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The Responsible Business Person

Studies of Business Education for Sustainability

Pernilla Andersson

SÖDERTÖRN DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

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Abstract
Calls for the inclusion of sustainable development in the business curriculum have increased significantly in the wake of the financial crisis and increased concerns around climate change. This has led to the appearance of new initiatives and the development of new teaching approaches. This thesis explores business education at the upper secondary school level in Sweden following the inclusion of the concept of sustainable development in the curriculum. Drawing on poststructuralist discourse theory, the overarching purpose is to identify the roles of a responsible business person that are articulated in business education and to discuss how these roles could enable students to address sustainability issues. The thesis consists of four studies, based on textbook analyses, teacher interviews and classroom observations. Three categories of roles have been identified, implying that a business person is expected to either *adapt to*, *add* or *create* ethical values. These three categories are compared with the roles indicated in the environmental discourses constructed by Dryzek and the responsibility regimes developed by Pellizzoni. Drawing on Dryzek's and Pellizzoni's reasoning about which qualities are important for addressing sustainability issues, it is concluded that the roles identified in the studies could mean that students are unequipped (the adapting role), ill-equipped (the adding role) or better equipped (the creating role) to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues. The articles include empirical examples that illustrate how and in which situations specific roles are articulated, privileged or taken up. The examples also indicate how the scope for business students' subjectivities are facilitated or hampered. It is suggested that the illustrative empirical examples could be used for critical reflection in order to enhance students' capabilities of addressing uncertain and complex sustainability issues and to improve educational quality in terms of scope for subjectivity.

Keywords: education, sustainable development, responsibility, environment, business, curriculum, teaching, discourse analysis, poststructuralism, pedagogy, classroom.

Contents

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Uppsala, January 2016
Pernilla Andersson

The Articles

Article I
Andersson, Pernilla, Johan Öhman, and Leif Östman. 2011.
"A business to change the world." *Utbildning & Demokrati* no. 20 (1): 57–74.

Article II
Andersson, Pernilla, and Johan Öhman. 2015. "Logics of business education for sustainability." *Environmental Education Research*: 1–17.

Article III
Andersson, Pernilla. "Equipped for responsibility? – A case of business education for sustainability". Submitted to *Journal of Business Ethics.*

Article IV
Andersson, Pernilla. "Business as unusual through dislocatory moments". Submitted to *Environmental Education Research.*

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

"You're not allowed to ask that question", said the student in a trembling voice. This frustrated response came in a lesson in which business students and teachers of drama, business economics and civics were using interactive drama to explore situations in which business decisions were made. The idea was to embody situations, relevant from a business perspective, that the students found unsustainable using interactive drama to explore how the situation could be made more sustainable and by whom. The students had prepared a drama about environmental damage and young children working in dangerous conditions. I asked the student playing the role of the executive manager, here called Anna, what she felt about the 'unsustainable situation' when she objected with frustration: "You're not allowed to ask that question … that's what it *must* be like", arguing that the workers being better off than before. I remember regretting that there was not enough time left in the lesson to explore the student's assertion. Were the workers better off, and who could decide that? Leading to questions of what is more and what is less 'sustainable' and which principles that should inform business decisions. These questions have no simple answers and reveal something of the complexities and uncertainties about doing business globally and dealing with long supply chains.

This incident set me off on the research path. I wanted to understand the ambiguity of the situation, which related to the role of a business person, the meaning of sustainability, ideologies relating to development processes, the role of the teacher and the purpose of education when talking about doing business sustainably. What follows is an exploration of an *educational* practice in which *sustainability* issues intersect with (business) *economics.* In this intersection, a number of dilemmas about doing business sustainably and what should be taught unfold. It is these dilemmas that the thesis investigates.

When approaching or searching for a research field I came across scholars of economics who expressed frustration about the difficulties of incorporating concerns such as poverty and environmental challenges in the academic subject of 'economics'. In *Economics for Humans,* Julie A. Nelson states that the academic subject of economics requires a threefold personality split between the economist self, the ethical self and the female self:

> If I were to try to live my life according to much of what I have been taught during my academic studies, I would have had to develop a personality split into three parts. My economist self would, like William Baumol, have had to admire the beauty of the economic machine. My ethical self would, like David Korten, have had to rail against the injustices generated by the economic juggernaut. My female self would, like the state commissioner, have needed to try to carve out a corner for personal concern and attention within the vast factory of impersonal economic life. (Nelson 2006, 6)

Similarly, Asad Zaman describes his experience as a student of economics as conflicting with his personal motivation of becoming an economist:

> … most were motivated to study economics because they wanted to make the world a better place. We wanted to help the poor, to find answers to the myriad economic problems facing human beings all over the world. In the course of our graduate training, we learned that the main economic problem was do-gooders like us, who interfered with the self-regulating economic market. Providing help to the poor would reduce their incentives to work, and lead to reduced wealth for the society as a whole. The main job of the economist activist was to try and remove all frictions and obstacles to the workings of the free market, and the invisible hand would do the rest. Just pursuing our self-interest was the best way to help society as a whole. (Zaman 2013, 24)

Similar experiences of economics education have been expressed by graduate and post-graduate students striving to reform economics education and include a broader conception of human behaviour and empirical grounding of economic theory in order to better address how current problems relate to poverty, inequalities and environmental challenges.[1]

These examples illustrate that education in economics (in its widest sense) does not easily 'merge' with the personal feelings, motivations and

[1] For more information about this movement and other initiatives related to the rethinking of economics education see: paecon.net, International student initiative for pluralism in economics http://www.isipe.net/open-letter/, realworldeconomics.org.
https://rwer.wordpress.com/category/the-economics-profession/students/, rethinkeconomics.org.

expectations of students. Zaman is frustrated about being considered part of the problem as a 'do-gooder', Nelson expresses that the subject of economics requires a personality split and Anna expresses frustration when asked about her feelings when playing the role of a manager.

Frustrations like these are not limited to the classroom situation, but are also evident in other sectors of society. For example, frustration relating to the 'expectations of an economic actor' was expressed by Alan Greenspan, the former Federal Reserve chairman in the US, during the financial crisis in 2008. He had been a long-term supporter of a hands-off approach to the banking industry, when the crisis left him in disbelief, saying to the press: 'I have found a flaw … I do not know how significant or permanent it is. But I have been very distressed by that fact'.[2]

I have here used the experiences of Anna, Zaman, Nelson and Greenspan to indicate when it is unclear what to do as an economic actor and how personal feelings should or could be dealt with when making business decisions. These experiences indicate that the expectations of a business person doing business responsibly, sustainably or ethically are somewhat ambiguous. This ambiguity is later referred to in terms of 'moments of dislocation', i.e. moments that reveal a dilemma or clash between different norm systems and principles, when it is no longer clear how to 'go on'. As subjects (in this case people in business) in such situations need to find new ways of acting, moments like these are of specific interest when studying the emergence of new roles, rules and practices.

In the wake of the environmental movement, the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change (2006), Al Gore's film An Inconvenient Truth (2006) and the financial crisis in 2008, the call for the inclusion of 'sustainability' or 'sustainable development' in the business curriculum increased significantly (Cullen 2015). The expectation, as expressed by UNESCO, is that education for sustainable development should empower students to contribute to a more sustainable future by providing them with the necessary knowledge, values and skills (2006, 2014). These expectations have also been challenged, arguing that such initiatives enforce a corporate agenda and fail to address the change that is needed to address the current

[2] Alan Greenspan, quoted by Andrew Clark and Treanor in *The Guardian*, 24 Oct 2008. "Greenspan - I was wrong about the economy. Sort of." http://www.theguardian.com/business/2008/oct/24/economics-creditcrunch-federal-reserve-greenspan (2015-12-28)

situation of environmental degradation and social injustice (Springett 2005, Fergus and Rowney 2005).

