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# Aiming at an Emancipatory Curriculum

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**Abstract:** I start the article from my own experience of teacher training addressed to the “curriculum development”, characteristic of technicist theories which dominated the last two decades of the twentieth century in Portugal, to contrast the “how to teach” movement with the new focus on “what to teach” brought to the field of curriculum studies by critical and post-critical theories. In fact, these theories have been responsible for drawing the attention of educational sciences to the issue of knowledge transmitted by the school without questioning it, i.e., only based on the simplistic view that “knowledge is knowledge”. They accuse the curriculum disciplines and subjects of reinforcing social inequalities, due to this concept of abstract, standard and universal knowledge without considering the specific regional, local, individual and popular knowledge. This curriculum is viewed as if it was castrating the raw material arriving at school in order to better adapt it to the desired standards. As a curriculum theorist, I acknowledge and share the dilemma regarding the ultimate mission of the school and the type of knowledge that is supposed to be valued: either an experiential knowledge, originated from the so-called commonsense, and limited to the students' worldviews of everyday experience; or a more academic and specialized knowledge, even if it is quite often labeled as elitist. And in a context of massive expansion of education, this dilemma becomes more relevant because the existing curriculum orthodoxy comes into conflict with nowadays cultural diversity of our schools. But at the same time, the present globalized and highly competitive world of accelerated change at all levels demands well-qualified, critical and creative citizens who has broader horizons, based on an academic knowledge, totally different from commonsense. Inspired by Paulo Freire and Michael Young, I end the article defending the idea that the curriculum can also be an instrument of emancipation, because every student, irrespective of color, race, gender or social class should have the same chances of exercising scientific thinking. In this context, “how to teach” gains a renewed relevance in a demanding curriculum with emancipatory possibilities. For this aim it is crucial that the two curriculum trends start a dialogue for the benefit of the field of curriculum studies.

**Keywords:** Curriculum Studies, Knowledge, Technicist Theories, Critical and Post-Critical Theories, Emancipatory Curriculum

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## 1. Introduction

As an elementary and secondary school teacher in the eighties of last century, I was trained for a rigorous execution of national-wide subject programs, which were based on prior definitions of general and specific goals, divided into cognitive [1], affective [2] and psychomotor [3] objectives, which by their turn were sub-divided into behavioral and operational [4-6] objectives. My teaching practice was only focused on the student action in terms of results, which should be clearly observable and measurable, aiming at transparency and objectivity.

At that time, the concept of curriculum totally converged with the concept of curriculum development, giving a special attention to the best teaching practices, methodologies and techniques. “How to teach?” was the only teacher’s concern, because it was not his/her responsibility to raise doubts about “what to teach?”. This was taken for granted and the curriculum was interpreted as an efficient teaching organization and instruction. There was no space left for any sort of social, political or even epistemological questioning about what the teacher was supposed to teach.

Teacher training thus aimed to prepare good teachers as technicians, who might be able to diversify methodologies, organize lessons, accomplish schedules, prepare materials

and manage a classroom, in the path of the early authors of the field of curriculum studies who emphasized the ‘means’ to achieve the ends of education, in the logic of the instrumental process-product rationality that characterized this (technicist) curriculum model, in line with the factories environment specific of the Industrial Revolution.

“Education is a shaping process as much as the manufacture of steel rails”, Bobbitt [7] said, in a context of railways’ expansion. Taylor’s principles [8] were to be applied to various spheres of action, including Education. The training of attitudes of obedience and discipline was necessary for the hard work in the factories. To this aim, nothing better than a mass school, i.e., a public school supported by a rigid and orthodox prescriptive curriculum.

In this organization, the teacher had to execute a linear and progressive plan, sequenced from the simplest to the most complex levels, which were step by step externally defined, according to the following curriculum definitions:

1. “The curriculum is all the learning experiences planned and directed by the school to attain its educational goals” [9];

2. “Curriculum is a sequence of content units arranged in such a way that the learning of each unit may be accomplished as a single act, provided the capabilities described by prior units (in the sequence) have already been mastered by the learner” [10];

3. “[Curriculum is] all planned learning outcomes for which the school is responsible” [11];

A “scientific management” of teaching, according to Taylor’s scientific management theory, did not tolerate any transgression of the stipulated sequence to achieve the desired goal. The teacher would thus have a role of a technician, assuming that teaching was just a practical activity, a craft, ensuring that the gear was properly oiled for the effectiveness and productivity of the system, aiming to obtain maximum results with least resources.

