DEVELOPMENT'S DISAPPEARANCE: A METAPHOR ANALYSIS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN NORWEGIAN CORE CURRICULUM

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Abstract: The article presents findings from a critical metaphor analysis of 'sustainable development' in the current and former versions of the Norwegian formal education curriculum. By combining conceptual metaphor analysis with an interaction approach, the article explores how experiences with 'reality' shape sustainable development and discuss how the metaphor's content in turn might shape perceptions of 'reality'. The former version reads like a priest's sermon placing sustainable development in a context of crises, complexity, and conflicts, requiring a holistically oriented education encouraging a collective effort. In the current version the interaction process of 'sustainable development' has culminated in a tension-reduced, individually oriented, and technology-optimistic metaphor. What then becomes backgrounded is the focus on sustainable development also being about meeting the needs of the present. With no explicit economic content, there is little in the curriculum that encourages debates about economic growth, the current economic paradigm, or exploration of alternative paradigms. These central issues are left out and the metaphor is falling asleep. Development education (DE), as a field of research and exploration of approaches to discuss and teach about the missing issues, can be a useful source of inspiration and contribute to reawakening the dormant metaphor.

Key words: Sustainable Development; Critical Metaphor Analysis; Development Education; Economic Growth.

Introduction

> "When two metaphors, such as sustainability and development, are parts in an interaction, the soundscape becomes a cacophony that few understand the consequences of" (Lippe, 1999: 199 – own translation).

In this article approaching 'sustainable development' as a metaphor is understood as exploring how our experiences with reality shape language and how language in turn shapes reality. 'Sustainable' and 'development' are concepts rich in connotations. Combined, they cover many concerns and suggested solutions, and 'sustainable development' as a metaphor has potentially great potency in meaning creation. However, this potency, and its transformative power, depends on what connotations are brought to the fore, and how. It is, therefore, of interest to explore what connotations are brought to the fore and what is being pushed towards the back in the presentation of sustainable development as part of the Norwegian formal education core curriculum.

Defined as meeting today's needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (WCED, 1987), sustainable development was fashioned to reconcile environmental considerations and the fight against poverty and social injustice. This reconciliation has proven difficult as sustainability has been understood as living within planetary boundaries and development has been understood as economic growth and therefore irreconcilable with these boundaries (Redclift, 2005). These irreconcilable considerations reflect some of the sustainable development metaphor's tensions.

How sustainable development is presented in the Norwegian curriculum is part of shaping how the concept is understood and taught in primary and secondary education. The Norwegian curriculum comprises a 'core curriculum' describing the value foundation of education, a section describing the subjects and time division, and the subject syllabuses (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, undated). Sustainable

development as a concept was included in the 'core curriculum' in 1993 (Kyrkje- utdannings og forskningsdepartementet, 1993). Since then, the concept has steadily been attributed more space through reform processes. The Knowledge Promotion reform of 2006 saw the introduction of competency goals, taking curriculum towards an output-oriented focus, and sustainable development was included in competency goals in the natural- and social science subjects through this reform. In the latest Knowledge Promotion reform of 2020 (LK20) the concept has been included in more subjects.

Through the LK20 reform the 'core curriculum' of 1993, hereafter named the 'General part 93' after its Norwegian title, was replaced with the 'Overarching part 2017' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). Through an open public consultation process, anyone with an opinion was invited to provide input to the renewal of the 'core curriculum' and to the subject syllabuses (Ministry of Education and Research, 2016). These inputs reflect some of the cacophonies of potential meaning indicated in Lippe's introductory citation (1999). It is therefore of interest to explore how both the 'old' and the new 'core curriculum' reflect this cacophony.

A critical metaphor analysis of the former (1993) and current 'core curriculum' is conducted to understand what sustainable development conveys. As the value foundation of the curriculum, how sustainable development is presented in this part has implications for how the topic is understood and is provided space throughout the subject syllabuses. The analysis looks at what is being brought to the fore, what becomes hidden, and how this has changed from the former to the present core curriculum. The article then discusses what implications the findings might have for the potency of sustainable development to enact transformative change.

