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## **Editorial: Educations For ... and Social Sciences, Research and Perspectives in the French-Speaking World**

### **1 Introduction**

From the late 19th century on, certain 'educations for' were able to be introduced into teaching either into existing subjects (e.g. education for health and hygiene became part of both the sciences and domestic science) or parallel to them (alcohol education) (Freyssinet-Dominjon, Nourrisson 2009, Lebeaume 2010; Nourrisson, Parayre 2012). At the same time, varying forms of education for citizenship were included in a number of school systems. But, since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, integrating 'educations for' seems to have become topical again affecting, to a greater or lesser extent, all cultures. The denominations and forms are varied (education for health, human rights education, education for peace, education for sustainable development, education in responsibility, entrepreneurship education, and education for citizenship). 'Educations for' can be cross disciplinary, trans-disciplinary or sometimes a-disciplinary or they may be linked to different disciplinary fields within a discipline based system either inside the disciplines already established or as a complementary subject. The humanities and social sciences are concerned in two ways: in terms of teaching, they can be used as a reference for the school disciplines related to them (history, geopolitics, sociology, economics...), and in terms of educational research, they can call into question and clarify these changes (sociology of education, philosophy of education, didactics...).

In this issue, we offer a reflection on 'educations for' regarding them as something we can deconstruct, make sense of from different perspectives and even help construct as an educational field. Thus, education for peace can be considered from a geopolitical point of view (does it have the same aims and the same content in a state where war is a distant memory or in a state where recent conflict is still in everyone's mind?), from the viewpoint of history (in which historical contexts is this type of education introduced? Are there any traces of it for example between the two world wars?), from the point of view of didactics (which curriculum? what is to be learned? which situations are conducive to learning what is to be learned? what barriers do teachers and learners encounter? how can we assess its effectiveness - the risk of war, the litmus test of a successful outcome for this type of education, cannot be programmed and is not desired?). In this issue it is the didactic perspective that dominates. Doussot examines how geography contributes to educating for ecologically responsible citizens and Richit looks at how the social sciences help pupils to make career choices. The article by Barthes and Jeziorski underlines the risks of fragmenting teaching content and the absence of a systemic approach to education for, at university level.

Panissal and Brossais demonstrate the effective role of debate in developing scientific citizenship. The humanities and social sciences also evoke the central question of such 'education for' projects: which human being, social actor, person, citizen do we want to forge? This is also the underlying question in several articles, for example concerning the question of developing critical thinking (Barthes, Jeziorski; Cardin, LeVasseur; Doussot) or more generally a citizen spirit (Cardin, LeVasseur; Panissal, Brossais). Although most of the articles take account of the 'educations for' which are prescribed and put into

practice, the focus on the disciplines does not preclude a reflection on inclusive educational projects: by challenging the social frameworks of history teaching and its legitimacy, LeVasseur and Cardin present it as an education for living in society which goes beyond the initial framework of the academic discipline.

This introduction is based on the French situation but, the articles in this issue are by no means limited to France. This focus allows us to ask, what we consider to be, some enlightening questions on 'educations for' and on the contribution of the humanities and social sciences to these educations. More importantly, we also try to explain in what way the theoretical frameworks of didactics may be (partially) specific to research carried out in the French-speaking world.

## 2 French School Tradition and Educations For ...

Since the creation of a closely administered school system (in the late 19th century), many attempts have been made to standardize what should be taught. The result of setting up a "model for school" (Vincent 1994; Monjo 1998) is that everyone accepts or considers that certain characteristics are necessary:

- A horizontal division of knowledge into "school subjects" (grammar, geography, algebra...); these school subjects are considered to be all the more noble because they have homonyms in the university sphere (Ross 2002); it follows that legitimate knowledge is knowledge which can become an integral part of one of these subjects, organized into school disciplines.

- A vertical transmission of content based on the way school is divided into "classes" according to age group or level; this implies the division of the subjects according to pedagogical progression corresponding to a greater or lesser extent to a logical content structure (thematic, chronological-historical) or to a progression in what is learned (in order to understand this you have to know that which means that must be learned before this).