So, I was trained for the time control in minutes during the school lesson, for the space organization of the classroom, for the efficient use of technological resources, for the diversification of teaching strategies, having in mind behavioral objectives. I was trained for the orthodox execution of a prescriptive and didactic curriculum, with very little space to assume myself as a real professional of Education.

## 2. The Theses of a Castrating Curriculum

Therefore, it was with optimistic enthusiasm that I joined the pedagogical trend towards the epistemological curriculum (what to teach rather than how to teach), triggered by critical reflections and analyzes on the school’s role as a reproductive system of social inequalities [12], with origin in the Frankfurt School of the thirties of the twentieth century.

In opposition to the Enlightenment ideal of withdrawing people from the darkness of ignorance that supported the establishment of the public school, critical theories [13]

brought another perspective about the curriculum: Althusser [14], as a philosopher, reflected about the school as one of the ideological apparatuses of the State, in direct relation with the economy and production; the sociological analyzes of Bourdieu and Passeron about the social reproduction, through *habitus* and (double) symbolic violence in relation to a certain cultural capital, underlined the responsibility of the school in the social differentiation through “the arbitrary impositioning of the dominant cultural arbitrary” [15]; Baudelot and Establet accused the capitalist school [16], the same way as Bowles and Gintis pointed out the schooling experience [17]. These studies were published in the seventies of the past century and brought a new, less naïve perception about what was effectively taught and learned at school, from a perspective of power relations, facing school as a political arena where dominant and dominated were struggling [18].

And there was a suitable environment for theoretical reflections, especially when social studies in schools and universities began to take a more affirmative and political dimension, following the protest movements of the 1960s, as the events of May 68 for example, as described by Jacques Ardoino:

“La spontanéité du groupe en liberté, la libération de la parole séculairement confisquée, la débâcle de l’affectivité, la contestation des figures paternelles, la coïncidence de la revendication politique avec la réapparition d’une imagination exubérante et d’un goût intense pour la création auraient pu constituer des invites à réflexion.” [19]

Movements in favor of the independence of the European colonies and against the war in Vietnam, the realization of Woodstock, the circulation of Bob Dylan and Joan Baez’s songs, the affirmation of feminist and resistance movements against all sorts of dictatorships, framed the sociocultural context of a new paradigm [20].

Having been broken the chains of tradition, through a revolutionary process of thought that emphasized freedom, all spheres of social life were shaken by theoretical reflections inspired by class struggles, putting in question the ‘standard’ social, educational, school and even curricular order. These critical theories were in fact extremely appealing and seductive, for daring to distrust the *status quo*, whether political, economic, cultural, or in a broader sense social order, through education research [21]. And it was not different with curriculum issues.

As Silva says, “traditional theories were theories of acceptance, adjustment and adaptation. Critical theories are theories of distrust, questioning and radical transformation.” [22]. That is, while traditional curriculum theories glorified the orthodoxy, through highly didactic-pedagogical prescriptive rules of good teaching practice, critical curriculum theories, as transgressors, provoked the reconceptualization of the curriculum as an emergent study field.

William Pinar explains how this shift occurred almost by chance, at the I Conference held at the University of Rochester in 1973, launching the beginning of the movement of Reconceptualization of Curriculum Studies:

“My PhD mentor, Paul R. Klohr, and I had planned the 1973 Rochester Conference as a “state-of-the-field” meeting; we did not foresee that it would initiate a decade of dispute that would result in the field mapped in Understanding Curriculum.” [23]

A new research object appeared in this emergent field of curriculum studies, born with the transition from the “curriculum development” to “understanding curriculum” [24]: rather than the explicit, formal and official curriculum [25], the attention turned towards the real curriculum, practised at school and including the hidden curriculum [26] that operates at the level of the unconsciousness, through messages transmitted in a surreptitious and insidious way by the school organization and its daily practices. And these messages were more difficult to deconstruct.

The Reconceptualization trend underlined the idea that the curriculum was at the service of a certain political and ideological agenda which aimed to forge identities to different roles in society: the subordination roles, in the case of working class children; and the dominance roles, in the case of economically favored class children.

The (neo)Marxist narrative about the reinforcement of social and economic class inequalities [27], through the curriculum at school, was extended to other sorts of social differentiation brought by the postmodern debate: differentiation based on ‘race’, skin color, gender, sexuality and more, when confronted with the knowledge that the public school transmits through a curriculum exclusively drawn from a single reference: the European model of culture and civilization, embedded in autonomous and specialized areas, strongly denounced by the movement of “Cultural Studies” under the leadership of Giroux and Simon [28].