First, the theory and method of metaphor analysis are presented, followed by the metaphor analysis of sustainable development in the two versions of the core curriculum, and then implications are discussed.

Critical metaphor analysis

A critical approach to metaphor analysis takes departure in critical pedagogy and critical curriculum theory as inspired by Freire, Giroux, Pinar and Apple. A key emphasis is on the power of language and on the effort to make visible structures of power shaping the contexts in which our actions unfold. Insights from critical pedagogy and critical curriculum theory is thus part of shaping how the analytical framework is utilised.

Within the dichotomy of realism and relativism, a distinction is made between what Ortony (1993: 2-3) describes as the *literal,* that language is a literal description of reality - and the *metaphorical* - that our understanding of reality is constructed through language. This dichotomy also describes a way of understanding how a metaphor works. Realists, on the one hand, will claim that science can describe the world objectively and literally and that the metaphor is unnecessary and confusing. On the other hand, relativists argue that our understanding of the world is constructed through language and that metaphor is a tool in this process. A metaphor, therefore, can have great power.

By using critical metaphor analysis, Charteris-Black (2004) believes that we can become more aware of how something is highlighted, and other things are suppressed. In this way, we can also 'challenge the metaphor and suggest alternative ways of thinking about the topic' (Ibid: 251). He argues that the development of cognitive semantics has contributed to a focus on metaphors as a tool for conceptualising political questions and worldviews. In his studies, he finds, for example, that political speeches based on 'religion domains' build up a 'new ethical political discourse' (Ibid: 48). An analysis of what 'domains' are utilised in a political document such as an education curriculum can therefore provide insights into the conceptualisation of political questions and worldviews.

The metaphor analysis of the two value documents of the Norwegian curriculum takes inspiration from the dichotomy between reality shaping language and language shaping reality by combining two different ways of understanding metaphors. It builds on Lakoff and Johnson's (2008) conceptual

metaphor theory of how our experiences with reality shapes our language. This is combined with Max Black's (1962; 1979) interaction perspective to see how our use of language is part of shaping how we understand reality.

Lakoff and Johnson define the essence of metaphor as 'understanding and experiencing one type of thing in the form of another' (2008: 4). They describe metaphors as a hierarchical system where conceptual phenomena inspire conceptual metaphors which create structurally arranged abstract metaphors. An example of a conceptual phenomenon, termed 'source domain', is how our *spatial* experience of up and down has led to conceptual metaphors where what is or moves up has a positive connotation, while what is down or moves down has a negative connotation: heaven and hell; how we bounce up in a good mood or how we slouch down when in a bad mood; views of being up and down a ladder, etc. Per Espen Stoknes (2020) exemplifies how naturalised good = up has become when he tries to explain why 'zero growth' is difficult to promote. Growth as going upwards, is so naturalised as something positive that zero growth, or stagnation, is difficult to perceive as positive. In this sense, the structure, or 'framework', around growth becomes a filter that appears difficult to change.

All words in our language evoke specific associations that belong to what Lakoff (2014) calls a 'frame'. Such a 'frame' has a filter effect in that it steers our focus towards specific associations. Conceptualisations and their structuring of metaphors into frames are not always the same across cultures. They can manifest differently as exemplified by how the future can be understood as being both in front and back of us, depending on cultural use (Lakoff and Johnson, 2008: 11). Frames are also deliberately used to instil certain ideas or images. An example Lakoff (2014) explores is the metaphor 'tax relief'. According to Lakoff, this metaphor is a successful attempt at 'framing' by the conservative side of United States politics, using the framework for 'relief'. Relief can be associated with removing or easing from something that is oppressive or painful, and 'relief' therefore frames 'tax' as someone being 'saved' from paying taxes, and the person doing the relieving becomes a 'hero'.