- A method of controlling the process of transmission and its results by evaluating the pupils (exams, qualifications), but also the teachers (competitive exams, teacher training, inspections).

The structure of academic knowledge has remained the same, in essence, since the early 20th century and has gradually spread to the technical and vocational sphere. This fact has not, however, precluded the emergence of several, often fragile and short-lived, 'educations for' introduced for the sake of social progress (domestic science, early forms of education for health).

In France in the 1990s, the education crisis, which stemmed partly from doubts about learning content adapted to the massification of secondary education, partly from the changes in society and social expectations for school, but also from the increase (at least in people's perceptions) in "social problems" such as a deterioration of the environment, antisocial behavior and violence, led to the introduction of "educations for" (Audigier, Tutiaux-Guillon 2008; Pagoni, Tutiaux-Guillon 2012): Education à l'environnement – EE" (*environmental education*), "Education civique, juridique et sociale – ECJS" (*civics, law and social education*) (Alpe, Legardez 2000), then "Education au développement durable – EDD" (*education for sustainable development*). These were added to civics education and physical and sports education<sup>1</sup>, both of which had already existed for many years, and to those whose status remains uncertain and often disputed

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<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note that these 'educations for' were maintained in reference to France's political and social recovery in the 1940s.

like educating for: health, safety, sex, career choices... As their denominations indicate, these 'educations for' are not "teachings of" (Lebeaume 2010): they do not have the characteristics of what we call "school disciplines" which are all defined, not only in terms of their content, but also in terms of prioritized school tasks and procedures.

In addition to the objects and notions to be taught, discipline construction incorporates the chronological divisions, teaching methods and evaluation practices to build an epistemic framework (Muller 2007). Yet, at the present time 'educations for' are not structured in this way. It is not a question either of education in a generic sense – hence the debate over the status of these 'educations for' which have four main characteristics in common (Alpe, Legardez 2011):

- they are thematic and interdisciplinary – even a-disciplinary, "cross disciplinary" (according to French Ministry of Education terminology): they thus escape the horizontal structuring of the school model even though they may include some subject-specific knowledge;

- they are closely linked to social issues and engage the actors directly because they are primarily a response to some form of social demand for education; in other words, whether they are the same as or different to long standing goals, they respond to urgent (apparent or recognized) cyclical social concerns. They may therefore be a vector for the orientations proposed and the behavior and attitudes expected but also for the modalities and procedures for decision-making in a democratic society;

- they attach importance to values which form part of the prescriptions; in this sense they transform goals into objects for school work, even if they share these aims with school disciplines;

- they target, generally explicitly, a change in attitude and behavior because the objective is to understand in order to act and to act in order to change oneself, change society, and even to change the world. And the vertical disciplinary structure by age group is based more on the development of individual skills than on the progressive fractionating of what is to be learned.

These characteristics break away from the standard school model by referring to specific didactic systems. They raise the issue of the status and legitimacy of the scientific, academic, social, school knowledge (Legardez, Simonneaux 2006; Alpe 2006) they convey, which means here, the knowledge of social sciences and knowledge about society circulating outside school and the academic world. They also raise another much more political question about the link between the aims – that is to say the model of the individual and of society underlying the school project – and over and above the content, the very ways in which teaching and learning is actually carried out in school. More generally, they may give us the opportunity to reflect on the mutations of the school systems which are of course mere social and historical objects.

### **3 The Social Sciences Within the French School System: What do they Contribute to Educations For?**

'Educations for' again raise the old question of the articulation of education and training and, in particular here, the (subject-specific) knowledge required to understand the world and society, to interpret the situations and to act. What complicates matters is that the postulate remains an autonomous individual yet autonomy oscillates between its definition as the ability to choose the appropriate knowledge and to use it on one's own initiative – a definition which maintains a strong link with subject-specific knowledge – and an alternative

approach which focuses on the individual's moral or intellectual commitment to changing the world and to changing himself. However, this particular definition may or may not be incorporated into existing disciplines, may or may not be common to them, therefore may impose work on a genuine reconstruction in order to correlate with the situated, discipline-specific practices and learning; it also imposes a reflection on the how the relationship to the world, to others and to oneself, is developed at school.