Accordingly, current educational reforms involving the incorporation of 'sustainable development' in the business curriculum are likely to contribute to ambiguity (or dislocation) in the role of a business. However, as is demonstrated in this thesis, ambiguity is not a problem *per se*. Rather, ambiguity, or the dislocation of discourses, could actually create opportunities for something different and better (whatever that might be). It could, for example, open up new ways of thinking and acting in business and business education. When thinking about how environmental and social challenges could be approached in the future, it is important to explore the emerging role (s) of business people and how they equip students to address sustainability issues.

To this end, the problem addressed in this thesis is twofold. The first relates to how business students are helped to address environmental, social and moral challenges. The second (as expressed by Nelson and Zaman) relates to the accommodation of students emotions and feelings about sustainability issues.

In what follows, the concept *economics education* is used and referred to in a broad sense and includes subjects like business studies, business economics and international economics. The empirical studies that make up this thesis are limited to upper secondary education, although in the research overview section economics and business education in higher education are also accounted for. Likewise, the concept *business person* is used for anyone working in or involved with a business. In the articles, further distinctions (business owners, managers and so on) are made when necessary. The concept *business* is also used in a broad sense, in that no distinction is made between different kinds of business. In the literature accounts, terms like 'firms' and 'corporations' are used when these are used by the author(s) in question. Similarly, in the presentation of the results, the concepts 'consumers' (users of a product) and 'customers' (buyers of a product) are used to reflect the terms used in the empirical material.

Overview of the thesis

Ambiguity – with regard to the role of a responsible business person and the expectations and concerns relating to the incorporation of sustainable development in the (business) curriculum – forms the point of departure in the thesis. The *overarching purpose* of the thesis is to identify the roles of a responsible business person that are articulated when the concept 'sustainable development' is included in the curriculum and to discuss how these roles could enable business students to address sustainability issues. This overarching purpose can be broken down into the following research questions: (RQ1) Which roles of a responsible business person are articulated in educational practice? (RQ2) How and in what kind of situations are specific roles privileged, articulated or taken up? (RQ3) How and in what kind of situations can the role of business change? (RQ4) How do these roles equip business students to address sustainability issues? (RQ5) How should or could a business person deal with personal feelings relating to sustainability issues when making business decisions? (RQ6) How and in which situations is there scope for business students' subjectivities? These questions are approached in all four studies to varying degrees. The articles and their purposes are described in the next section, together with an explanation of how each of the questions are addressed in the articles.

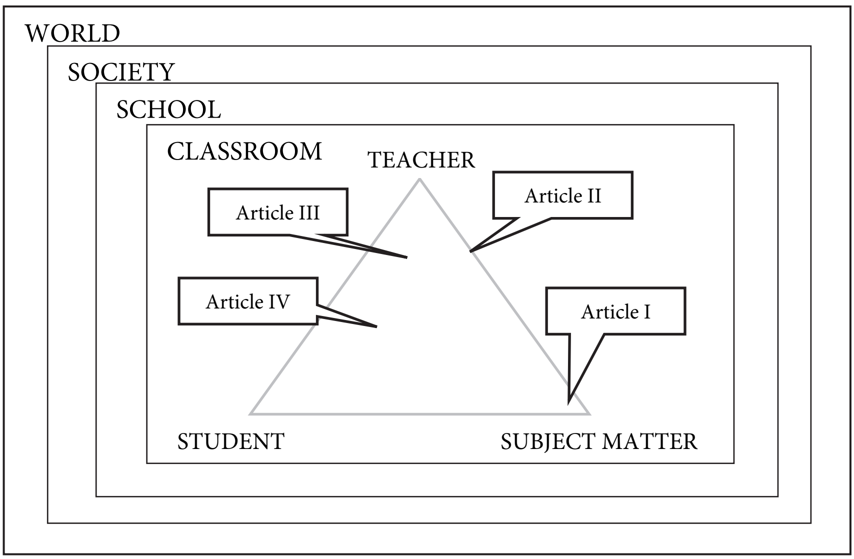

Figure 1: The didactic triangle and the Articles (I–IV)

When designing the thesis I used an extended version of 'the didactic triangle' (Figure 1) in order to capture 'the role of a responsible business person', as articulated in *different* parts of educational practice. 'Didactic' comes from the Greek word *didaskein* and refers to the science of teaching and learning. The origin of the central didactic triangle is unclear, although it is commonly used in educational science. Hudson and Meyer added 'society' to the model to capture the role of the societal context (2011) and Öhman added 'world' to capture the dimension of sustainable development (2014). In this thesis, the model has inspired both the overall research design and the combination of the different methods and empirical focus of the studies. By 'taking samples' from different parts of educational practice the ambition is to contribute to a complex understanding of how the roles of a responsible business person are facilitated. The different studies can be described as moving the focus from the subject matter in the right-hand corner of the triangle to the teacher at the triangle's apex to the student in the left-hand corner. The first study contributes knowledge about the subject matter, the second about teachers' understandings of the subject matter, the third about teachers' actions and the fourth about students' reasoning or meaning-making. As the figure illustrates the interrelationships between classroom, school, society and the world, the results also tell us something about the society in which we live. The analysis of education as a practice can also be described as an accessment of the different ways of understanding or perceiving the role of a responsible business in this wider social context. One of the aims of the thesis is to facilitate the critical reflections of teachers and others involved in designing lessons, educational materials and curricula. The studies included in the thesis thus aim to contribute knowledge about the practice of business education for sustainability and the discourses relating to education, business and sustainability.

The articles, their purpose and the research questions

The first article, *A business to change the world – moral responsibility in textbooks for international economics*, presents an analysis of content relating to sustainability in the textbooks used in upper secondary schools. The *purpose* is to contribute knowledge about the meanings offered to students regarding the scope of taking moral responsibility in relation to the role of a business person.

The second article, *Logics of business education for sustainability*, is based on an interview study of eight teachers' reasoning of their own 'business education for sustainability' practices. The *purpose* of this article is to contribute knowledge about the logics behind teachers' reasoning and how they position the business person in relation to ethical responsibilities.

The third article, *Equipped for responsibility? – a case of business education for sustainability*, is based on video-recorded lessons in which teachers integrate the concept of 'sustainable development' in the subject of business economics. The *purpose* here is to contribute knowledge about the roles of a business person that are articulated by teachers in the classroom and how these roles can equip students, as future business people, to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues.

The fourth article, *Business as unusual through dislocatory moments,* is based on one of the few cases when I, in classroom observations, was able to identify a dislocatory moment. The *purpose* of this article is to describe in detail how a dislocatory moment can open the way for 'business as unusual', i.e. a change in what is perceived as desirable in order to do business 'sustainably'.

In their own ways, the four articles answer the research questions (1–6) in the following way:

All the studies contribute knowledge about (RQ1) the roles of a responsible business person as articulated in educational practice. In Article I, the roles of a business person as privileged in *textbooks* are captured by analysis of *content* relating to environmental and social issues. In Article II, an analysis of *teachers' reasoning* of their own practices, contributes knowledge about the roles of a business person articulated in teachers' expected learning outcomes. Article III contributes knowledge about the roles of a business person that comes into play through *teachers' actions* in classroom practice when sustainable development was incorporated in the lesson content. Last, Article IV captures the roles of a business person taking responsibility for sustainability, *as taken up by students*, in classroom practice. All the articles include illustrative examples in order to exemplify how and in which situations specific roles are articulated (RQ2). Article IV involves an analysis of how and in which situations the role of business person, as taken up by students in classroom practice, can change (RQ3).

The role of a business person in relation to taking responsibility for sustainability is both the starting point and empirical focus in all the studies. Further, in all the articles the results are discussed in relation to how sustainability issues could be addressed in the future (RQ4). Article III includes a more detailed analysis of how the roles of a responsible business person that are facilitated in classroom practice can equip students to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues. In the final chapter of this thesis, the results of all four studies contribute to a broader discussion on this topic.

