skills as argumentation, analysis and comparison:

> References to higher education are conducted regularly. Teacher: ‘In upper secondary school and at university you will be forced to discuss and argue, use references and of course, be source-critical and analytical’. The teacher reminds the pupils once again that ‘quality is more important than quantity’. (Field-notes Spruce).

On the whole the grading criteria and the image of teaching at Spruce were characterised by high expectations and demands on student performance where the pupils’ own thoughts and opinions were requested. Focus was put on a vertical discourse, based on the elaborated code, characterised by being theoretical, abstract and conceptual (Bernstein 2000). Teachers took their struggle towards the highest grading criteria for granted, and they believed all their pupils could reach them:

> Everything written on the white board and pupils’ own notes are now related to the Swedish National Agency’s goal formulations: ‘These are excerpts from the national goals… you can easily handle them’. Throughout the conversation the teacher focused goals at the highest levels rather than basics and just a pass. (Field notes, Spruce)

The teaching aims at Pine looked quite different. While Spruce's teachers were constantly focused on higher education and motivated pupils with what was expected of them when they went to upper secondary school and university, Pine's teachers were set to 'basics' and a pass. There were 'no candidates for the highest grades' as Paula, one of the teachers at Pine said. Paula as well as several of her colleagues at Pine stated that they 'were more than pleased if as many pupils as possible could only pass'. Pupils at Pine were enticed into a 'making' culture where criteria like 'a) able to describe…; b) able to read, write and formulate…; c) know about different…' where in focus. Most criteria were organised within a horizontal discourse based on the restricted code referring to a local context as the example below:

> Patricia, the teacher stands in front of the white board. She holds up the textbook in social sciences in one hand and a bunch of stencils in the other: 'In order to get passed in this area, you are supposed to read the chapter on various religions and answer all questions I have done on stencils. You are also supposed to describe similarities and differences'. (Field-notes, Pine)

The criteria for a pass at Pine focusing on 'answering' and 'describing' were in stark contrast to criteria for pass at Spruce focusing on 'discussing', 'arguing', 'reflecting' and 'understanding'. If the majority of teachers at Spruce talked about their pupils as motivated and ambitious, the majority of teachers at Pine talked about their pupils as 'unwilling' (Petra, teacher in Maths), 'quiescent' (Paul, English teacher) and even as 'lazy' (Patricia, teacher in social sciences). Within the direct lesson situation, the teachers' analysis of pupils' behaviour often stopped at a psychological analysis on an individual level where reasons were turned into personal shortcomings. However, at deeper conversations and recorded interviews, teachers also presented reasons based on pupils' social and cultural capital. Many pupils were 'simply not encouraged enough or helped at home', as Paul expressed it.

How the requirements and criteria were formulated was also something teachers at Pine discussed and reflected upon. Many of the teachers showed concern about this, and Paul illustrated that anxiety: 'the bar had been lowered because today the pupils come exclusively from a socially burdened area'. He went on and said that the 'requirements were different when no vouchers or freedom of choice existed', when 'the school's catchment was larger and more heterogeneous'. Paul expressed concern about the segregation that had occurred since the system of freedom of choice and school vouchers had been implemented. Pine used to be 'more heterogeneous' with 'pupils with many different backgrounds', he said. Several reports have recently demonstrated the increased segregation and demolition of equality in Swedish schools (Lindgren 2012; Swedish National Agency for Education 2012; Teachers' Association 2012). Paul's concern was based on awareness that the staff put fewer demands on today's pupils due to the fact that the catchment area had become more homogeneous. The teachers at Spruce also expressed that they had a homogeneous catchment but based on completely different reasons: 'ambitious and motivated pupils with very interested and enthusiastic parents'. Characteristic differences between the two classes were precisely this, and the teachers seemed to have different aims with their teaching depending on the pupils' social and cultural capital.

The pupils at Pine which the teachers had assessed as 'weak' did not obtain the same descriptions of aims and grading criteria as did the group at Spruce,

particularly with regard to the higher achievement levels, nor were pupils at Pine presented with these as regularly as pupils at Spruce. The pupils at Spruce were judged as most successful and were enticed into a performativity culture in this way far more intently than were the 'weak' groups at Pine. These types of differences in demands, presentations and expectations in communication have also been noticed elsewhere and written on previously (see also Beach 1999, 2001, 2003; Dovemark 2004a, b; Beach and Dovemark 2007, 2009, 2011).

The pupils were given various opportunities to understand and achieve the goals of the school, and as a consequence of this, they were offered various opportunities to attain the highest grades. Pupils at Spruce had thus already begun the first steps of a theoretical training course (see also Baudelot and Establet 1977).