Then the attacks against the curriculum started being stronger and stronger, opening the gap between the modernist traditions from the birth of the public school, and the postmodern conditions of present times.

On the one side, there was an orthodox curriculum with universal truths, through which the cultural identity was supposed to be worked within the framework of the certainties of the western values of the white man, of a high social status, healthy, heterosexual, with urban habits, and of a certain State [29]; on the other side, there was the recognition of a postmodern world of hybrid identities, local cultural practices and plural public spaces that emerged as a menace, as explained by Giroux:

“An epistemic arrogance and faith in certainty sanctions pedagogical practices and public spheres in which cultural differences are viewed as threatening; knowledge is positioned in the curriculum as an object of mastery and control; the individual student is privileged as a unique source of agency irrespective of iniquitous relations of power; the technology and culture of the book is treated as the embodiment of modernist high learning and the only legitimate object of pedagogy.” [30]

Torres Santomé [31] lists some “absent voices in the selection of school culture” who are overwhelmed by the hegemonic culture:

- The children's and youth cultures;
- The cultures of ethnic or powerless minorities;
- The cultures of the feminine world;
- The cultures of lesbian and homosexual sexualities;
- The cultures of the working class and the poor;
- The cultures of the rural world;
- The cultures of people with physical and/or mental disabilities;
- The cultures of the senior age;
- The Third World cultures.

These are the heterogeneous voices that are not contemplated by the curriculum, despite attending at the public school, thus reinforcing the differentiation between the standard and the margins. This is the reason why for this new trend in curriculum studies the curriculum is castrating, when it ignores these marginal voices, subordinating them to the dictates of a single history and standardized culture, in a process of “testing, sorting and tracking”.

### 3. Knowledge as the Core of Curriculum

When the focus of the curriculum field turns to “what to teach?” it is obvious that knowledge becomes the core of the curriculum. It is knowledge, after all, that justifies the existence of a school, a university, or another educational institution.

Everyone knows that the approach to knowledge has been differently interpreted throughout the history of epistemology: it may be either considered as having its own existence *per se*, just waiting to be discovered by someone; or it may be considered as a reality constructed by the subject, non-existing without the knower.

In the first hypothesis, it is the responsibility of the curriculum to provide the access to the self-existing knowledge, in a rational or empirical way.

The rational way tries to disclose the knowledge that already exists within each one, through the syllogistic reasoning of logical-mathematical inferences. In this case it is necessary a Socratic teacher who works as a midwife of the apprentice's ideas; mathematics and logics are the fundamental disciplines for this process.

The empirical way makes use of the observation and experimentation based on the human senses; as they are quite often fallible, the empiricist teacher recurs to instruments (microscopes or telescopes as more refined extensions of the human senses) to obviate the relativities of perception.

Specifically referring to the scientific knowledge, this was viewed as a result of multiple, uncompromising, neutral and systematic observations: For this trend, scientific knowledge is an objective knowledge, without any interference of human or religious values.

Reacting against the uncertainty of the classical Reason, the modernity opposed the certainty of the Experience, ordered by well-defined steps: 1. Identification of the problem; 2. Formulation of a hypothesis; 3. Collection of data; 4. Interpretation of the collected data; 5. Drawing conclusions. 6. Confirmation, rejection or modification of the

hypothesis.

And it was in the context of the modern scientific thought that the public school was born, together with the “scientific” and “technicist” curriculum centered on the didactic organization for the access to knowledge, a knowledge that nobody dared to put in question, because it was supposed to be objective, factual, observable and measurable. And the textbook at schools were used to preserve the curriculum’s orthodoxy.

Making a link with the first part of this article, the supposedly objective knowledge is now questioned by critical and post-critical curriculum theories, from a perspective of power relations. Following Apple’s “simple questions”, as he calls them:

“Rather than simply asking whether students have mastered a particular subject matter and have done well on our all too common tests, we should ask a different set of questions: Whose knowledge is this? How did it become ‘official’? What is the relationship between this knowledge and how it is organized and taught and who has cultural, social and economic capital in this society? Who benefits from these definitions of legitimate knowledge and who does not? What are the overt and hidden effects of educational reforms on real people and real communities?” [32]

And I may go on asking: Why is certain knowledge considered more important than other one, in a scope of an extremely wide universe of knowledge? What knowledge is set aside? When one speaks of a socially valid knowledge, is it valid to whom? Who determines it? From what social class are the curriculum designers?