Let's consider the following disciplines: history, geography, economics, management and law which, in the French system, are school avatars of the social sciences. The first two are taught as one combined subject, the others as "sciences économiques et sociales – SES" (*economics and social sciences*), or "économie et gestion – EG" (*economics and management*) or even "principes de base d'économie et de gestion – PBEG" (*basic principles of economics and management*). These disciplines are referred to in some of the articles included in this issue (Doussot, Richit).

### 3.1 The Economics Programs

SES, EG and PBEG are only taught in *lycée*, that is to say during the last three years of secondary education. The teaching of management, still called "business economics" or sometimes somewhat inappropriately "micro-economics", appears early on in the technological study stream. The significant increase in the number of classes, first in the technological (EG) then in the (tertiary) vocational streams, has contributed to its development with a tacit agreement being reached over the different positioning of these two programs (vocational and technological). This has gradually evolved thanks to a whole string of "renovations" the most recent of which endeavor to increase the academic legitimacy of the technological stream by differentiating it more clearly from the vocational stream and by bringing it closer to the disciplines of reference in higher education (economics, management, law). In the late 1960s, the SES option was introduced into secondary education creating a specific stream in general education, the existence of which has been challenged on several occasions (Chatel et al. 1990). The SES program continues to spark debate with various expert reports and opinions clashing over the different economic approaches but also the goals attributed to this discipline (to produce responsible citizens, to provide insight into the principle mechanisms of economic life, to discover a discipline and prepare for further studies...) or even the image it conveys of the corporate world.

We can easily imagine that these programs could contribute to an education for created recently and still marginal: entrepreneurship education (Champy-Remoussenard 2012). However, specific parts of the teaching content could also be used in an education for sustainable development (the links between economics-society-environment) or health education (sociological approaches). Richit has examined how SES and PBEG are mobilized in educating for career guidance. Finally, the confrontation with debates going on in society (at least in SES) comes into the realm of education in debating and citizenship analyzed by Panissal and Brossais

### 3.2 History and Geography

History and geography have been present in primary education since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, part of secondary education since 1902 and have survived all the

reforms. Parallel to the intellectual and cultural aims, both have the well-established goals of forming citizens and forging a common identity. No one challenges these goals, even though the meaning of the words used to describe them has changed considerably since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The prescribed teaching content can be incorporated directly into themes connected with education for sustainable development (this is true, to a large extent, in the case of geography as Doussot demonstrates in his article) or into citizenship education (in geography concerning the relation between citizen and territory, in history where political questions occupy most of the programs). The common set of core skills and knowledge (MEN 2006) for *college* (the first four years of secondary education) defines the aims which are common to all disciplines; social skills and civics, autonomy and initiative are similar to the prescriptions of 'educations for'. The recent programs for *lycée* (MEN 2010 ssq.) also prescribe what pupils are expected to learn including capacities that are acquired for and via reasoning. Above all, the way teachers see it, history, geography and the SES study stream share the same fundamental and founding concerns as an education in critical thinking (cf. LeVasseur and Cardin) a concern claimed also by the 'educations for' especially in the face of the abundance of information and its inconsistent reliability. In fact, this is the object of media education<sup>12</sup>, an education for, recommended in France since the 1970s.

However, even if their goals are similar to those of 'educations for', these disciplines are not structured in such a way as to engage the actors, to render the values underlying the social projects explicit or to directly influence attitudes and behavior. They may make pupils aware of information they would not otherwise have access to and which is relevant to the 'educations for', but they are still structured by discipline related themes that teachers link more to academic, university knowledge than to the problems in society.