10.5 Different Organisational Principles and Content of Knowledge

The different ways of regarding criteria manifested themselves within teaching practice. Even though both studied classroom practices were strongly linked to curriculum goals and grading criteria and to the teachers' efforts to highlight these, there were many differences. I was struck above all by the differences with regard to demands and expectations. The pupils at Spruce were constantly spurred and coached to intensify performances through references to future educational requirements:

> Stina describes again what had been on the 7th grade syllabus and took up a couple of common lines leading up to upper-secondary school. She emphasises in particular the science content in the 9th grade and the first year of upper- secondary level. She pointed out particularly the common presentation of aims for the sciences courses in year 9 and first-year upper secondary A course. She uses these descriptions to motivate the current content in year 8. Stina also points out that the present course is often regarded as the most difficult and that the level they are working at is above the work needed for a basic pass. As she puts it, 'it's for those who try a little harder'. (Field notes, Spruce)

As stated earlier, teachers at Spruce were contrite to emphasise the aims and the need for good grades amongst pupils as a motivational device, which also seemed to work in the manner intended. The notion of the carrot and the stick can be illustrated in amongst other ways, such as by recourse to notes about pupils staying behind after school and lessons during breaks and at lunchtime, to take part in extracurricular work related to course contents. Most of the time, they did not really need to do so in order to get the good marks they were looking for and that they felt they needed for a good future education and a good career afterwards. The following field note extract pertains to these ideas. It refers to a full class presentation by the teacher during a lesson in Maths at Spruce:

> 'We have the green course for the two highest grades… and this, multiplication with variables, which is really quite advanced. You don't actually need it even for the top grades but I'll go through it with those who want to. The others can go back to the home room and the rest continue your maths here…' None of the pupils get up. The teacher starts by writing: $5(x+4)-2(7-2x)=3(2x+3)$. Teacher: 'These are worth more points than the others on the

> test.' The pupils watch the teacher's demonstration intently, writing down what she writes down and listening to what she says. A pupil asks: 'The yellow course only gives a pass doesn't it?' The teacher answers, 'yes, if you want more then it's the green course you need.' Another asks if the green course will give the top grade. The teacher answers, 'yes you can get it. It has to do with your analytical capabilities'. (Field-notes, Spruce)

Performance aspects were given attention regularly at Spruce – particularly in key subject areas. Entire lessons were commonly focused on test content and questions, which were in turn related verbally by teachers to the course aims:

> 'This next test will be quite a big one' (Teacher). 'Remember the course aims'… 'We went through what was needed to get a distinction… but I want to go through what you need to do for a top grade. You will manage that!' Stina goes through the requirements/…/Always focus on requirements as analyse, evaluate, argue and compare. (Field-notes, Spruce)

Teachers at Pine also focused on course aims, but not at all as much as the teachers at Spruce. At Pine, it was more in connection with passing than obtaining higher marks and distinctions. The skills focusing at Spruce, such as analysing, arguing and evaluating academic knowledge within a vertical discourse, create room for manoeuvre and the achievement of greater generality (Bernstein 2000). The field notes below come from a social sciences lesson at Spruce when Sigrid, the teacher in social sciences, is about to instruct the pupils about a new work:

> The teacher goes through the different grading criteria. She gives examples of how pupils can proceed as how to outline. (Again, I am struck by the teachers' clarity on the visibility of grading criteria). She shows great determination and a clear inventory of what can be regarded as different grades. On the white board there are also examination tasks and suggested sources written. The pupils are supposed to write reports on this work. Sigrid refers once more to higher education and stresses the importance of sources and references. Pupils are encouraged to read, evaluate and argue about their chosen content. She points out that the examination is being an individual task but she also invites the pupils to work together in groups to seek information here at school as well as at home. (Field notes, Spruce)

Sigrid expected the pupils to analyse, evaluate and compare the chosen content. It was not uncommon to encourage them to write a report and that these were supposed to be reviewed at a 'vent' in which an 'opponent' discussed the work and the author was expected to defend it, in an academic standard common presentation form. The pupils at Spruce were clearly well prepared for higher education. The teachers at Spruce took for granted and also urged the pupils to bring work home as Sigrid did at the introduction above.