Where Lakoff and Johnson point to how the frame shapes the focus of a metaphor, Max Black (1962, 1979) emphasises how both the focus and the frame can affect each other. In his interaction perspective, both the focus and the frame have associated common places or connotations which influence each other. An example he uses is 'man is a wolf'. Here, 'man' is understood as the focus and 'wolf' is understood as the frame. In the interaction perspective, the idea is that it is not only the connotations of 'wolf' that highlight certain characteristics of 'man', but that also 'man' can shape which of the connotations of 'wolf' are played upon. In this way, the wolf is also humanised according to Black (1962). As such 'sustainable' and 'development' can be understood to affect each other. The connotations of each interact and transfer meaning to each other. Consequently, we can say that both the focus and the frame of the metaphor turn our gaze in specific ways. Like a filter, it organises how we see the world. The filter causes some connotations to be highlighted while other connotations are 'pushed away and overlooked during the interaction process' (Lippe, 1999: 199). Such metaphorical interaction can lead to new insights or to a cementation of existing insights. The interaction can also be understood as a change of opinion or an expansion of meaning (Flatseth, 2009: 82). Consequently, it matters how the metaphor is used and understood.

When using a metaphor, there is always uncertainty about how the 'listener' understands what the 'speaker' conveys. A field of tension opens where the listener is invited to draw on elements of the focus and the frame and construct a parallel 'implication complex' (Black, 1979: 28) that matches the focus, which in turn also affects the frame. 'In this speaking and listening, there may be a shift in the participant in the discourse that gradually changes the meaning given to the words in the expression' (Stoknes, 2011: 37). Such shifts are where 'metaphoricity' arises and reflect the metaphor's potency. By drawing on different elements of the connotations, a tension is created in what the metaphor conveys and means. However, some metaphors have gradually acquired such established meanings that they can be considered 'extinct' or 'dead'. They no longer have a creative force or a field of tension that is actively interpreted. According to Black (1979), some metaphors can also be called

'sleeping', i.e. they have the potential to be awakened again. Active or 'living' metaphors are those metaphors where there is still a field of tension and interaction between the focus and the frame.

Using a conceptual metaphor analysis and searching for source domains in the two value documents provides an understanding of how experiences with 'reality' and conceptual metaphors shape the language of the two versions of the 'core curriculum' in which sustainable development is presented. In the analysis, the two texts are understood as contexts for the metaphor. The interaction analysis looks at what connotations of sustainable development are brought forth and how, and looks at how these change between the two different contexts.

Analysis

A conceptual metaphor analysis involves looking for, isolating, and sorting metaphors in the text (Foss, 2017). This is done by searching for source domains using Nvivo to find how often selected metaphors are mentioned. These are presented in tables, inspired by Charteris-Black (2004: 56). Where '0' is used in the tables it is to indicate that the word is used in one of the two documents. A challenge is that of translation, exemplifying Lakoff and Johnson's (2008) point about cultural differences in language. Despite conveying the same meaning, a translated word does not necessarily take inspiration from the same source domain, or experience with reality.

First, an analysis of the 'General part 93' as a context is presented, before sustainable development is analysed within this context. Then the same order follows for the 'Overarching part 2017'.

The 'General part 93' as context

The 'General part 93' is a text divided into eights parts of which one part is the introduction and the remaining seven are titled according to different human qualities: 'the meaning-seeking human'; 'the creating human'; 'the working human'; 'the educated human'; 'the cooperative human'; 'the environmentally

conscious human'; and the 'integrated human'.   Figure 1 shows source domains shaping the text.

Figure 1. General Part 93 (Kyrkje- utdannings og forskningsdepartementet, 1993).

Source-domain	General part 93
Spatial orientation = 147	Wide x 7, unfold x 2, up x 7, down x 1, deep x 2, in-depth learning x 0, expand x 5, open x 8, in x 10, out x 11, 'utdype' = 'out-deeping'(elaborate) x 6, 'opplæringa' ='up-learning (education) x 47, upbringing x 15, 'oppleve' – 'up-living' (experience) x 7, 'utfolde' - 'outfold' (elaborate) x 3, across x 11, tverrfagleg' = 'across-learning' (interdisciplinary) x 1, surrounds x 3, overarching x 0, direction x 1
Building = 47	*Build /to be built* x 6, ground x 2, foundation x8, base education x2, education framework x3, room x8, basic view x1, strength x 3, power x 2, frames x 3, tufted on x 1, concrete x 5, structure x 1, sustainable (bærekraftig) x 2
Nature = 69	Stream x 1, unwilteringx1, force of nature x 1, cultivate x 1, force x 5, tracks x 2, natural x 1, nature x 24, grow x 2, environment (incl. learning-) x 25, wild x 1, growths x 5