## 4 The contribution of Didactics

### 4.1 Disciplinary Didactics, School Disciplines and Educations For...

Teaching is structured around the different disciplines so too is didactics research: actually – and even though the theoretical references may belong to other scientific fields – what is particular to didactics within the educational sciences is its focus on content (what is prescribed, what is to be taught and what is to be learned). Many educational scientists have been trained initially in the scientific discipline with the same name as the school subject. We can distinguish between the different didactic fields because each refers to a particular discipline. Most importantly, the distinction between didactics and pedagogy is that the former is discipline-related; in fact it is this sort of

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<sup>2</sup> The French Liaison Centre between Education and Information Media (CLEMI) has been responsible for media literacy in the French education system since 1983. Its mission is to teach pupils to explore the media as citizens of tomorrow by way of partnerships between teachers and media professionals. Media education now implies learning to use Internet. Since 2007, clearer guidelines have been set by the French general inspectorate for education : "In order to prevent media education being considered as a matter for militants and enthusiasts, it seems necessary to take steps towards a more comprehensive approach which is well defined and managed. This is an important challenge which must be met to ensure that our democracy continues to function and basic learning skills (mastery of languages, general knowledge, critical thinking, autonomy, citizenship) are acquired. In order to do this the school system must create the conditions to introduce a minimum level of modern media training into existing programs" Source : [eduscol.education.fr/.../education-aux-medias/.../recommandations-fr](http://eduscol.education.fr/.../education-aux-medias/.../recommandations-fr)

reverence for the discipline "*vénération de la discipline*" (Chevallard 2006) that legitimizes didactics. As we see from the articles in this issue, this orients the questions about 'educations for' in two closely linked directions: the specificities of 'educations for' in relation to academic disciplines (Barthes, Jeziorski), and the relation between 'educations for' and the established disciplines (Doussot; Panissal, Brossais; Richit). This also means that it is the theoretical instruments of didactics that are mobilized to examine 'educations for': here the term didactics is used to denote a well-tooled up methodical study which aims to produce valid knowledge about what is prescribed, taught and learned within a specific discipline. Proposing best practices may be one of the goals of this research but it is neither the sole nor always the main one even if most of the research is also designed to enlighten teachers' reflections and practices.

The didactic fields have been developing now for a good thirty years; they have led to the circulation of models and concepts, to exchanges even to links being made between the didactics of the social sciences<sup>3</sup> or between the didactics of the sciences and technologies (Hasni, Lebeaume 2010). The 2000s have seen the emergence of comparative didactics: the comparison no longer just concerns the circulation of concepts from a particular subject-related didactic field to another but consists in distinguishing the specific nature from the generic nature within the didactical phenomena and in "updating the respective blind spots" in the different subject-related fields (Mercier et al. 2002). At the moment, the comparative didactic approach is rarely applied to 'educations for', it is however true that this type of analysis could be relevant for the objects taught in all subjects and which the Ministry obliges all disciplines to participate in. What's more, because of the lack of comparative work, recent projects on 'educations for' associate several didactic fields as is the case of research into "education for sustainable development: barriers and facilitators"<sup>4</sup> to which the authors of this text contribute. This research compares several discipline-related didactic perspectives (concerning history, geography, economics, earth and life sciences, chemistry, animal husbandry, agronomy...) and raises the question of "area didactics": the didactics of socially acute "scientific" questions and the didactics of socially acute "social" questions which converge in the analysis of an education for sustainable development (EDD).

This research is consistent with what we can call critical didactics. Starting in the 1990s, the development of a critical didactic trend in the French speaking world, sometimes linked to comparative didactics, seems more immediately relevant to research questions on 'educations for'. This critical trend helps to go beyond a discipline-related structuring of didactics and also redirects research towards the concept of Socially Acute Questions (Legardez, Simonneaux 2006; Simonneaux, Legardez 2011). Other critical didactics related work can be mentioned: the research on Environmental education (Bader, Girault, Sauvé) and also the international trend of Socio-Scientific Issues (SSI) in the didactics of the Sciences. In this case it is accepted that reasoning must take account of the complexity of the issue which necessitates an examination of the question at hand from several angles and also be skeptical about the lack of information

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<sup>3</sup> This manifested itself, for example, in the conferences on didactics held at the INRP from 1986 to 1996 (which resulted in a publication) or more recently in the development of a new association for didactic research into history and the social sciences ([www.irahsse.org](http://www.irahsse.org)).

<sup>4</sup> Research subsidized by the ANR 08-BLAN-135  
- acronym ED2AO  
- 2009-2012 - coordinator J.M. Lange (Rouen University).

