



**Cultural variation – Politics and  
Policy**  
**There are different roads to Rome!**

NERA conference Helsinki  
9-11 march, 2016

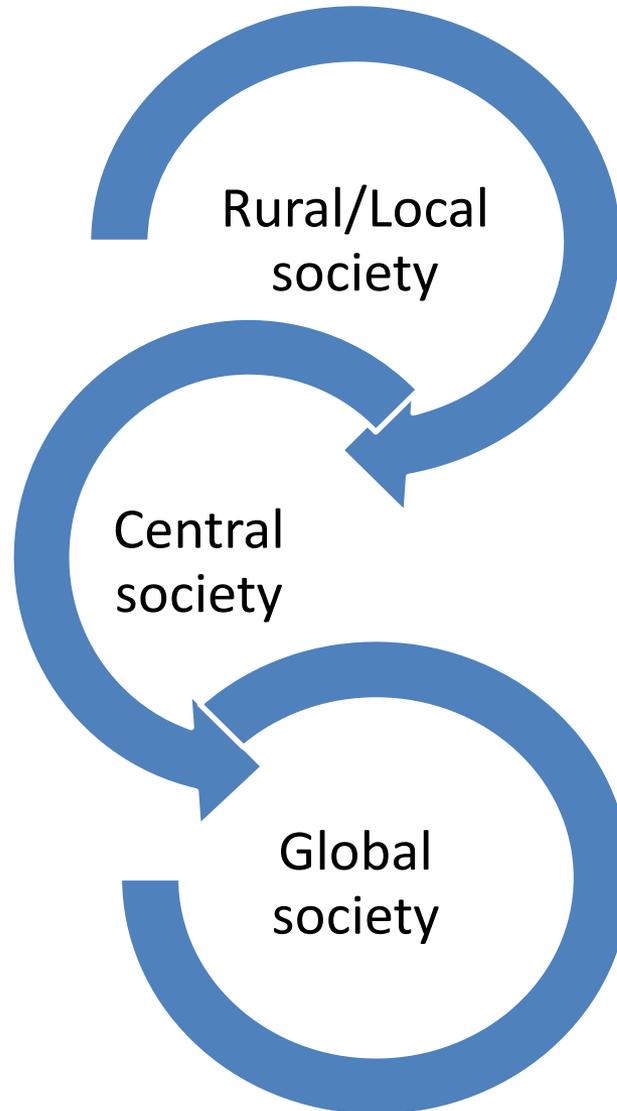
Ragnhild Liland og Agneta Knutas  
NTNU, Trondheim, Norway  
Program for Teacher Education

# Changing society – new demands

**A:** In Europe the Agral Society lost ground as THE common WAY of living with the rise of Industrialization

**B:** Centralisation of both people, resources, and production increased with Industrialization  
Dicotomi: Central – Peripheral

**C:** Globalisation adds a new challenges to the **Central-Rural/Local dimension**.  
Globalization pushes for economic progress, *manifold* through competition as well as efficiancy