In the text, there are many examples of the spatial orientation domain, which corresponds with Lakoff and Johnson's assertion that 'most of our fundamental concepts are organised in terms of one or more spatialisation metaphors' (2008: 14). There are also many examples of 'building' as source domain, and a few which represent nature. The use of 'building' as a source domain is common according to Charteris-Black (2004). According to him, 'building' is often used as a source domain because it expresses positive associations about 'ambitions for desired social goals' (Ibid: 71). In his analysis of political documents, he shows how parties use building metaphors to create positive associations with something well worth building, namely

'society', which is also interpreted as a building. Building metaphors can be connected to something that is stable, and that provides security by ensuring shelter. Some implications of using a building as the source domain can be interpreted to mean that the building has a goal that is to be positive, stable and provide security. The metaphor thus also indicates a form of organisation and structure that sets the framework for further development towards a goal. If we elaborate on the idea of the 'General part 93' as a building to further understand the context, what kind of building can we envision based on the language?

The 'General part 93' as a building
In the language of the 'General part 93' there are several sentences that point to the dualities of education (Kyrkje- utdannings og forskningsdepartementet, 1993). Examples are dualities between the individual and society, between the past and the present, the present and the future, between specialised and generalised knowledge, between the steady and the changing, between the close and the distant, between being loyal to the inherited and at the same time wish to create the new. These dualities reflect acknowledgement of balancing between contradictions, between the good and the bad, and through emphasising common values and frames of references the narrator provides and encourages a path to be followed. As such the text can be interpreted to have similarities to the sermon of a priest. This impression is perhaps amplified by the religious pictures, often related to Christianity, accompanying the text. Another feature that contributes to the impression of the text being a sermon is the normative admonitions of the prose. By using sentences such as 'education *must* encourage each individual to empowerment and close collaboration for common goals' (Ibid: 3 – own translations) and 'children and young *must* understand moral demands and let these become leading for their actions' (Ibid: 4 – my emphasis) the narrator invokes a position of power in terms of directing education, teachers, and students. If we allow such similarities to be interpreted as a sermon, perhaps the 'General part 93' can be understood as a church?

Baptism of sustainable development

In the 'General part 93', sustainable development is mentioned under the title of 'the environmentally conscious human' (Ibid: 22). In the imagined context of a church, it is fitting that there is power to the language used to describe sustainable development and the congregation's situation. The priest points to 'how the interaction of the economy, ecology, and technology presents our current time with particular knowledge - and moral challenges to ensure a sustainable development' (Ibid: 22 – own translation). The sermon refers to *Our Common Future's* (WCED, 1987) definition and reflects the complexity of sustainable development by referring to the 'interconnected crises' exemplified in 'improved health and population growth in the world; in how modern technology provides both benefits yet contributes to overconsumption of resources; in economic growth which pollutes and destroys nature; in poverty and destitution' (Kyrkje- utdannings og forskningsdepartementet, 1993: 22). These examples emphasise the priest's message of the inherent contradictions, potential conflicts of interests, and the scope of the challenges. The critical view of economic growth is accentuated by emphasising how the 'Interconnection between economy, ecology, and technology (…) must be based on the limits that nature, resources, technological levels, and social conditions require' (Ibid: 22 – own translation). This perspective of the economic dimension opens for critical discussions about it.

Understood as a sermon, it is also appropriate that the priest emphasises the moral challenges and the importance of solidarity with the 'world's poor' (Ibid: 22). Education, therefore, must focus on ethical nurturing. Education must also provide a broad knowledge of the connection between society and nature. It must counteract disjointed teaching and encourage an interdisciplinary approach connecting holistic knowledge of natural sciences with economics and politics of the social sciences.