Pupils' opportunities to discuss school assignments with parents, siblings and friends showed out to be of great importance for managing the tasks. Help from parents and siblings was simply essential and critical when it came to succeeding or failing and probably also essential if the school situation should work or not (see also Dovemark 2004a). Bernstein (2003:64) stresses that the logic core in all pedagogical relations mainly consists of the relationships of three rules: hierarchical, sequencing and critical. The hierarchical rule refers to the relation between the transmitter (the teacher) and the acquirer (the student), a rule which is governed by rules of social order, character and behaviour. These are relationships that condition interpretation of preferences in pedagogical relations. The sequencing rule is about

how the transmitting is carried out. The critical rule allows the acquirer to understand 'what counts as legitimate or illegitimate communications, social relations or position' (Bernstein 2003:65) in the pedagogical situation. Bernstein classifies the hierarchical rules as controlling and regulative and the sequencing and critical as instructive and discursive. In other words, Bernstein stresses that it is not enough for pupils to know they have acquired the knowledge they are supposed to learn. They must in some way or another understand and act as it is expected in a school situation as in the above example when the teacher took for granted that the pupils wanted to bring home school work during the weekend. I could not identify any protests from the pupils; on the contrary, they rather seemed to see it as an opportunity to produce work with potentially highly rated value.

The teachers' expectations in regard to cognitive skills at Spruce stood in stark contrast to Pine's focus on atomistic knowledge areas. While Spruce's teachers talked about their pupils as 'strong' and 'motivated' and constantly focused on higher education, the pupils at Pine were talked about as 'weak' and occupied by transcribing what the teacher had written on the whiteboard and were frequently working with direct study questions like in the example below, which comes from an ordinary lesson in social sciences:

> Pia, the teacher gathers the pupils in front of the whiteboard. She draws two circles and writes schematically the percentages for sea and land… and for the Atlantic and Pacific oceans respectively. Pia then tells the pupils to pick up their notebooks and to 'draw of the circles and what is written on the white board'. Then she hands out stencils and calls the pupils to 'answer all the questions. You will find all the answers in your textbooks'. (Field-notes, Pine)

Teaching materials such as textbooks, study books, outline maps and copied tasks were frequently used: 'Pupils were given the task to read several pages in the textbook. They were then given questions related to the text, which they had to answer individually' (Field notes, Pine). The content was mostly strongly classified with context-bound tasks where the pupils reproduced material, which the teacher had gone through, or that the pupils themselves had read in a textbook. The pupils at Pine were offered a simplified and less challenging form of teaching compared to the pupils at Spruce. The organisational principles and content appeared to be context bound and predictable, all within the restricted code (Bernstein 1971). The pupils were offered a horizontal discourse linked to a material base with immediate concrete situations within a specific context. By that they were limited to transcend different contexts, far removed from the vertical discourse pupils at Spruce were offered.

The strategy to offer tasks within the horizontal discourse and restricted code, as most of the teachers at Pine did, can also be understood as a way for the teachers to maintain control during lessons. Behind the teachers' classroom discourse, there is, according to Bernstein (2000), a representation of the ideal student or even the ideal citizen. Within the restricted code, teaching is primarily focused on getting pupils to follow instructions, be on time and behave (see also Korp 2006) what Bernstein (1999:163) describes as the regulative discourse, 'a discourse of social order' with the goal to create order, relations and identity. During my fieldwork, I found that a

sense of calm settled over the class at Pine when these, strongly structured and framed (Bernstein 1975) tasks were made. The pupils worked intensely and looked concentrated in stark contrast to those few occasions when the pupils got tasks which could be considered as weakly framed as in the example below during the technology class when teaching friction and rate:

> The pupils get the task to construct a sledge and a cart. The teacher puts a lot of different materials in front of them: 'Your task is to draw a sketch of a model and write down how the sledge/cart is supposed to be constructed and how it will work'. The pupils were supposed to build the model out of offered material, describe the workflow, photograph and then load it and make tests. They were finally asked to 'draw conclusions what might be done differently'. (Field notes from Pine)

Sighs, anxiety and unease were spread all over the classroom, and questions were raised both to the teacher and to each other. Most of the pupils made other things and simply ignored the task. It was clear that the pupils were not used to these kinds of issues and quite soon the teacher lost control over the classroom. He got into an untenable situation, and the pupils could after a short time renegotiate the task to be transformed into what the teacher expressed as 'an ordinary question and answer task'. The pupils simply had to read a text and then answer a series of questions. The teacher transformed the task into immediate goals within an ongoing everyday practice (see also Beach and Bagley 2012) instead of challenging the pupils with other organisational principles. The important question is whether the pupils at Pine ever will challenge themselves if they do not get the opportunities to train and by that get used and accustomed to tasks that require time, energy, reflection and analysis to solve. Tasks characterised by being theoretical, abstract and conceptually integrated, weakly bound to context, quite different from the 'question and answer tasks' pupils at Pine seemed so familiar with that it became almost impossible for teachers to challenge them without losing control over the classroom.