# Macro

Education and International influence

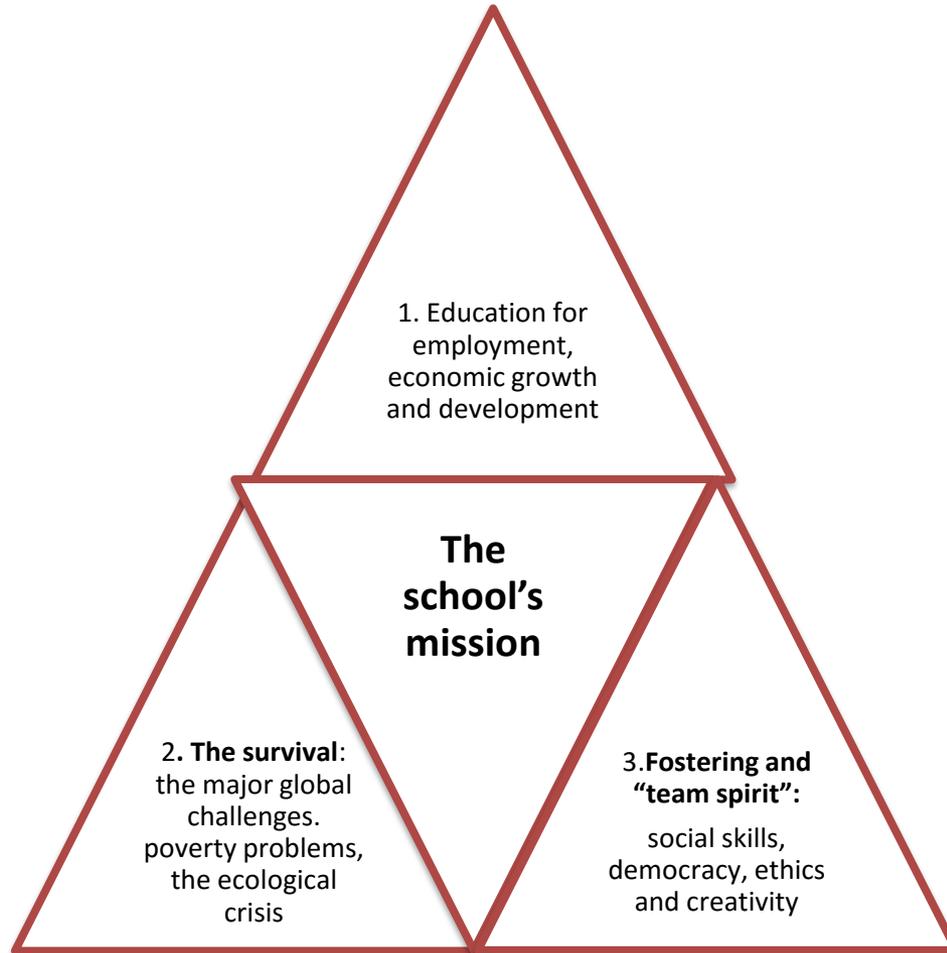
## **1980-1990's: Nordic State Decentralisation policy:**

- OECD influence on national politics; new language of education; skills, best practise, Pisa, efficiency
- **International guidelines «improve efficiency»  
«enhance diversity (manifold)»**
- New economic system in the Nordic countries – economic responsibilities pressure municipalities
- Increased centralisation & consolidation of schools

# Nordic values in Education under pressure

- Consolidation - pressure on democracy and equality
- Economic rationality - closure policy of schools
- Insufficient knowledge regarding «local» schools' role in the community
- Economic rational solutions ahead of local freedom and action

Cultural variation (diversity) decreases?



# Small schools- What does research say?

- During the last 10 year 550 small schools have closed down.
- small school: less than 100 children.
  - In reality a small school in Norway is a school with 6 – 70 children.
  - organizing education in multi-grade classes.
- Multi grade teaching promote self-reliance.
  - Cross over in age gives the pupils' opportunities for social development, “cross age learning” and cooperation (Johnson et al., 1985; Little, 1995).
- Small schools in rural areas are a source of social capital.
  - a meeting point, a place for collaboration,
  - reconstructing local history and culture (Koulouris and Sotiriou, 2006, Berry and West, 2010).
  - the school facilitates cooperation across generations (Nguyen et al., 2007).
- Higher interaction between pupils and extracurricular activities.
- Higher degree of cooperation among teachers (Cotton, 1996; Leithwood and Jantzi, 2009; Slate and Jones, 2005).

# **Cultural variation in rural schools?**

**Which cultural variations are expressed in focus group interview's with teachers in small schools in rural areas?**

# Method

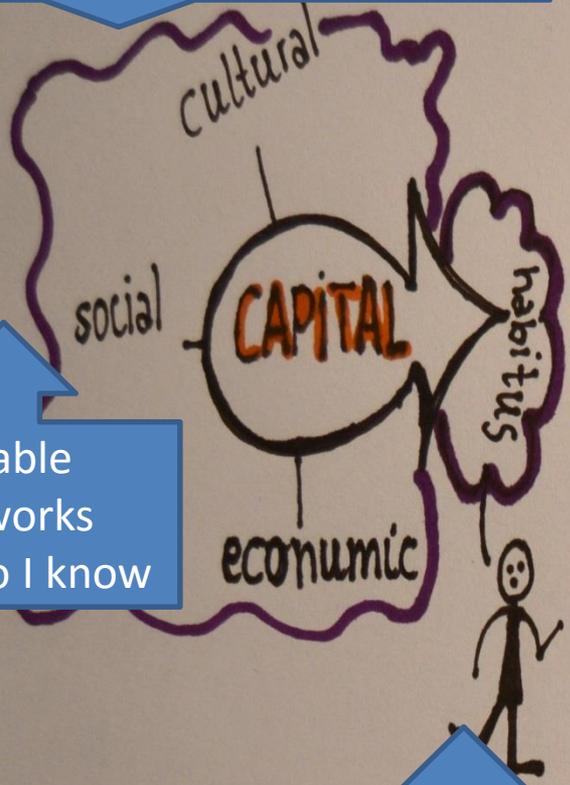
- Five focusgroup interviews
  - Teachers at four different schools in rural Norway
- Hermeneutic interpretation of culture
  - Culture exist in and through praxis, interaction and communicaton.
  - Culture is constituted through actions, dispositions and interpretations (Bourdieu, 1995).
- Analyzed with Bordieus *Habitus, Cultural- and Social Capital*