Presently the questions about “why” and “what for” of that knowledge transmitted by the curriculum make curriculum scholars face their study object in a different way. Having as a background “La condition postmoderne” [33] that relativizes everything, this scientific area started thinking science itself as a subjective creation rooted on quicksand, according to Popham’s principle of falsifiability. [34]

For Lyotard [35], postmodernity means the end of metanarratives and all absolute truths coming from great explanatory schemas of the world, whether they are ideologies or totalitarian systems of knowledge, as science for example. If it is true that science was viewed as liberating, when it emerged, bringing hope to solve all the problems of the mankind, in substitution of God, the anarchist vision of science, according to Feyerabend (1924-1994), accuses science of imposing a single method, a universal Method, imprisoning researchers in a presumed scientific dictatorship. The question now is: why not accepting alternative ways of science, as for example, alternative medicines, rain dance or astrology?

In the second hypothesis, it is the responsibility of the curriculum to provide conditions for knowledge construction by the subject, the learner. One thing is to have access to information (and this has exponentially increased with the ICT massive explosion); and another thing is to change information into knowledge, when the information gains significance to the subject, when the subject manages to filter the information

through his own context and experience of life.

If previously the subject should deny his subjectivity, facing the “fact” as the reality itself – assuming that knowledge had its own existence independent of the subject who apprehended it - now the “fact” is viewed as modeled by the subject’s perceptions, concepts and representations. The dissociation between subject and object, formulated by Descartes as *ego cogitans* and *res extensa*, starts giving place to the idea of a subject as the creator of the object, the one who gives meaning to the observed object. In the end, we may say that there is no knowledge if there is no subject to construct it.

It is obvious that this new concept of knowledge shaped by the “postmodern condition” should reflect in the curriculum. Whether these times are designed as postmodernity, late modernity [36], liquid modernity [37], or hypermodernity [38], what happens is that we live a new order, a relative and complex order, with implications in the way knowledge is faced now.

“... a new order, where the simplistic and Cartesian dichotomous division is difficult to be accepted now, [...] a division organized in reason, on the one hand, and emotion, on the other; in Right, on the one hand, and Left, on the other; in man, on the one hand, and woman, on the other; in black, on the one hand, and white, on the other. In contrast, we live times of ethical-philosophical, political and ideological miscegenation.” [39]

We live fluid times, where rigid boundaries start disappearing - boundaries between the various disciplines, between the physical and natural sciences and the human and social sciences, between the investigating subject and the investigated object, between scientific knowledge and the commonsense, between the elitist culture and the popular culture. These times are ephemeral and transitory, in terms of work and employment, place of residence, interests and personal relations. These are times of uncertainty and indeterminacy, under the aegis of the absolute relativism of the so-called “universalizing presumptions” [40], a relativism that confers substance to the post-critical curriculum theories.

Consequently, in order to better understand the knowledge that the school transmits through the curriculum, this study field now focuses on “what to teach?”, “what knowledge to teach?” from the point of view of its relation to ideology and power [41] and identities’ construction [42]. And along with the tone of criticism about the role of curriculum in the social inequalities, an awkward feeling seizes the curriculumists who are now aware of the link between what is effectively taught and learned at school and the western cultural heritage that privileges the cultural capital of the white middle and upper-class students in general. This awareness originated a drastic shift towards a curriculum rooted in local culture, incorporating popular culture products.

## 4. Towards an Emancipatory Curriculum

At this point, I bring two critical scholars to the current

analysis, which may help us to reflect out of the box. Being curriculum an expression carrying orthodoxy itself how is it possible to also view it as emancipatory? Simply linked to study plans and programs (number and hierarchy of subject-matters, hours, credits, calendars, schedules, tests, etc.), the curriculum constitutes the core of the institutionalized process of education, under the responsibility of the school. Even if we use euphemisms like “alternative curriculum” and “flexible curriculum”, there will always be administrative instances, teachers and educators, tasks to be fulfilled, salaries to be paid, schedules and assessments, material resources and facilities, and several elements that require public expenditure and a good management. With this vest-of-forces, how can the curriculum be emancipatory then?