This 'contextual church' brings complexity, conflicts of interests and politics, solidarity, and environmental concern to the fore, and as such has connotations of both 'sustainable' and 'development'. This acknowledgement of the concept's inherent contradictions, complexity, and interconnectedness

reveals a potent metaphor in terms of meaning creation. At the same time, the text is written in an admonishing prose, that despite its normativity reflecting a certain positioning, might not actively encourage others to enter other positions.

The 'Overarching part 2017' as context

The 'Knowledge Promotion' reform process of 2006 did not include renewing the 'General part 93', and so the 'General part 93' was in use until 2017, when it was replaced by the 'Overarching part 2017' as part of the 'Knowledge Promotion 2020' reform (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). Where the 'General part 93' was structured according to seven qualities of human, the new 'Overarching part 2017' is divided in three: 'Core values of the education and training'; 'Principles for education and all-round development'; and 'Principles for the school's practices'. The first section addresses values, the second section is content oriented, and the last section addresses conditions for learning (Ibid).

Compared to the former 'General part 93', the new 'Overarching part 2017' is both shorter and has less variety of words. However, the presence of 'building' as a source domain is even more prominent. The text has the same number of examples referring to the 'building' source domain as there are 'spatial orientation' domain examples, and more references to the 'building' domain than in the 'General part 93'.

Figure 2. 'Overarching Part 2017' (Ministry of Education and Research, 2017).

Source- domain	Overarching part 2017
Spatial orientation = 97	Wide x 1, unfold x 0, up x 7, down x 0, deep x 0, in-depth learning x 4, expand x 0, open x 1, in x 2, out x 2, 'utdype' = 'out-deeping'(elaborate) x 2, 'opplæringen' ='up-learning (education) x 42, upbringing x 0, 'oppleve' – 'up-living' (experience) x 7, 'utfolde' - 'outfold' (elaborate) x 2, across x 5, 'tverrfaglig' = 'across-learning' (interdisciplinary) x 4, surrounds x 5, overarching x 11, direction x 2
Building = 98	different versions of 'base' (Norw. "grunn") x 18, 'foundational' education x 15, room(ing) x 9, build(ing) (v) x 15, educational framework(s) x 14, frame(s) x 3, foundation x 4, reinforced x 1, tufted=built on x 1, doors x 2, concrete x 2, sustainable (bærekraftig) x 7, structure x 2, tools x 5
Nature = 28	stream x 0, unwiltering x 0, force of nature x 0, cultivate x 2, force x 0, tracks x 2, natural x 1, nature x 8, grow x 0, environment (incl. learning-) x 15, wild x 0, growths x 0

Though many of the values conveyed in the two texts are the same, one of the main differences between the two is how the values are administered. Developing the new 'Overarching part 2017' included a public consultation process where anyone could contribute with input. As such the intent behind the 'building' appears to be inclusive. However, the balancing act of appeasing all these inputs might explain why much of the text is written in such a generalised way that it is difficult not to agree with most sentences there. Many of the inputs conveyed contradictory opinions (Tollefsen, 2017), yet the text does not reflect these contradictions and it can be read as tension-free and harmonious. This impression is strengthened by the general lack of urgency and contextualisation of the text.

Where the 'General part 93' changed between using *'must', 'shall', 'can'* and *'will'*, with *'must'* used most often, the 'core curriculum' almost exclusively uses *'shall'*. After 'student(s)', 'shall' is the most used word in the text. Where the former text reflects normativity through its admonishing prose, which can be read as one position amongst others, the 'Overarching part 2017' takes a more 'objective' position leaving an impression it is the only position. With no positions to discuss, what 'shall be done' simply *is*. The inclusive process of creating the text has ended in an administrative voice 'neutrally' stating what is to be done.