(Sadler et al. 2007).

It is striking to observe how the objects of critical didactics, which all crystallize the values and political choices at stake, converge with certain 'educations for' (environmental education of course but also education for sustainable development media education, education in debating and citizenship education). With socially acute questions, the scope of research into teaching-learning has extended to a questioning of the goals and validity of the content of school subjects and activities. At the crossroads of these different approaches are the issues of values, expertise, media coverage and cultures.

Research work in didactics has specifically studied the epistemological, axiological and social dimensions of discipline related teaching and learning and more recently of 'educations for'. Within this perspective, this research may focus on one or associate several dimensions:

- the socio-epistemological dimensions of academic knowledge as well as the reference knowledge and practices: construction and paradigms of the school disciplines, study of the domains of validity, the modalities for constructing knowledge, the stakes for the actors concerned by this knowledge, the role of models, of the uncertainties and controversies surrounding these references;
- the psycho-social dimensions of the teaching-learning process are studied by way of the representations, lines of reasoning, decision-making and more generally the actors' engagement.
- The operational dimensions with the analysis of educational mechanisms: debates, digital environment, individual work, participatory projects, peer interaction.

In this issue, the articles, in which 'educations for' are specifically questioned, cover these three dimensions and focus on the construction of knowledge and references, consideration of the social representations, the role of values and finally the teachers' instructional posture ranging from neutrality to engagement.

#### 4.2 Constructing Knowledge and References

The methods used to develop what is taught in schools were mainly designed according to two models. The first one is Yves Chevallard's (1985) didactic transposition theory which based on the work of the sociologist Michel Verret and which has spread beyond the didactics of mathematics. Didactic transposition interprets the way knowledge is transformed to make it teachable in schools. It focuses both on the reference to established scientific knowledge and on the profound change in nature this knowledge undergoes when it is prescribed and taught. This model has been extended by adding epistemology to the body of scientific reference knowledge (particularly in the didactics of geography) and sometimes by blowing the whistle on the deformation inflicted on some of the reference knowledge. This model is appropriate for analyzing certain knowledge related to 'educations for', especially because it allows us to consider how this knowledge has been extracted from its original scientific context and recontextualized to make it teachable in schools and how, in so doing, its original creators and the scientific debate over it are both lost.

The other model, used in the didactics of social sciences, is that of the "school discipline" (Chervel 1988, 1995). According to him, school disciplines are structured by a vulgate (what everyone agrees should be taught and learned at School), by the everyday exercises which shape a lesson, by evaluations and stabilized motivational teaching practices, all of which is centered on goals. These goals and the resulting structure contribute to the durability of the school discipline, which responds fundamentally to a social project. Besides the fact that

it includes teaching practices, the particularity of this model is that it proposes other references for what is to be taught by allowing it to be socially construed, without constituted scientific references, aimed above all else at solving problems encountered in school (this is what Chervel demonstrates in particular regarding the teaching of grammar in the 19<sup>th</sup> century). Basing research into 'educations for' on this work has enabled us not only to clarify certain differences with other programs but also to consider them as academic creations which may incorporate social knowledge that is different from the knowledge derived strictly from the sciences. From this perspective, values and behavior become legitimate teaching and learning content even in the absence of scientific references.

The contributions to this issue reflect a variety of instructional postures taken when constructing a discipline. The key questions, raised by Doussot, LeVasseur and Cardin or again by Richit, are consistent with identifying or even reinforcing existing discipline based structures. In contrast, education for nanotechnologies described by Panissal and Brossais is based on interdisciplinary knowledge and therefore involves going beyond the usual segmentation. It is therefore difficult to rely on models designed to characterize the disciplines. This may indeed explain why the theories chosen by these authors are rooted in psychology and linguistics.