One of the authors is the Brazilian Paulo Freire who, in contrast with the pessimistic view of social reproduction through a fatalistic determinism operated at school [43], believed in “Education as a practice of freedom” [44], combining values of Christian philosophy with the Hegelian dialectics and the historical materialism. By using the literacy process as a way of “conscientização” (Brazilian Portuguese word difficult to translate, but to be understood as political awareness, in a broader sense), Paulo Freire believed in the ontological vocation of Man, as a subject who acts onto the world, and who is capable of transforming it; even being ignorant, or immersed in a “culture of silence”, he, the Subject, has the ability to critically look at the world, in a “dialogical” encounter with the Other. Once the Subject gets the necessary and adequate instruments, he gradually understands not only his personal and social reality, but also the contradictions existing there.

Having in mind that Freire’s target public were sugar cane workers, adults and illiterates, in the context of the “reading circles” after a hard working day in the fields, I nevertheless consider that it is possible to extract from his educational experience some streamlines for the curriculum. If the process of “conscientização” was intended to provide the oppressed people [45] with the necessary instruments of elementary reading and writing, this was the first step to create conditions for them to “read” their social and political reality, in view of their own political liberation, in a process of knowledge-building through action and reflection. In this case, the curriculum gets an emancipatory dimension associated to a project of education of Subjects, who may be able to consciously reflect, produce and transform their existence and of those of their environment.

Because “non-action is an action” Apple alerts:

“I fear that too many arguments and tendencies in the curriculum field and in education in general do not have a substantive epistemological, political, theoretical, or just as importantly the very practical understanding of the foundational materials that are supposedly being drawn upon. [...] Sometimes it is as if postmodern and poststructural abstractions have led us to amnesia, to forgetting the very real structures that organise this society.” [46]

While recognizing that it is difficult to reconcile curriculum (by nature orthodox, as said before) with the

systematic problematization of the “generative ideas”, characteristic of Freirean process of learning, I believe that it is possible to foster transgression within the frame of orthodoxy, provided there are real professionals, teachers with a high level of knowledge and who hold at the same time a critical and situated vision in the global context of postmodernity.

The second author is Michael Young, one of the founders of the New Sociology of Education (NSE) movement, who published in 1971 a book significantly entitled “Knowledge and Control: New Directions in the Sociology of Education” [47], composed of chapters written by himself and others, such as Bourdieu and Bernstein, for example. But I mention this author related to his second phase, started in 2008, when in a rebuttal of conscience, he made his *mea culpa*, publishing his “Bringing Knowledge Back In” [48]. Accusing curriculum for losing its object, Young proposes to overcome the crisis in curriculum theory, going back to a knowledge-based approach. In his words:

“On the one hand, as educators, we have the responsibility to hand on to the next generation the knowledge discovered by earlier generations. It is this element of continuity between generations which distinguishes us from animals; it is a way of saying that we are always part of history. On the other hand, the purpose of the curriculum, at least in modern societies, is not only to transmit past knowledge; it is to enable the next generation to build on that knowledge and create new knowledge, for that is how human societies progress and how individuals develop.” [49]

Trying to restore teachers’ traditional role as pedagogic authorities, instead of merely facilitators of learning, Young is now quite assertive defending specialized discipline knowledge as a powerful knowledge. Blaming the over-psychological approach to the learner as a self-centred individual and not a social being situated in a social environment with rules and demands externally determined [50], he claims for a clear distinction between academic knowledge and mere commonsense, derived from everyday experiences.

He accuses the relativism of critical and post-critical curriculum theories for the promotion they gave to the marginal voices referred to in the first part of this article, saying that these theories elevated commonsense to the category of knowledge, in the supposition that “all statements of knowledge and truth are equivalent, whether derived from commonsense, popular tradition, laboratory research or systematic disciplinary knowledge.” [51]

In contrast, he considers that it is important to clearly point out the intellectual dishonesty of the theorists supporting the voices’ discourse, arguing with the potential harm they can cause to those in the most vulnerable situations. He refuses the thesis that classifies academic knowledge as elitist, because, in his view, that reveals a profound anti-intellectualism. Even if organized in disciplines, the author affirms that academic knowledge is also a social product, constructed in interaction with others, in this case by the community of experts and by science itself.

And parents send their children to school expecting them

to acquire the specialist knowledge that they would not have access to at home [52]. For reasons of social justice, all learners irrespective of their different social origins should be entitled to that powerful knowledge, i.e., the “knowledge of the powerful” as it is designed by the critical trends. Even if some students reject it or find it difficult to apprehend it, teachers should not deny their access to that knowledge.