The question of how and in which situations business students' subjectivities can be accommodated relates to the problem captured in the two quotes from Nelson and Zaman (see. p. 16). The problem of whether a business person should include or exclude moral considerations and personal feelings when making business decisions (RQ5) is approached in different ways in the four studies. Article I includes an analysis of a business person's scope for taking moral responsibility. Article II includes an analysis of how a business person ought to relate to her or his feelings and emotions. Article III includes an analysis of emotional reactions in classroom practice and indications of how a business person should handle personal feelings when making decisions. Article IV is about the scope for and the involvement of students' subjectivities in classroom practice. All the articles include illustrative examples in order to exemplify how and in which situations there is scope for subjectivity – here understood as human agency (RQ6). An elaboration of the concepts of subjectivity, affect, feelings, emotions and personal convictions are included in Chapter 5.

Theoretical framework

The inter-disciplinary nature of this thesis involves drawing on and contributing to several fields of research. *First*, the thesis draws on post-structuralist discourse theory (Laclau and Mouffe 1985/2001, Laclau 1990, Glynos and Howarth 2007, Howarth 2013, Norval 2006) and uses this to analyse the empirical material. *Second*, the project draws on environmental sociology, environmental discourses (Dryzek 2013), knowledge, uncertainty and responsibility. It also recognises that today's environmental issues are characterised by uncertainty and complexity (Pellizzoni 2004, Dryzek 2013), which has specific implications for how sustainability issues can or ought to be approached. *Third*, it draws on educational research about what good education ought to include (Biesta 2009). Environmental and pedagogic theories facilitate both the analysis and discussion of the results of the discourse analysis. The following chapters account for how the various fields (discourse theory, environmental sociology and pedagogy) have inspired the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework as a whole is based on discourse theory (Chapter 2). Perspectives on the economy (Chapter 3), environment (Chapter 4), responsibility (Chapter 4) and education (Chapter 5) have informed decisions about the methodology and the empirical material and are used to understand and discuss the results of the discourse analysis.

CHAPTER 2

Discourse theory

How the role of business is understood, what taking responsibility implies, what sustainability is and what the role of education ought to be depends on how we apprehend the world. Discourses rest on assumptions and contentions about how things are or should be and thereby provide important clues for understanding the role of a responsible business person. In this chapter I describe my understanding of the discursive, why discourses matter, how discourses take shape and change, the dislocation of discourses and role of the discourse analyst adopted in this thesis. The particular way of doing discourse analysis in the different studies is based on a logics approach[3] developed by David Howarth and Jason Glynos (2007) and is described in Chapter 6.

> A discourse is a shared way of apprehending the world. Embedded in language, it enables those who subscribe to it to interpret bits of information and put them together into coherent stories or accounts. Discourses construct meanings and relationships, helping define common sense and legitimate knowledge. Each discourse rests on assumptions, judgements, and contentions that provide the basic terms for analysis, debates, agreements and disagreements … discourses both enable and constrain communication. (Dryzek 2013, p. 9–10)

In line with John S. Dryzek's description, in this thesis *discourse* refers to as a shared way of apprehending and talking about the world. A discourse shares assumptions about how economies work, what good education is, what is expected from a responsible business person, what a desirable future is and so on. Consequentially, different discourses are based on different assumptions, which results in different perspectives on how economies

[3] In Article I the approach to text analysis can be described as similar to a logics approach although not described as such.

work or what good education is. My understanding of 'the discursive' is in line with the discourse theoretical approach developed by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, who argue that all objects are regarded as discursive in the sense that their *meaning* builds on a system of socially constructed rules. This means that although objects have a *material* existence, they cannot be perceived, as objects, from the 'outside' (God´s eye view). A phenomenon like a tsunami would exist without human minds. But if we understand a tsunami as a punishment from God, or explain it by plate tectonics, it is discursive (Laclau and Mouffe 1985/2001, 108). Similarly, even if resources are real, our understanding of the economy, e.g. as a machine or a beating heart (as suggested by Nelson), builds on socially constructed meanings.

From this theoretical starting point, 'doing business' cannot be explained in terms of 'natural' economic forces. Rather, the meaning of what it implies to do business builds on socially constructed rules. This anti-essentialist and poststructuralist theoretical perspective has been elaborated in depth by Laclau and Mouffe, describing the economy as 'the last stronghold of essentialism' (Laclau and Mouffe 1985/2001). I return to this later in the thesis. Although it can be argued that a business is dependent on material resources and needs to make a profit, there is scope for different decisions to arise in the space between 'enough' and 'maximum profit', in the space of time, such as the profit foreseen in the next quarter or the next ten years, or with regard to the distribution of profit between different employees and owners. Thus, a business decision about 'profit' is not a question of yes/no or on/off. In order to (theoretically) include this wide range of possible decisions it is necessary to avoid making predetermined assumptions about how businesses or economies at large 'work'. De-naturalising business behaviour by avoiding an essentialist ontology is also necessary in order to facilitate the critique of unsustainable business decisions (because responsibilities come with choices) and be able to recognise a radical change of business behaviour if or when it happens. This, I argue, also applies to empirical studies of business education when issues like this are included in the subject content. The poststructuralist approach to the economy is elaborated on later by drawing on Nelson's and Zaman's accounts of the evolution of the 'the invisible hand' metaphor. Their accounts provide an historical background to some of the underpinning assumptions of the predominating economic theory. These accounts are helpful for identifying contemporary, socially constructed presuppositions that affect how current environmental and social challenges are addressed.

Why discourse matters

A discourse matters in that a certain way of understanding reality has a productive function since it equips and restricts our imagination. In this way a discourse have material consequences since it affects which decisions (e.g. business decisions) are possible and which solutions to environmental and social problems are perceived as feasible. As Dryzek describes, discourses can constitute institutional software by constituting the informal understandings that provide the context for social interaction (2013, 20). This is why discourses are important objects of inquiry. Maarten Hajer (1995) demonstrates this by arguing that the environmental conflict has become discursive because it is no longer a matter of whether there *is* a conflict, but about the definition and meaning of the conflict. By constructing the environmental problem in a specific way, the foundations for possible solutions are also constructed and, as such, discursive constructions becomes an important realm of power. For instance, Hajer maintains that the image of planet Earth lays the foundation for the discursive construction of the need for *centralised* global action, which implies a loss of formal representation and the marginalisation of *local* environmental problems (Hajer 1995, 9–15). The concept 'constructing' should thus not be interpreted as a denial of environmental problems per se, but rather that problems can be constructed (for instance in business education) in different ways. Different problem constructions have different implications for which solutions are facilitated and what is expected from a responsible business person. These constructions are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4. What a discourse analyst should do is also developed later in the chapter.

Dislocation of discourses

At times we are confronted with events that we cannot explain because they do not fit our understanding of how things are or should be, for example like when the Federal Reserve chairman was confronted with the financial crisis and when the teacher asked inappropriate questions in the business economics lesson. These situations are here understood as moments of *dislocation*, which implies that a previously stable discourse is confronted by new events that it cannot explain or domesticate (Howarth and Torfing 2005, 16). In social situations like this it is no longer clear how a subject should 'go on' (Howarth 2013, 161) because the discourse that guides the subject's actions is challenged. Discourses provide structures that position subjects, which means that they also carry expectations as to how a subject should act in specific situations. A free market discourse implies that actors (banks, producers, consumers) in a market are better off without interference from the state. A scientific rational economic discourse implies a structure in which science provides knowledge for a legislative body to use to make laws that businesses follow.

In the introduction I described the kind of frustration that can arise when it is not clear how a business person should act and whether she or he should take personal feelings into account when making business decisions. This ambiguity stems from different ideas about whether it is wise to create or (try to) maintain a division between an economic sphere in which moral considerations should be side-lined and a political sphere in which moral actions are legitimate or imposed. The two different lines of thought (which are elaborated on in the next chapter) imply different expectations with regard to ethical responsibilities and thereby contribute to the dislocation of a business person.

This ambiguity also contributes to a gap in the social structure that can be described as a dislocation, i.e. a social situation in which it is not clear how a subject should 'go on' (Howarth 2013, 161). When discourses are dislocated by events that cannot be domesticated, subjects need to find 'new ways of acting'. Moments of dislocation are therefore of specific interest for studies of the emergence of new subject positionings and their implications. This is why exploring sustainability in business education is relevant. Classrooms and the texts used in education could be understood as 'arenas', where 'new ways of acting' or the potential new 'roles of a business person' come to the fore or are 'negotiated'. The relevance of research on the incorporation of the concept sustainable development in business education is further supported by research arguing that this can be challenging. This is discussed in Chapter 5. Against this background, how can the role of the discourse analyst be understood? This question is dealt with in the next section.