10.6 Discussion

When talking about segregated schools, we may think of big schools situated within giant cities' suburbs or between independent and municipality-owned schools (Bunar 2010). The Spruce and Pine schools were both quite small (approximately 350 pupils) compulsory public schools located in a middle-sized Swedish municipality on the west coast of Sweden. On a first comparison between the two schools, there were a number of similarities to be found: organisation, location, facilities, presentation on the web, etc. A closer study revealed a number of differences though. The chapter draws particular attention to differences related to pedagogical organisational principles and content of knowledge in the both studied classrooms. In my analysis, I look for assumptions and justifications implicitly or explicitly expressed by teachers and other actors to justify the choice of pedagogical organisational principles and content of knowledge at Pine and Spruce, respectively.

An overall comparison of Pine and Spruce showed a pronounced systematic differentiation between the two groups of pupils. While teachers at Spruce had focused on the highest grading criteria and future university studies, the teachers' main goal at Pine was that pupils should just pass. Pupils at Pine were offered a simplified and less challenging education compared to the pupils at Spruce. The pedagogical organisational principles and knowledge content were almost exclusively within the horizontal discourse, with tasks defined as direct and inextricable. Pupils at Pine were seldom offered advanced tasks in the sense that they required analytical skills and they were seldom (if ever) presented to academic preparatory content. The lessons were based on powerfully classified and framed, highly structured lectures organised round textbooks and questions. Tasks offered pupils at Pine were characterised as context bound, strongly rooted in the material base, and they were bound to reproduce the content of knowledge teachers had gone through or what they had read in textbooks, an atomistic view of knowledge. While the tasks almost exclusively consisted of a horizontal discourse, it lacked potential for application and by that it did not challenge pupils to think and discuss the unthinkable.[2] Pupils at Pine were simply not offered to challenge the discursive gap (Bernstein 2000), which in turn leaves them unprepared to develop skills like analysing, interpreting and evaluating, skills called for in the public debate (see also Player-Koro 2011).

The pedagogical organisational principles at Pine stood in stark contrast to what was offered to pupils at Spruce. Both organisational principles as well as content of knowledge were mainly based within the vertical discourse. This kind of knowledge has strength through its indirect connection to the material base, which in turn creates room for manoeuvre to develop new concepts and principles (Bernstein 2000). Pupils at Spruce were constantly trained for analysing, evaluating and arguing. With this content, they were also given significant possibilities to challenge the 'discursive gap' (Bernstein 2000) and prepare themselves for an active citizenship.

In reality different rating scales were used within the two classes. Students at Spruce were expected to demonstrate analytical as well as interpretative skills already for pass, while students at Pine were asked for context-bound abilities such as 'describing' and 'doing'. At Spruce, teachers seldom gave just a pass; the effort was rather to make all pupils receive higher grades, while at Pine the main goal was to get all to pass. One teacher even claimed that 'pupils at Pine were not interested and that there were no candidates for the highest grades'.

The differentiation was legitimised by teachers' (and pupils') beliefs, expectations and demands in the way students were talked about as 'strong' or 'weak', a pronounced superior educational ideology within the institution. This legitimises an activity based on different demands and expectations (Beach 1999; Dovemark 2004a, b; Beach and Dovemark 2007). It is in this sense that cultural production, cultural reproduction and social reproduction are connected (Willis 1981). By identifying the pupils as 'strong' or 'weak' in relation to their social and cultural capital, those children who had a second site of acquisition (their families) to

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[2] Exceptions from these patterns are discussed in Dovemark (2010).

interpret regulations and codes in order to understand the educational context were those who were likely to succeed (see also, e.g. Swedish National Agency for Education 2009).

10.7 Conclusions

The reported study notes that the Swedish school is far from equal even though it is organised as a coherent system. All children are not offered the same chances. Historically there has always been an unequal social distribution of knowledge amongst different social classes. Already in the early 1970s, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) posed the fact that the education system contributes to a breakdown in manual and intellectual work (see also Bourdieu 1981). This was clearly done at Spruce and Pine. My point in this chapter is to point to the fact that working class and lower officials' children are destined to vocational training long before they so-called choose them (Dovemark 2012), due to the way teaching processes and organisational principles are devised within different educational practices. The question is if the unequal distribution of knowledge has been intensified through the possibility of freedom of choice? According to the teachers in my study, the differences between schools had increased when schools became more homogenous and it seems to be more and more important what school children and their parents choose. Thus, the current study confirms the recently published reports about increased segregation and demolition of equality in Swedish schools (Lindgren 2012; Swedish National Agency for Education 2012; Teachers' Association 2012).

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