It is the equivalent of a hippocratic oath that obliges us, curriculum theorists, designers and teachers, to entitle all learners to the academic knowledge, even if it may be experienced as oppressive and alienating. It is not the curriculum, the school subjects and the powerful knowledge the great causes of social inequalities. Instead of this ideological perspective of curriculum, Young prefers to stress the empowering dimension of the academic knowledge:

“School subjects [...] always offer contradictory possibilities. If learners are to succeed, they are required to follow prescribed rules and sequences that are laid down externally and can be experienced as imposed and even alienating; on the other hand, with a well-qualified teacher, it is in submitting to such rules that students gain access to alternatives and a wider sense of their own capabilities.” [53]

### 5. Conclusions

This article aimed to bring to the discussion the ongoing debate between two main subfields of curriculum theories (Figure 1): on the one side, the technicist curriculum theories, which since the early years of the twentieth century, have been focusing on the best teaching methodologies, the ‘means’ to attain the goals externally determined by the labor market; on the other side, the critical and post-critical curriculum theories, born from the Frankfurt School, who have been drawing the attention to what is taught at school and to what extent it contributes to social inequalities in general, including others as gender, sexuality, ‘race’ and colour.

I recognize that the strong critical attacks coming from different areas of social studies against the curriculum paralyzed us, curriculum theorists, in a certain way. While searching for the core of our identity, we dismissed ourselves from the task of curriculum making, giving space to other new-born experts namely coming from different spheres of government. As Young denounced in 2013:

“It is easy to bemoan the forces of neo-liberalism, and academics seem most comfortable criticizing governments for their policies; however, given curriculum theory’s renunciation of its object, we must take at least some of the blame.” [54]

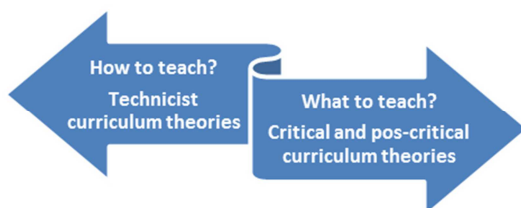


Figure 1. Different focus of curriculum theories.

Apple also blames the absence of action from the part of curriculum theorists, in the same framework of post-modernity, when he says: “With neoliberal, neoconservative, authoritarian populist and new managerial forces increasingly occupying the space of real policies and practices, we have little voice in the public debates over the realities of schooling and the decisions of curriculum policies and practices. The field of education deserves more.” [55]

I consider that, without underestimating the importance of critically analyzing the curriculum (that prescriptive and orthodox curriculum) and the academic knowledge it transmits in its relations with the installed power, it is also important to look at it from another perspective, as suggested by Freire and Young: that of the empowerment of learners, precisely those from the less privileged social groups. Otherwise, what instruments of social and cultural promotion will the school provide to these groups, if relegated to their practical knowledges experienced in their daily lives?

It is crucial to give voice to the diverse worlds that co-habit the school scenario, but just to start from them. Daily experiences should be a starting point for a deeper academic knowledge to be built by each one. It is the responsibility of the public school to establish the bridge between the popular discourses, based on what is immediate and concrete, derived from those experiences, on the one hand, and the academic discourse, on the other.

Also sharing the idea that education deserves more, I consider it is crucial to bring back the issue of knowledge to the core of curriculum (“what to teach”), and make it dialogue [56] with the best didactic and pedagogical ‘means’ (“how to teach”), so that students may attain high levels of proficiency.

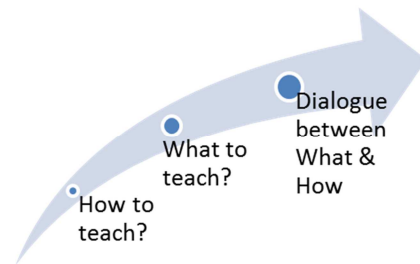


Figure 2. Need for a dialogue.

Without neglecting students’ popular roots, the curriculum has the ultimate purpose of opening horizons to every student. Making academic knowledge and commonsense overlap, in a naïve logic of plural and democratic acceptance, will precisely harm those more vulnerable. Every student, irrespective of color, race, gender or social class should have the same chances of exercising scientific thinking. And to understand and critically intervene in the natural and social world, on the same baseline as others, the students need an orthodox curriculum. Only a demanding curriculum has emancipatory possibilities, only a curriculum based on sustainable and solid academic knowledge allows a conscious transgression. It is time to make these two trends start a dialogue (Figure 2), for the benefit of the field of curriculum studies.

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