The role of the discourse analyst

> … poststructuralists agree on a strategy of denaturalizing and historicizing social relations and processes, such as the market forces or the natural laws of economy. The latter are not fixed and eternal, but precarious, incomplete, and changeable. (Howarth 2013, 63)

The role of the discourse analyst adopted in this project is twofold. First, it implies facilitating critical reflections by paying attention to the *contingent* nature of educational practice, i.e. that what is perceived as 'natural' could be otherwise. Secondly, inspired by Hajer, it means *illuminating* '*places, moments, and institutions* where certain perceptions of environmental change and social development emerge and are reproduced (Hajer 1995, 19). Here, the contingent nature of educational practice involves the purpose of education and the subject matter. The critical potential of this 'de-naturalising' approach has been described by Aletta Norval as 'coming to see a picture as a picture' (see the quote and figure below). Once you discover that a picture *could* be interpreted differently, you cannot go back and pretend that you are not aware of other possible interpretations (Norval 2006, 238–242).

In other words, it is only by becoming aware of the multiplicity of perspectives (or discourses) that we can begin to view a naturalised perspective precisely *as* a perspective, rather than a matter of fact or 'truth'. Accordingly, awareness of different ways of 'doing business education for sustainability' also implies awareness of the contingency of a practice, which is a necessary component in order to be able to reflect critically. This is what Aletta Norval, building on Wittgenstein, refers to as *aspect change*:

> Where aspect change occurs, what becomes visible is not just the presence of a different understanding of things, but an awareness of the multiplicity of grammars. One is freed when one comes to see a picture as a picture. … What are its political consequences? Once I see both the duck and the rabbit[4], I cannot go back and to that point where I was aware of only one of the aspects. (Norval 2006, 242)

Figure 2. The duck and the rabbit illusion

[4] The 'duck and the rabbit' refers to the illusionary picture used by Ludwig Wittgenstein to describe two different ways of seeing: seeing that and seeing as. *The title is "Which animals are most like each other?" with an answer below being "Rabbit and Duck"*. Image first published in Fliegende Blätter 23 October 1892. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Rabbit%E2%80%93duck_illusion#/media/File:Kaninchen_und_Ente.png.

In similar vein, Cleo H. Cherryholmes (1988) suggests that in order to avoid reproducing existing power structures, educational researchers should make discourses visible and thereby facilitate critique. I have made methodological decisions (outlined in Chapter 6) in line with Cherryholmes', Howarth's, Hajer's and Norval's approaches to the discourse theoretical project in order to capture *varieties* and *detailed* descriptions of educational practice. Capturing varieties relates to the critical potential of becoming aware of a perspective *as* a perspective. Detailed descriptions relate to the potential of illuminating the places and moments in which perspectives of sustainability and the role of business emerge and are reproduced. Accordingly, these decisions have been made without pretention that the results are correct descriptions of what business education generally *is* or *ought* to be. Apart from the critical potential of denaturalising social relations, the results are discussed in relation to how environmental and social challenges could be addressed and to educational qualities. The perspectives that are used to understand the results of the discourse analysis and that form the starting point for discussion are described in detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Summary

This chapter has accounted for the discourse theoretical framework used in the thesis. Discourse is described as a shared way of apprehending the world and that discourses matter, because as they are embedded in language they affect the kinds of decisions that are possible. It has been shown that discourses can be dislocated and that these *moments of dislocation* offer opportunities to study new emerging roles, i.e. positionings of subjects. It is further shown that the discourse theoretical project ought to *denaturalise* social relations and *illuminate* the places and moments in which certain perceptions of environmental change and social development emerge, are reproduced or challenged. The particular ways of doing discourse analysis in this thesis will be described in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 3

Perspectives on the economy

This chapter elaborates on different perspectives on the economy that could affect the role of a responsible business person, describes how an economy (as a society) and economics (as a school subject) can be understood from a poststructuralist perspective and suggests why a poststructuralist and anti-essentialist approach to the economy or economics education is a potentially fruitful way of approaching sustainability challenges.

The ways in which we address current environmental and social challenges are affected by how we understand the world around us. Of particular importance for this thesis is the fact that such an understanding is informed by assumptions relating to economic theory. It is therefore important to be able to identify contemporary, socially constructed assumptions that inform the kind of solutions that can be imagined, because this could provide access to a greater variety of 'tools' with which to address sustainability and its challenges.

The invisible hand – the birth and death of a metaphor

The economists Julie A. Nelson and Asad Zaman's accounts of the evolution of 'the invisible hand' metaphor provide a useful background and contribute to the empirical studies of this thesis. These two scholars illuminate assumptions that in our daily lives are mostly regarded as facts. In other words, in this section I describe how a common western understanding of the economy as a machine, in which buyers and sellers are the cogs and self-interest is the fuel, has developed.

In order to understand contemporary presuppositions with regard to how economies work, Nelson goes back to the early industrialisation of Europe when Adam Smith wrote *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of* *the Wealth of Nations* (1776). In this work, Smith coins the metaphor 'an invisible hand' in order to show how a person promotes her or his self-interest and at the same time provides what is good for society at large. His argument is that while a baker bakes and sells bread with self-interest in mind, the bread that is baked becomes beneficial to others through the *mechanism* of a self-regulating market system. As Nelson describes, this choice of metaphor should be understood in its context, which in this case is when the understanding of provisioning is in transition from 'the sacred and fear of hell' to the rise of science and Newton's idea of 'the world as a clockwork universe'. To most Enlightenment thinkers, the notion of nature as a clock was inseparable from the notion of God the Clockmaker, who secured the purpose and ethics behind the machine. Later, accelerated by Darwin's theory of evolution, the notion of a clockmaker became increasingly irrelevant to scientific work. Economists followed the same course in that they increasingly saw their work as the objective study of the 'drives' and 'mechanisms' in the economic 'machine' (Nelson 2006, 10–12).

While Smith recognised a wide range of human behaviour (*Theory of Moral Sentiments*) and saw a need for the regulation of commerce, self-interest was later *assumed* to be the 'energy source' driving the 'gears' of economic life. Smith and his contemporary readers were well aware that 'the invisible hand' was a metaphor, or figure of speech, and not literally true, i.e. a living metaphor. However, somewhere along the way, as elaborated by Zaman, the metaphor has become so deeply entrenched in the common western understanding of how things are that it is no longer regarded as a figure of speech but as true, i.e. the metaphor is dead.[5] This 'death of the metaphor' has led to the metaphor being used as though it was based on observations or understood normatively as an ideal to strive for. Confusing the metaphor with reality has affected the subject content of economics textbooks, in that selfish behaviour is described as leading to socially optimal outcomes. Furthermore, as outlined by Zaman, the acceptance of the metaphor as true has led to the perception of 'the failure

[5] Unlike living metaphors, dead metaphors often go unnoticed. For instance if I say that 'I am as hungry as a wolf' it is clear that I am not a wolf. Examples of dead metaphors include 'the *foot* of a mountain' and 'the *back* of a chair'. They are dead because we do not normally think of these words as parts of the body. Whether a metaphor is perceived as dead or alive depends on our own individual experience. What is a living metaphor for one person could be a dead metaphor for another. The metaphor 'the invisible hand' *could* be argued to be dead in the sense that it is often regarded as a description of reality of how things work, rather than as a figure of speech.

of the invisible hand to provide for the common good' as an exceptional situation (Zaman 2013).

But *when* did this metaphor die and *how*? Inspired by the progress of science, John Stuart Mill (1836/1948) suggested that economists should base their knowledge about the production of wealth on the 'laws of nature', as proposed by scientists. Accordingly, in order to practice economics as a science, Mill argued that it would be useful for economists to *assume* an arbitrary definition of man as a being who inevitably achieves what he wants by obtaining the greatest amount of necessaries with the smallest quantity of labour. This concept was later summarised as 'economic man' or 'homo economicus': an individual rational calculator that was only interested in his own material or financial gain.