Embodied  
Objectified  
Institutionalized

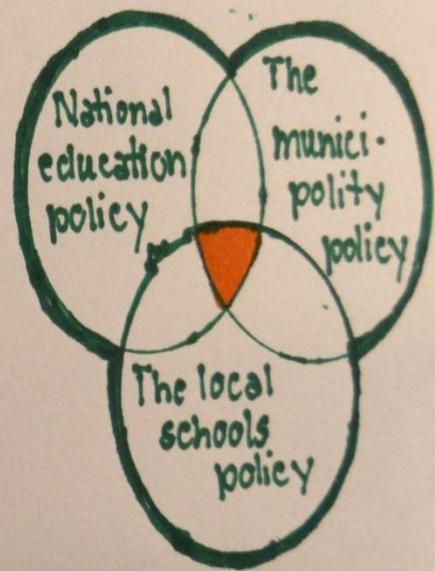
That of social groups recognized as valuable and in practise given value

Duale networks  
Who do I know

Habitus  
Dispositions, trained capacities, think, feel, norms guide behaviour and thinking



SYMBOLIC CAPITAL



Power

fields

# Resultat

School activities linked to local community

- **The teacher:** *The School and whats going on here are very important for the community and for our pupils. I can for example tell you about our reindeer hunting. Every autumn we go up in the mountains with our.....*



# Lavvo / sami tent





# The local habitus and the school

dispositions, trained capacities, thinking, feeling norms that guide behaviour

- Village with inhabitants who *live close to local activities of the community*
- People in this village are by tradition linked to nature, and the activities going on there.
- *School engages in the traditional knowledge*
  
- Mutual responsibility
  - important reconstruction of knowledge for the next coming generation

# Social capital

Durable networks – who do I know, relationships, mutual acquaintencies and recognition

- Mutual relations upheld through practise and symbolic capital – holds the village together
- *Hunting and fishing are recognized as important investments in the tradition of the village.*
- *The village secure both material and symbolic profit.*
  - *knowledge related to curriculum (natural science, mathematics, history, geografi)*
  - *network of «hunters» and «fishers» for the next generation are secured.*
  - *the village will be able to profit from being known having good hunters and fishers in their province.*

*Symbolic capital: that of social group recognized as valuable in practise*

# Cultural capital

Embodied, objectified, institutionalized

The cultural capital:

- Hunting, fishing, knowing the mountains are parts of the village culture (habitus)
- The local village inhabitants have *knowledge* and *equipment* for staying outdoors in the mountains
- The village have inhabitants who own and have license for guns
- Create events across generations (reindeer dinner)

Knowledge and cultural capital - constituted through embodiment;

- practise carried over cross generations through body and mind.
- objectified through hunting, fishing gear and «lavo» as well as through curriculum books.
- The cultural capital is institutionalized through curriculum, local hunting and fishing organisations.

# Conclusions; cultural variation and it`s contribution to Education

## Results:

Disapperence of local schools in rural areas might decrease manifold and diversity related to culture of certain kind (based on story told).

## Earlier research point out :

There is a thight connection between the local school and the local society

## Knowledge, curriculum :

- Not a set of predetermined facts or absoloutes as a special substance distinctiv and separate from contex
  - **results show how curriculum is connected to context**

## Knowledge, socialization :

- Is created in a process of learning and a product of a complex relation between formal curriculum and the contingent social, cultural dispositions and influences