Another shift is that where the 'General part 93' speaks of what '*education* must', the 'Overarching part 2017' to a greater extent speaks of what '*students* shall' and often it is what 'students shall *get*' (own emphases). Though the focus is still also on what 'education shall', it appears to have shifted somewhat from education to the student. Another feature of this shift is that it coincides with a change from balancing an individual and societal focus, perhaps leaning somewhat to the latter in the 'General part 93', to shifting the scales more towards the individual in the 'Overarching part 2017'.

If the focus in the value document is changing from being on what the education and the school environment must do to focusing on what the individual student shall get, then the 'building' the text is constructing can resemble that of a company structure in which students are consumers of skills and competency to be delivered by teachers. What does such a company structure imply for sustainable development?

The dilemma of sustainable development
Unlike in the 'General part 93' where sustainable development is a mentioned concept within the section about 'the environmentally-conscious human', sustainable development in the 'Overarching part 2017' is positioned as a sub-heading and interdisciplinary topic next to 'democracy and citizenship' and 'health and life skills'. On the one hand, being provided its own sub-heading gives the topic more prominence. On the other hand, one could argue that the other two interdisciplinary topics could have been part of sustainable

development. Consequently, certain connotations such as social and political issues and participation, and life style questions can appear to be outside of the sustainable development topic.

The description of the sustainable development topic refers to the definition and mentions 'environment and climate, poverty and the distribution of resources, conflicts, health, gender equality, demography and education' (Ibid: 13) as examples of issues the metaphor contains. Here some of the connotations of the metaphor emerge. Again, the 'students *shall* learn about the connections between the various aspects' (Ibid: 13). It is, however, not pointed out that there are contradictions or conflicts between these 'aspects'.

Teaching about sustainable development 'should facilitate so that students can understand basic dilemmas and developmental features in society, and how they can be handled' (Ibid: 13). The word dilemma makes it appear as though the alternatives already exist and that it is first and foremost a matter for the individual to choose between them. The focus on the responsibility of the individual is also evident in the sentence 'Students shall receive understanding for how the actions and choices of the individual matter' (Ibid: 13). Stating that the actions of individuals matter could be encouraging, but what is silenced is how our actions also depend on the structures in which we find ourselves, and there is no mention of structural levels or systemic thinking.

The final paragraph, one out of three, is exclusively addressing technology. It starts by stating that technology has 'significant impact' and that 'technological competency and knowledge about the interconnections' of sustainable development is '*central*' to the topic (own emphasis). It acknowledges that 'technology development can solve problems, but also create new' ones. Therefore 'knowledge about technology entails an understanding of which *dilemmas* can arise through the use of technology, and how these can be *handled*' (Ibid: 13 – own emphasis). Emphasis is placed on how the students 'shall receive understanding' and 'shall develop competence' (Ibid: 13). The focus on providing students with predefined competencies to handle dilemmas fits with an administrative approach as it delineates a certain

area of expertise that can be approached pragmatically. This reflects and reinforces the impression of a company with packages of knowledge and competencies to be delivered to reach some predetermined solutions.

Connotations of 'sustainable' and 'development' are present, but the lack of contextualisation in time and space appears to put a smokescreen on their urgency, complexity, and inherent contradictions. The crisis conveyed in the priest's sermon is gone. From being about crises, solidarity with the world's poor, conflicts of interests, and politics, the 'Overarching part 2017' presents a timid metaphor about dilemmas to be solved by individuals through the use of technology.

Discussion
The texts present two quite different contexts in which sustainable development is situated. Where the admonishing prose of the 'General part 93' acknowledges a situation of complex crises requiring a collective effort from society, the 'Overarching part 2017' appears disconnected to the current situation and therefore lacks the feeling of urgency. This difference is striking considering where we are, and what we know of our current and future predicament in terms of growing inequality, economic uncertainty and unrest, and risk of triggering tipping points (Armstrong Mckay, et al., 2022). Where the 'General part 93' had a strong admonishing prose not exactly encouraging opposition, the administrative prose of the current text exudes a taken-for-granted apolitical neutrality which makes it seem as though there are no opposing opinions or conflicting interests and consequently, nothing to oppose. This lack of politicisation is strengthened by the impression that the focus should be on individual-level action and the belief in technology to be central in solving the dilemmas the individual is facing. As was stated in an input to the renewal process of the new curriculum specifically pertaining to how sustainable development was described: 'the one-sided technology focus simplifies complex problems and downplays the understanding of responsibility. We cannot understand and solve problems related to migration, climate, hunger, inequality in living conditions, and conflict through technology alone.' (NDLA, 2017 – own translation). Downplaying

socioeconomic issues and focusing on technology as the solution coincides with findings elsewhere (Kagawa and Selby, 2015). The result is a lack of focus on these issues and their underlying drivers (Ibid: 33).