Later, the first neoclassical economists began to formulate Smith's and Mill's ideas in mathematical terms and borrowed the calculus-based models from earlier developments in mechanical physics. The idea of business firms as entities, acting like homo economicus and making calculations and maximising profits was expressed mathematically in terms of expenditure and revenue. The term utility (equalling satisfaction with people's willingness to pay) was employed in order to explain decisions relating to household consumption. Concepts like this were *assumed* to be the direct counterparts of the concepts of physical science, in that profit, utility and prices were regarded as particles that were raised and lowered by the forces of market interaction (Nelson 2006, 10–40). This led to the development of a mathematical model explaining how economies work. Whenever the model has been criticised (for instance, because human behaviour is so much more complex than the assumption of 'homo economicus' indicates), the response has been to add or modify assumptions (for example by widening the meaning of self-interest to include what people in their daily lives would call empathy).

In the above 'the death of the metaphor' is described as a process in which the *assumption* of economic man or homo economicus becomes 'true'. Along the way we have learned to understand the economy as a machine, buyers and sellers as cogs and self-interest as the fuel. This way of thinking permeates mainstream economics at both the macro- and micro level. The ideal of the free market can be described as an application of the invisible hand at the national level. Thinking about the economy as a machine also influences the subject content of economics textbooks and the perception of the failure of 'the invisible hand' as an anomaly.

The last stronghold of essentialism

The understanding of the economy as a machine running on (material) self-interest is shared by economists and free-market advocates. It also extends across the political right-left spectra and includes free-market critics, Marxists and radical or reformist environmentalists. Weber writes that the economic order 'is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which to-day determine the lives of all the individuals who are born into this mechanism' (1930/1958, 181). Habermas, when making a distinction between the 'lifeworld' and 'the system', argues that the economy functions independently of human norms and personality as an autonomous sphere with its own internal system logic and drive mechanism (Habermas 1987, Nelson 2006, 35). Similar expressions[6] can be identified in Beck's depiction of business behaviour, where business decisions to move away from the carbon dioxide business is explained in terms of profitability: 'These are not born again do-gooders who are acting out of humanitarian interest' (2009, 102).

The point I am making here is that the behaviour is described as something *natural* and has nothing to do with the correctness of these descriptions of business behaviour. When behaviour is described as natural, it eliminates the possibility of different choices – and thereby moral responsibility, in that responsibilities comes with choices. It could be argued that mainstream economists and radical and reformist environmentalists agree that the capitalist economy is like a machine, but suggest different remedies for modern-day environmental and social problems. That the picture of the economy as a 'natural force' is so widely shared makes it particularly hard to penetrate, which is reflected in Laclau and Mouffe's description of the economy as the last *stronghold* of essentialism.

To be or not to be political?

Earlier I described how 'a common western understanding' of self-interest has evolved from something that *can* contribute to what is good for society at large to something that *explains* how economies in general work. A later contribution to the evolution of a western world's common understanding

[6] Also in Dryzek (2013, 10), which I draw on in this thesis, a similar way of talking can be identified when referring to material economic forces.

of self-interest was made by the economist Milton Friedman, who in the Cold War turned self-interest into a *virtue* by linking the capitalist market economy to political freedom. He argued that political freedom was promoted by competitive capitalism, because it separated economic power from political power. This line of thought can be identified in other contemporary writings, such as those of Adair Turner, a former member of the UK's Financial Policy Committee, who stated that: 'The good society is delivered by a robust tension between politically defined constraints and the self-interest and animal spirits of business and entrepreneurs, and it is not always wise to muddy those roles' (2001, 376).

Others have criticised the ideal of separating the market as a force from its social and political context. In *The Great Transformation,* Karl Polanyi (1944/2001) argued that this ideal would lead to the destruction of society and the natural environment. Further, inspired by Polanyi, contemporary sociologists like Rickard Swedberg and Mark Granovetter have argued that 'sooner or later the realization was bound to come that it was unwise to make such a sharp separation between what is "economic" and what is "social"' (1992, 1).

It is worth clarifying that the point is not whether 'politics and economics' can be separated, but whether the separation of politics and economics is an ideal state to strive for. This is further elaborated on and criticised by Karl Palmås, who maintains that it implies a belief in an a-political market that ensures a transparent and democratic guidance of society. In other words, separating politics and economics guarantees a distribution of power. From this point of view, if businesses started acting 'politically' or ideologically it would mean 'taking a shortcut to political influence' (Palmås 2011, 28). Business owners and employees are expected to be a-political and a 'de-subjectified' business person guarantees that a business does not develop into a political and unreliable powerful force. Palmås argues that our economy has never been modern in the sense that it has managed to isolate itself from politics, and that it is time to accept this and instead pay attention to the impact, good or bad, that entrepreneurs, or what he calls 'quasi-radicals', have on society (2011, 27–29, 137). Other economists (in the fields of business, ethics and sustainability) argue that in addition to making a profit, a business should have a social purpose or take a broader social responsibility. It is suggested that such a purpose should not arise from charity, but from a deeper understanding of economic value creation (Porter and Kramer 2011) and that a business should seek active support from its shareholders when doing so (Schwartz and Saiia 2012).

Ulrich Beck (2009) introduces the term *sub-politics* for when businesses act 'politically'. He describes it as 'the decoupling of politics from government' and explains how politics is possible beyond the representative institutions of nation-states. Beck includes corporations, international organisations and social movements as potential sub-political actors. More specifically, Beck describes sub-politics as 'direct' politics 'bypassing the institutions of representative will-formation', i.e. political parties and parliaments (Beck 2009, 95) Thus, sub-politics could be described as a problem from a formal democratic perspective. At the same time, sub-politics can be described as setting 'politics free by changing the rules and boundaries of the political so that global politics become more open and more amenable to new goals, issues and interdependencies' (Beck 2009, 95). The concept sub-politics accordingly captures the ambiguity of the involvement of businesses in 'politics[7]' by having goals other than making a profit. To be or not to be 'political' is a question that captures the different lines of thought outlined in this section, and is a question that contributes to the dislocation of a business person.

An anti-essentialist and poststructuralist approach to the economy

This chapter describes how a common western understanding of the economy as a machine has developed and that this is now a widely shared understanding among the political left and right and radical and reformist environmentalists. The economic model based on the homo economicus assumption has been criticised, for instance by phenomenologist Alfred Schütz, who accuses economists of making models that create marionettes living in accordance with principles created by themselves (Schütz 1953). This critique, which is in line with the poststructuralist discourse theoretical approach taken in this thesis, implies that an economic model is not limited to its explanatory function. The economic model also equips and restricts our imagination, and when we in our daily lives make decisions as if the assumptions are true they have a productive function. Therefore, by taking

[7] 'Involvement in politics' here does not mean lobbying or supporting political candidates but only the political aspect of having a social purpose apart from making profit.

a poststructuralist perspective (i.e. that there is nothing natural or essentialistic about how an economy works) on economy, additional ways of understanding the economy are accessed together with a larger variety of ‘tools’ for addressing sustainability challenges.

I have here described lines of thought with different implications for what is expected from a responsible business person. The next chapter provides an overview of environmental perspectives and their implications for the role of a responsible business person. This is followed by a summary of the roles of a business person presented so far.

CHAPTER 4

Environmental perspectives

In this chapter, the theoretical perspective used to discuss the results of the discourse analysis is presented. Environmental discourses identified by Dryzek and referred to in the thesis are presented. The typology of responsibility developed by Luigi Pellizzoni is also introduced. This typology is used in the thesis as a way of organising the different roles and perspectives of a responsible business person when interpreting the results of the empirical studies. Dryzek's and Pellizzoni's arguments about what needs to be considered in order to be able to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues are also outlined. These aspects are returned to in the final chapter when discussing the findings of the empirical studies.