The epistemological doubt can also spread beyond school, particularly when the knowledge taught cannot be referred to knowledge which has already been institutionalized. So, it may be a question of analyzing the methods used to build the reference knowledge and practices when these are uncertain and non-stabilized as is the case in a number of 'educations for'. These 'educations for' raise questions introducing uncertainties that transcend the sphere of scientific expertise and spark off debate in society, especially in the media. It appears then that it is the goals that, for the teachers, become the reference. This occurs undoubtedly all the more easily because fostering a critical spirit is an academic tradition, which is very common in the disciplines related to social sciences. Faced with controversial references, the goals asserted by the teachers are consistent with a critical perspective. This is the case for environmental issues, economic or social questions in environmental education or education for sustainable development (Simonneaux, Simonneaux 2009) and more generally for socially acute questions. The article by Panissal and Brossais on education for nanotechnologies specifically incorporates these uncertainties so that they contribute to educating for risks. Barthes and Jeziorski, LeVasseur and Cardin and also Doussot confirm the central role of education in critical thinking.

#### **4.3 Social Representations as Analytical Tools in Didactics**

Research, which aims to throw light on teaching and above all learning, is mostly supported by models used in psychology and, in the case of the didactics of social sciences, those used in social psychology. The field of didactics for experimental sciences has developed around the analysis of concepts and knowledge (Giordan, Girault, Clément 1994), of history (in particular: Lautier, 1997) or of economics around the concept of social representations borrowed from Moscovici (1976), Jodelet (1989) or Abric (1994). Alain Legardez (2001, 2004) has reinterpreted this concept as a system of representations and knowledge for the didactics of economics and social sciences (SES).

Social representations interest specialists in didactics because they name and characterize a product and a learning process which associates knowledge (held

to be true and reliable whatever its validity for the expert), values, affective connotations, attitudes and judgments. We can add that researchers see them as springboards for communication, action, and shared identities. In this sense, mobilizing this concept has helped to understand the knowledge acquired, the barriers and facilitators to learning and proves to be particularly useful in the case of 'educations for', precisely because they specifically incorporate both ethical and psycho-social dimensions while targeting action and engagement. The article by Barthes and Jeziorski gives an example of this social construction by demonstrating the impact of the sociocultural and political context on the representations of sustainable development. Indeed, the Polish students' representations were considerably different from those of the German and French students. LeVasseur and Cardin consider the tension between building a collective historical norm and the different representations of history that students are able to develop themselves faced with a changing society and culture.

#### 4.4 Which Questions are Raised About Values?

In the didactics of the «sciences» - the first to be developed - and for a lot of pioneering research, references for what is taught are considered to be stable and valid, an increase in the amount of information or knowledge<sup>5</sup> acquired by the learners is presumed to foster rational behavior and a critical spirit. Instruction, in an approach which is actually very positivist, ensures education. It is also this assumption that has been implied in the wording of the goals attributed to school disciplines since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century: acquiring knowledge rooted (or reputed to be) in the sciences, allows the pupil to gain access to rational thought and hence a reasoned social and civic attitude and behavior as well as a way of thinking that banishes outdated prejudices and beliefs. Knowing science encourages democratic values. The educational model may be described as a "deficit model": simply bridge the information gap in order to make good decisions.

In this context, no school time is specifically dedicated to teaching "values", apart from during civics lessons<sup>6</sup> and to some extent philosophy (which is only taught in the final year of secondary school in France); values are incorporated into the disciplines. It is accepted that education as a whole helps transmit a model (of citizenship, responsibility, solidarity, etc.) formulated in the programs in terms of the goals of the disciplines. These socio-political functions of school (Prost 1992), asserted as such by the fathers of the state school system, and analyzed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century by Durkheim (1922/1968), justify the presence of values, or even ideological positions, in the programs which went virtually unchallenged until the sixties. French history and geography teachers (to take an example which echoes the article by LeVasseur and Cardin) take shaping the future citizen to be a natural aim of what they teach and see the result as a sort of republican neutrality which does not interfere with scientific objectivity (Lautier 1997). In addition, concerning the economic sciences, the debate over

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<sup>5</sup> In French we use two terms to translate «knowledge»: "savoir" which refers to a set of concepts and notions elaborated by a (scientific, professional ...) community and "connaissance" which refers to what is learned by an individual about a theme.