A change in curriculum that reinforces the impression of socioeconomic issues being downplayed is how economic growth is no longer mentioned in the mandatory subjects addressing sustainable development. It could be argued that this has to do with the less detailed language of the curriculum. However, it is a concern that economic issues are provided little space in the curriculum and therefore have few avenues to encourage teachers to address them, or economic growth specifically. Despite little explicit economic content, the 'company' framing of the 'Overarching part 2017' reveals an implicit economic mode of thinking. The apolitical-, individual- and tech-fix-oriented approach to sustainable development aligns with globalising forces described in Norwegian literature to compromise efforts to instil an education for sustainable development (ESD). Sinnes and Eriksen (2016) claimed that globalising forces of the PISA tests of the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) have created changes in the Norwegian curriculum towards more output-oriented goals and a focus on basic skills, a development that obstructs efforts for ESD. It has also been questioned whether these forces cause a 'de-politicisation of school's social mandate, disempowerment of students and consequently a weakening of the political democracy' (Heldal, 2021: 246 – own translation). These experiences reflect an education Kirby (2012: 25) describes as being 'battered into complete subservience to the dominant neo-liberal, commercial paradigm that is the fundamental cause of the crisis'.

A way to reawaken the metaphor is to take inspiration from development education to bring forth the connotations of 'development' and strengthen the focus on global and local socioeconomic issues to understand its fundamental drivers. Kirby (2012) and Kagawa and Selby (2015) point to how Freire's conscientisation is constructive in building powerful counterforces that can challenge the dominant paradigm. Kirby explores how this conscientisation has contributed to an 'empowered and socially aware consciousness' (2012: 28) in several Latin American counties, creating spaces

of debate and exploration of new paradigms. The consciousness, and these spaces, he argues, are preconditions for movements to emerge and grow. Such spaces can be connected to Selby and Kagawa's (2011) 'shadow spaces' in which individuals and sub-groups can explore ways to inform the larger structures in which they find themselves. Within such shadow spaces questions that address values and power can be raised: 'What values matter most to us, and why?', 'Who is the global citizen? (…) Whose interests are represented here? (…) Are we empowering the dominant group to remain in power?' (Selby and Kagawa, 2011: 26-27). In a Norwegian context, for these questions to be raised, it would require a critical re-politicisation of how we convey and understand sustainable development.

Conclusion

The two core curriculum texts examined in this article portray different contexts bringing forth and hiding different connotations of the sustainable development metaphor. The metaphor has interacted, implying it is alive. Where in the 'General part 93' sustainable development conveys an urgent crisis, the 'Overarching part 2017' downplays the tensions of complexity, conflict, and contradictions, and one of sustainable development's most debated issues, economic growth, is removed. While some elements of 'development' are explicitly mentioned, poverty being one example, the metaphor's diminishing field of tension risks either the omission or diminished urgency of political issues and debates. The combined effect of putting crises, conflicts of interests, structural and holistic perspectives, economic growth, and politics in storage, is that the tension evaporates, the metaphor dies, and we only understand and discuss a fraction of our problems. Consequently, we become incapable of finding relevant solutions and explore alternatives to transform society.

Sustainable development is provided more space in the new curriculum and new avenues of exploration are opened through its presence in more subject syllabuses. A further exploration of what this entails can reveal stirring approaches reawakening the metaphor. Such approaches should take inspiration from development education and Freire's conscientisation in terms

of thematic issues and through enabling spaces for debate and discussion addressing values, power, and alternative paradigms.

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