Environmental discourses

What is an environmental problem? What is a natural process that should be 'left to run its course'? What should or could be done, and by whom? Different environmental discourses answer these questions differently. In other words, an environmental discourse is a specific way of apprehending the environment – including humans and non-humans – and how humans interact with each other and with the natural environment (see quote on p. 25). An environmental discourse may not be perceived as 'environmentalist' and might deny the existence of environmental problems. In order to foster understanding and provide a context in which to discuss the results of the empirical studies, the environmental discourses as they are constructed and identified by Dryzek (2013) are introduced. Here the focus is on the preferred approaches and possible solutions of the various discourses, including the roles and motives of a business in relation to other roles (of citizens, consumers, governments, scientists etc) and motives.

Different environmental discourses can both complement and compete with each other. Individuals may partially inhabit competing discourses that 'make claims' on them. As described by Dryzek, an individual working in a government may be 'an administrative rationalist at work, a green radical in conversation with friends and economic rationalist when buying and selling' (2013, 22). These environmental discourses could pull an individual in very different directions.

According to Dryzek environmental discourses depart from two dimensions. The first dimension is that even though an environmental discourse departs from industrialism, it can be *reformist* or *radical* depending on whether or not the liberal, capitalist, political, economic system needs to be changed. The second dimension is that the departure from industrialism can either be *prosaic,* i.e. seeing environmental problems that need to be solved within the existing political-economic system, or *imaginative*, i.e. seeing environmental 'problems' as opportunities rather than difficulties and environmental and economic concerns as reconcilable . From these two dimensions, Dryzek identifies four main categories of discourse: *limits and survival*, *problem-solving*, *sustainability* and *green radicalism*. In order to identify the environmental discourses in these four categories Dryzek analyses the basic entities that are recognised or constructed, assumptions about natural relationships, agents and their motives and key metaphors. Dryzek's approach to discourse analysis and the discourse analytical approach used in the empirical studies included in this thesis are similar in that they align with the definition of what a discourse is (see Dryzek's quote in the introduction to Chapter 2). This facilitates a comparison between the roles of a business person as implicated by the environmental discourses constructed by Dryzek and those identified in the empirical studies of the thesis. However, in some respects my theoretical starting point differs from that of Dryzek. This is addressed at the end of the next section.

The first named category of limits and survival is based on the idea that unchecked economic expansion and population growth will eventually exceed the Earth's stock of natural resources and the capacity of its ecosystems to support human agricultural and industrial activity. It seeks to redistribute power within industrial political economy and reorient away from economic growth (radical) and to see solutions in terms of the options set by industrialism (prosaic). Its opponents, Prometheans, deny any thinking of the natural environment in terms of limits (prosaic and neither reformist nor radical). The environmental problem-solving category takes the political-economic status quo as given (prosaic) but in need of adjustment (reformist) in order to cope with environmental problems. The sustainability category focuses on the need to achieve some kind of resolution (reformist) to conflicts between ecological and economic values, suggesting that there might not necessarily be a conflict (imaginary). The green radicalism category rejects the basic structure of industrialist society (radical) and the way the environment is conceptualised and instead favours alternative interpretations of humans, their societies and their place in the world (imaginary).

An overview of these categories and the environmental discourse is presented in Table 1, below. In the next section, the role of a business person within each discourse is developed in more depth. The role of a business person as it is formulated here should be seen as my reading of Dryzek, who does not explicitly express the role of business in the way that is depicted in Table 1.

Table 1. Environmental Discourses (after Dryzek)

Main categories	**Environmental Discourse**	**Agents and their motives**	**The role of business**
Limits and survival (prosaic and radical)	Limits and survival	scientific experts and governments for the public interest (excluded: citizens, individual problem solvers, markets and social movements)	follow the recommendations set by scientists and governments
Opponents to limits and survival (prosaic)	Promethean	everyone pursues material self-interest	solve environmental problems by maximising profits
Problem-solving (prosaic and reformist)	Administrative rationalism	the government, technical experts and managers of government agencies work in the public's best interest	follow laws and regulations set by experts working on behalf of government agencies
	Democratic pragmatism	individual citizens, activists, corporations, trade unions, government agencies,	take part in interactive problem-solving

		strive for selfish material interests or public interest	
	Economic rationalism	main agent homo economicus in pursuit of self-interest, and agents in governmental positions designing systems such as 'cap and trade' motivated by public interest	Pursue material self-interest, thereby maximising profits and adjusting to the price mechanisms designed by government agencies
Sustainability (imaginary and reformist)	Sustainable development	international, regional and local organisations, governments and corporations collectively strive for the public good	cooperate with governments, including actors at international and local levels in the public's interest
	Techno-corporatist ecological modernisation	scientists, engineers, and accountants strive for profit and the common good	strive for profit and aim to save the environment with the aid of new technology
	Reflexive ecological modernisation	governments, businesses, reform-oriented environmentalists and scientists motivated by public good	committed to working for sustainability in a reflexive process
Green Radicals imaginary and radical)	Green consciousness	every person can be an agent for the common good (collective actors like governments and corporations are excluded)	(subject to critique)
	Green politics	individual and collective actors, such as parties, states and international organisations strive for public good	(subject to measures imposed by politicians)

Environmental discourses and the role of business

Dryzek's (2013) overview of environmental discourses provides 'a map of the big picture'. I have used this map to formulate how the role of business can be understood within the different environmental discourses. It can be described as a mapping of the discourses that exist in a wider social context, within which educational practices are situated (see Figure 1, p. 19). Dryzek's overview is useful for understanding the results of the empirical studies. However, they have not been used as analytical categories in the process of identifying the roles of a business person as articulated in the empirical material. In the next section Dryzek's perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of the discourses in relation to (uncertain and complex) sustainability issues is accounted for.

The discourse of *limits and survival* took hold in the 1970s through the Club of Rome. Manifested in the publication *The Limits to Growth* (1972), it warned of the depletion of natural resources. The emphasis changed from natural resources to ecosystems after the Millennium Ecosystems Assessment Report in 2005. Drawing on the planet's ecosystem's ability to sustain future generations, the concept 'planetary boundaries' was launched. Based on the report, a system known as the Corporate Ecosystem Services Review was developed with guidelines that businesses could use to review their operations (World Resources Institute, Meridian Institute, and World Business Council for Sustainable Development 2012). The *role of a business* within the discourse of limits and survival could thus be described as following the rules and recommendations set by scientists and governments.

The *Promethean* discourse is a response to the discourse of limits and survival in that it does not regard the natural environment as having limits. In Greek mythology, Prometheus stole the fire from Zeus and thus increased the capacity of humans to manipulate the world. Thus, Prometheans have unlimited faith in humans and their technological abilities to overcome problems. Prometheans are critical of the advocates of limits and survival for not including prices or technologies in their models. By taking the price mechanism and technological development into account, Prometheans argue that there is no need to worry, because the scarcity of resources will lead to higher prices, thus inciting the extraction of new resources or the development of substitutes. Thus, with enough energy, facilitated by economic growth, any environmental problem can be solved. Human domination and competition between humans are seen as natural relationships through which the scarcity of resources can best be solved.

Accordingly, the *role of business* could be described as striving to maximise profits in order to solve environmental problems.

The *administrative rationalism* discourse takes liberal capitalism for granted, but recognises the need for adjustment in order to cope with environmental problems. These adjustments involve institutions such as professional resource managing bureaucracies, pollution control agencies and expert advisory councils. Governing is carried out by the administrative state and is about the rational management of a clearly defined public interest informed by the best available expertise. This discourse emphasises the role of the expert in problem-solving, rather than the citizen or producer/consumer, and stresses hierarchical social relations rather than equality or competition. Accordingly, the *role of a business* could be described as following the laws and regulations set by experts working on behalf of government agencies.

The *democratic pragmatism* discourse involves interactive problem-solving within the basic institutional structure of liberal capitalism. The *role of business* could for instance take the form of public consultation as part of an environmental impact assessment.

The *economic rationalism* discourse is committed to the use of market mechanisms to achieve public ends. The main task for governments is to facilitate the use of market mechanisms by privatising the environment. The 'pollution rights' initiative is an example of this. Other initiatives involve 'green taxes' or the provision of information about the environmental impact of a product, to facilitate green consumerism. Accordingly, *the role of business* could be described as pursuing material self-interest, and maximising profit while 'adjusting' to the price mechanisms that are designed by government agencies as a way of putting a price on the natural environment.