<sup>6</sup> Civics -under different denominations- was firstly limited to primary education and then after the Second World War extended into basic secondary education; it is only since 2000 that we find it in all secondary education and all study streams. We should add that it is effectively rarely taught at primary level and in *collège* (lower secondary) (Audigier, Tutiaux-Guillon 2004, Audigier 2010).

the status of values in the reference knowledge as well as in the knowledge taught at school is an old one but remains lively and controversial. Besides the precursors like Hirschman (1984) or Sen (1999), many have recently spoken out in defense of an economy incorporating or articulating human or political values and principles.

The place accorded to values has gradually been reduced in the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century during a slow process of didactical work on the content taught at school: the need to teach a lot of heterogeneous pupils following the rise in mass education (Merle 2009) gives priority to the contents of what is taught, a mistrust resulting from a questioning of the ideological role of school (unequal academic opportunities, the role of a cultural capital) by the sociology of education (Bourdieu, Passeron 1970), fierce criticism against a nationalist orientation potentially excluding otherness and experienced identities (Citron 1989), leads school to be suspected of pedagogical mystification (Charlot 1976), indoctrination (Reboul 1977) or to transmitting a "hidden curriculum" (Perrenoud 1993). Values become, in a way, "free riders" of what is taught and should be kicked out (Solonel, Tutiaux-Guillon 1999). Didactics research, therefore, rarely focuses on values preferring to concentrate on the more legitimate content of teaching and learning.

This is where the question of 'educations for' has changed everything. Indeed, as we pointed out earlier in this introduction, they are prescribed to address social and political issues which openly challenge values. The texts that define 'educations for' clearly mention values (even if they sidestep the debate on their importance and relevance). Analyzing 'educations for', even from a didactics perspective, therefore requires handling values as teaching content.

The challenge is not only educational, but also democratic. It means shifting education and didactics research from the theoretical framework of the "deficit model" either to a deliberative model or to an "education as praxis" model or even to a dissident and controversial model (Levinson 2011). In the deficit model the didactic relationship is hierarchical and learning what is taught fosters the development of skills. In the deliberative model, there is open discussion with the participation of different actors faced with uncertain or fallible knowledge, even contextualized knowledge emerging and distributed between different actors in the practical model.

This may tie in with another question concerning the emphasis placed in the prescriptions and practices, discipline related or not, on political projects/ideologies underlying 'educations for'... They may be explicit: the model of the citizen or the model of the person may be specified in the goals defined in the texts. Often, 'educations for' target engagement, responsibility, learning to debate and handle information in a society where it is overabundant and contradictory. However, the type of society or political system are very rarely targeted. For example, we can identify a shift from citizen to economic actor (producer and consumer) which also means the political aspect is forgotten. We can question the focus placed on the individual in various 'educations for', to the detriment of a reflection on what is built and determined socially and here again on political responsibility. It is tempting to see in these prescriptions an implicit promotion of political and economic liberalism based on liberal philosophy whereas the objective could be to contribute to the co-construction of a new critical citizenship. New directions for didactics can be found here. The way in which the political interferes with the educational stakes is considered in the contributions made by Barthes and Jeziorsky or LeVasseur and Cardin, the political dimension is at the heart of Doussot's questioning when examining the relationship between what is taught in geography and political skills.

## **5 From Neutrality to Engagement, Analyzing the Actors' Instructional Postures in Educations For**

Faced with the explicit institutional injunction in educational matters, a lot of research has demonstrated a reluctance to engage on the part of teachers, who give preference to declared neutrality (Simonneaux, Simonneaux 2006). Perhaps more than in anything else that is taught, in 'educations for' teachers are directly called upon as people and as citizens, confronted with their values at the same time as those prescribed or underlying the prescriptions. They can no longer take refuge behind a strictly factual form of teaching; many feel to be ill at ease with this. Furthermore, 'educations for' open up school to agents from the outside world, such as—and more particularly—to certain campaigners. How can everyone find his place? Some teachers have learned a lesson from sociology and think twice before claiming to be "neutral" but they aspire to an objectivity which is consistent with their code of professional ethics. Many consider themselves to be "teachers" and not educators. However, in certain difficult contexts, teachers give priority to learning to live together (Lautier 2002). As there is no consensus on the subject, no homogeneous picture is arising. The question of their position on an issue is a critical one for them, especially when it comes to the transmission of values or encouraging certain behavior and attitudes. And yet this question ties in with the one that faces researchers working on teaching socially acute questions (Simonneaux 2006).