The *sustainable development*[8] discourse takes the capitalist economy as given, but not the structure of political systems. The reorientation suggested by this discourse requires a shift in power away from the nation-state to coordinated international action, local levels of political organisation and partnerships with business. The discourse suggests that environmental con-

[8] The intention here is not to stipulate a definition of sustainable development that will be used analytically. In the theoretical framework, the concept of sustainable development is treated as a concept that is specifically open to different meanings, a so-called floating signifier. For a further elaboration see Chapter 6's application to discourse analysis.

cerns and economic growth are not necessarily in conflict, but can be reconciled. Accordingly, the *role of business* could be described as cooperating with governments, including actors at an international and local level, for the common good/public interest.

In contrast to the sustainable development discourse, the *ecological modernisation* discourse (divided in two strands in Table 1 and described below) not only suggests that environmental concern and economic growth can be reconciled, but also that 'concern for sustainable development' is good for business. Governments, environmentalists, scientists, engineers and businesses are partners in the project of the ecological restructuring of capitalism. Ecological modernisation requires political commitment. Thus, there is no trust in the invisible hand to provide the common good. Further divided into two strands, ecological modernisation could be understood in a limited technical sense, involving engineers and accountants (techno-corporatist), or in a sense that also involves the restructuring of political-economic life (reflexive) (see also Hajer 1995).

The *techno-corporatist* ecological modernisation discourse acknowledges the need to reform the capitalist political economy, but not in a way that requires a different kind of political-economic system. The discourse implies 'repairing design faults' in the existing political-economic system, for example by environmental bookkeeping/auditing. Accordingly, the *role of business* could be described as striving for profit and saving the environment with new technology'.

The *reflexive ecological modernisation* discourse argues that delegating decision-making to expert councils is problematic from a democratic perspective. Therefore, public debate that also includes the construction of the social problem should be strengthened. In this reflexive process, the challenge is not to come up with suggestions about how preconceived goals could be achieved, but to allow social change to take place democratically. This involves a public debate that proliferates insights into the ecological dilemma, clarifies options and costs, facilitates reflection on the kind of development society wants, makes it clear what the agenda of environmental NGO's really is, invites firms (businesses, corporations) to substantiate what they mean when they talk about the social responsibility of the firm and explain what their dilemma is (Hajer 1995, 288–292). Accordingly, the *role of business* could be described as being committed to working for sustainability in a reflexive process with governments, scientists and environmental activists. The reflexive process in cooperation with environmental activists implies that the boundary between the discourse of ecological modernisation and the discourse of green radicals, to which I now turn, is somewhat vague.

Green radicals reject the basic structure of industrial society and favour alternative interpretations of humans, their society and their place in the world. The *green consciousness* discourse (i.e. deep ecologists, ecofeminists, lifestyle greens) implies that the way people experience and regard the world in which they live, and each other, is the key to green change.

The *green politics* discourse (i.e. green parties, eco-marxists, anti-globalisation activists and others) involves changing the social, political and economic structures more directly.

In Dryzek's overview, businesses or corporations are absent as agents in the category of radical and imaginary environmental discourses. There might be different reasons for this. It could be understood as a reflection of Dryzek's (critical realist) theoretical perspective, which is reflected in expressions like: 'If governments make investors unhappy – through (say) tough antipollution policy – then they *are* punished by disinvestment…' [my italicisation] (Dryzek 2013, 10). As has been described in the previous chapter, this implies an understanding of businesses' behaviour as something natural, which is a theoretical position that I find problematic when exploring business education. However, Dryzek's overview is valuable for understanding the results of the studies. It should also be added that from the poststructuralist and anti-essentialist perspective of the thesis, radical and imaginary businesses or corporations could either be absent or 'dressed as activists'. For instance, could Ben and Jerry's support of the Occupy Wall Street movement be described as activism, or a business venture? The line between green politics and reflexive ecological modernisation could, in this regard, be described as ambiguous. This 'ambiguity' is elaborated on in the summary of the roles of a business person later on in the chapter.

Roles of a responsible business person – summary of perspectives

This section presents a comparative summary of the different perspectives from which the roles of a responsible business person, as identified in Article I–IV, can be understood. In order to organise the perspectives a typology of responsibility developed by Luigi Pellizzoni (2004) is used. The perspectives that are presented below are not exclusive, although they do have different implications for what a business person needs to know and do and how they are expected to contribute to sustainable development.

Pellizzoni's typology consists of four responsibility regimes: care, liability, accountability and responsiveness. A *care* regime is grounded in strong normative and factual beliefs, such as 'a mother should take care of her child'. A *liability* regime is grounded in laws, written agreements and principles, such as the 'polluter-pays-principle'. An *accountability* regime is characterised by 'good governance', or 'the audit society', and builds on voluntary regulation. Last, a *responsiveness* regime implies taking responsibility by anticipating the needs of others without guidance from previously established principles. Accordingly, these different responsibility regimes have different implications for what a responsible business person needs to know and do.

Maximise profits … and follow laws and regulations (liability)

The Promethean perspective on responsibility, which in its extreme version is hostile to any form of regulation, could be argued to fall outside Pellizzoni's typology of responsibility. In short, this orthodox position implies that environmental problems will be solved in the best way if economic actors, individuals and businesses are left to pursue their material interests and maximise profits. The reasoning behind this perspective is accounted for in Chapter 3. Similarly, Friedman states that the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits, although adds 'while conforming to the basic rules of the society' (Friedman quoted in Schwartz and Saiia 2012, p. 6). This implies that maximising profits needs to be combined with the role of business within a liability regime. The role within the economic rationalism discourse is also to maximise profits, although here this involves adjusting to the price mechanisms designed by government agencies in order to 'correct the price' for the environment. The role of business within a liability regime, and as presupposed within the discourse of administrative rationalism, is to follow the laws and regulations informed by scientific experts working on behalf of government agencies.

Work for sustainability and make a profit (accountability)

The role of a business person in an accountability regime is to adopt and follow up on sustainability principles. Similarly, the role of business within the limits and survival discourse and the techno-corporate ecological modernization, implies adopting and following guidelines set by experts.

The perspectives differ slightly depending on whether there is a conflict between a business making profit and taking responsibility for sustainability. While the limits and survival discourse (initially) assumes a conflict, the sustainable development discourse suggests that there might not be a conflict at all. The techno-corporate ecological modernisation discourse suggests that saving the environment with new technology is profitable. However, in contrast to the Promethean discourse, the perspectives/discourses share the view that sustainability problems require specific actions and are not solved by 'the invisible hand'. In similar vein (as explained in Article II), Porter and Kramer (2011) and Schwartz and Saiia (2012) argue that apart from making profit, a business must have a social purpose or take a broader social responsibility. It should be noted that what Porter and Kramer and Schwartz and Saiia suggest here could also be coherent with a responsiveness regime if 'a social purpose' involves being receptive to the needs of others before deciding what the social purpose is. Likewise, if the adopted guidelines involve standards being developed in a democratic process, 'accountability' will reflect what Pellizzoni describes as 'responsiveness' (see below).

The good master (care)

In Pellizzoni's account the welfare state is used to illustrate a care regime. From a business perspective, the role of a business as a carer in a care regime could be described as providing for the anticipated needs of others, for instance workers. These are needs that a business (leader or owner) assumes, or is assumed, to know, such as 'a good master' providing schooling, housing and medical care for his workers (without previously listening to their needs), or a green radical business person/owner/leader as a spokesperson for animals and/or future generations in a more authoritarian or paternalistic green radical discourse.