Laurence Simonneaux refers particularly to the work of Kelly (1986) who considers four instructional postures: exclusive neutrality, exclusive partiality, neutral impartiality, and committed impartiality. Proponents of exclusive neutrality believe that teachers should not address controversial topics and that scientific discoveries are value-free truths. Their position is consistent with positivism. Exclusive partiality is characterized by the deliberate intention to get pupils to adopt a particular point of view. In this case, teachers ignore or, more or less insidiously, play down contradictory positions. They believe that pupils should be provided with intellectual certainty – which could come close to indoctrination. This instructional posture is however accepted in education for health where best practices are explicitly defined. Proponents of neutral impartiality think their pupils should be involved in debates on controversial issues within the framework of citizenship education and that teachers should be careful not to reveal their points of view. Certain proponents of this posture believe that it allows them to preserve their authority by masking their indecision or their ignorance, for others, it is particularly important to avoid influencing the pupils' reasoning, even by way of a confrontation with the mindset of an adult who is an expert in the field. In the case of committed impartiality, a posture which is apparently paradoxical, teachers give their opinions whilst encouraging the analysis of competing viewpoints on the controversies. Kelly finds this posture the most defensible because, – presented with the teachers ideas, and encouraged to evaluate the validity of these ideas in an environment which is free from potential sanctions–, the pupils develop skills in civic engagement and resolve. According to Kelly, the balance between personal commitment and impartiality catalyzes critical thinking and civic resolve in both pupils and teachers; the pupils feel more adult.

The arguments Kelly develops, both in his critique of the instructional postures and in his defense of committed impartiality clearly tally with the goals of 'educations for'. In addition, the framework of interpretation he proposes could be useful for elucidating teachers' positions towards 'educations for' inasmuch as these, even outside all controversy, call directly upon the teacher as

an educational, social and political actor and, if he takes responsibility for this form of teaching, lead him to become engaged.

Laurence Simonneaux's analysis of the educational stakes of *socio-scientific issues* sheds light on what is expected, not only from the teacher's point of view but also from the point of view of the learners, in the field of 'educations for'. The challenges constitute a continuum between, at one end, favoring knowledge which is taken to be stable, thus considering that reliable information is sufficient, and at the other end, fostering militant engagement and thus asserting a political citizenship education. Between these two extremes, we will encounter complex educational challenges (the analysis of controversies and uncertainties, of risks and of values) even critical thinking when making decisions. The challenges presented in the analysis conducted in this issue, fall mainly into the category of critical thinking and do not cross the border into militant activism.

### Conclusion

The diversity of the analytical frameworks demonstrates the richness of francophone didactics research in the field of 'educations for'. The work presented in this issue seems to be consistent with the critical perspective which characterizes recent research in the French-speaking world. This research however, reveals the difficulties encountered when trying to integrate educational practices into this critical perspective both from the institutional point of view and from the point of view of the actors of the education system, in particular the teachers.

Is such research specific to the French-speaking world? It seems to us that this critical trend converges with and echoes research on an international level in the field of educational science (Benzce et al. 2009; Kelly 1986; Levinson 2010; Sadler et al. 2007) or political philosophy. It is a political and philosophical question because 'educations for' place learners' conceptions of human beings and of themselves, of society, of the world and of nature or more precisely the relations between humanity, society, the world and nature, at the heart of the issue (Bader, Sauvé 2011). These different conceptions cause friction between the process of an individual's autonomy and the acculturation process, in asserting one without wanting to exclude the other. On top of this, there is friction between the present and future self because 'educations for' encourage, even require, an individual to project himself, society, nature into the future. This projection will also unavoidably affect his relation to the past (Koselleck 1990; Angvik, Von Borries 1997). At a time when our increasingly individualistic society finds itself confronted with a multitude of (environmental, economic, political) crises, it seems to us to be both important and logical that this friction finds its way into school.

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