Committed to sustainability (responsiveness)

The role of a business (person) within a responsiveness regime involves being sensitive to the needs of stakeholders ('others') and 'socio-ecological systems'. This implies not presuming to know stakeholders' needs in advance but listening, or taking a receptive attitude, to their needs and wishes before deciding what to do. In such an approach, the role of a business is to: a) be committed to and take an active part in a reflexive process as suggested by the reflexive ecological modernisation discourse, b) take part in interactive problem-solving as suggested by the democratic pragmatism discourse, c) cooperate with governments, local and international organisations for the public's interest, as suggested by the sustainable development discourse and d) collaborate with sub-political actors (Beck) and 'quasi-radical' businesses (Palmås) and in so doing combine activism with doing business. What unites these perspectives or discourses is that the reflexive process has no predefined problem definition or predefined principles. Instead, it involves a break with a linear understanding of the policy process, where a problem is defined by experts and the policy process follows after the definition of the problem. The definition of the problem is here integrated in the policy process (see also Hajer 1995).

Taking responsibility for uncertain and complex sustainability issues

This section accounts for and combines Dryzek's and Pellizzoni's arguments about what needs to be considered when addressing uncertain and complex sustainability issues.

As environmental issues are often uncertain and complex, Dryzek (2013, 233–239) argues that institutions and discourses are needed that are capable of learning. Complete confidence in the correctness of interpretations and prescriptions is an impediment to learning, which (as Dryzek argues) permeates the limits and survival-, Promethean-, administrative rationalist- and economic rationalist discourses. Dryzek argues that better possibilities for social learning and addressing current environmental challenges are offered by the discourses of democratic pragmatism, sustainable development, reflexive ecological modernisation and green politics. These possibilities are found in: a) procedures for cooperative problem solving (democratic pragmatism), b) a conceptualisation of 'sustainable development' that facilitates 'experiments' about what sustainability can mean in different contexts (sustainable development), c) reflexivity facilitating an open-ended exploration of what ecological modernisation might mean in itself (reflexive ecological modernisation) and d) ideas and visions about the future (green politics and to some extent green consciousness). These 'possibilities for learning' fit into what Dryzek calls 'ecological democracy', which he advocates as a means of addressing uncertain and complex sustainability issues. His argument is based on the claims that ecological democracy: facilitates or encourages 'listening to the conditions of socio-ecological systems', facilitates consideration of the interests of a community as a whole, inspires people to think about how the interests of others – including those who are not present in the deliberative forum, such as future generations and non-human nature – can contribute to creative solutions, enables interpretations of what a general principle means when applied to a particular case and identifies its own deficiencies and correct them.

Current systems of environmental governance (for example 'administrative rationalism' described in the previous section) rely heavily on science as a source of independent, credible and reliable knowledge. This implies a linear process, where science provides knowledge to legislative assemblies that in turn stipulate laws that businesses (amongst others) are to follow. However, sustainability issues are often uncertain and complex, e.g. the complex environmental and social challenges that accompany global supply chains. Global supply chains involve many steps and actors that makes it difficult, or even impossible, to monitor the impact on humans, animals and the natural environment. Geographical distances, information gaps and global standards that may not suit local contexts or needs contribute to the complexity that implies that there is no one-size-fits-all solution (Boström et al. 2015). Sometimes laws and regulations lag behind due to new products with new chemicals entering the market. When agencies also have to prove that the product is harmful, the system that we believe will protect 'us' from harm is likely to fail (Karlsson, Gilek, and Udovyk 2011). As a consequence, businesses cannot rely on (simply) following the law in order to address environmental and social challenges. For instance, a manager of a horticultural company concerned about the situation of bees and other pollinating insects cannot just rely on selling products that are allowed by law or meet all the regulations. It is argued that we need to regard uncertainty and complexity as permanent, rather than as transitory conditions of scientific knowledge (Pellizzoni 2004, Gross 2007). Thus, sustainability issues cannot just be solved by more research. Instead, businesses need to find ways of coping with uncertainty and complexity.

Pellizzoni argues that liability and accountability regimes are undermined by scientific ignorance, because they are dependent on predefined principles, expressed in law or in the form of voluntary regulation. Therefore, it is suggested that we need to understand responsibility in terms of responsiveness. This does not mean that liability and accountability regimes ought to be discarded, because the regimes are effective under specific circumstances. Rather, it means that taking responsibility in terms of being responsive is an important prerequisite in order to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues (see Article III for a further elaboration of the typology of responsibility and the advantages and disadvantages of the different responsibility regimes).

Responsiveness is here understood as anticipation, being sensitive to the situation and a readiness to rethink the problem and act without the guidance of previously established principles. Responsiveness implies that you do not know in advance what the needs and wishes of others are. It means not sticking rigidly to plans, but being receptive to the needs of others and taking these into account before making a decision (Pellizzoni 2004). In the absence of principles, dialogue and personal feelings are necessary 'tools' when listening to others' needs or the condition of socio-ecological systems in order to decide what to do. In similar vein, Hans Jonas, the author of *The Imperative of Responsibility – In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age* (1984)[9], proposes a conceptualisation of responsibility that implies not only *being* but also *feeling* responsible (90–93). In this regard, taking responsibility in terms of being *responsive* is similar to taking *moral responsibility* (see also Article I).

Taking Dryzek's and Pellizzoni's perspectives and arguments as starting points, what needs to be considered in order for students, as future business people, to be able to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues? As accounted for in this section, such issues provide a particular challenge for responsibility regimes depending on science as a source of credible knowledge. This is because credible knowledge is vital in the stipulation of laws, regulations (liability regimes) or voluntary regulations (accountability regimes).

[9] Against the background of the threat of nuclear war, genetic engineering and ecological ravage, caused by modern technology, Jonas coined the principle 'Act so that the effects of your actions are compatible with the permanence of genuine human life'. The original German text was published in 1979 in the midst of the Cold War in Europe. The publishing year for the English translation in 1984 coincided with the World Commission on Environment and Development's work on the report 'Our Common Future'(Brundtland 1987). It is therefore reasonable to assume that the work of Hans Jonas had an important influence on the later conceptualisation of responsibility for 'sustainable development' and the pre-cautionary principle.

In uncertain and complex situations, Dryzek argues that institutions and discourses are needed that are capable of learning, i.e. *reflexivity*, while Pellizzoni argues for an understanding of responsibility in terms of *responsiveness*. This implies that a responsible business person cannot *only* rely on laws and regulations or on adopting predefined principles or guidelines. Responsiveness or reflexivity requires listening and having a receptive attitude to others' needs or the condition of socio-ecological systems in order to decide what to do. This kind of judgement requires the involvement of reason, personal feelings and empathy, as there are no pre-defined principles or goals to follow. It also requires being ready to re-think presuppositions and convictions about how problems should be solved. In the next chapter I will elaborate how these expectations or qualities regarding a responsible business person can be understood from a pedagogic perspective.

CHAPTER 5

Perspectives on education

This chapter discusses how the expectations or qualities of a responsible business person can be understood from a pedagogic perspective. The chapter also accounts for previous research on 'environment and sustainability education' and 'sustainable development in the business curriculum', examines the different perspectives on the purpose of education and discusses 'de-subjectification', 'subjectivity' and 'responsiveness' in relation to teaching, elaborates on the relationship between the concepts of subjectivity, affect, feelings, emotions, identity, subjectification and de-subjectification, outlines the role of the educational researcher adopted in this thesis and describes the knowledge gap that this thesis aims to bridge.

Environmental and sustainability education research

The implications for education in general when considering that sustainability issues often are uncertain and complex has been addressed by Scott and Gough, who distinguish three theories to sustainable development, learning and change. The theories are based on different problem definitions and have implications for what students ought to learn in order to contribute to a more sustainable future. Based on these approaches Vare and Scott suggests that it would be helpful to think of two interrelated and complementary approaches to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) which they term ESD 1 and ESD 2. The approaches (see Table 2) are suggested to be understood in terms of 'yes-and' rather than 'either-or'. They argue that ESD 2 makes ESD 1 meaningful, because our long-term future will depend less on our compliance in being trained to do the 'right' thing now, and more on our capability to analyse, to question alternatives and negotiate our decisions. In this thesis ESD 2 is of specific interest as it specifically involves reflective social learning necessary for the development of students' abilities to make decisions when facing complexity and uncertainty. Accordingly, what Scott and Gough describes as a Type 3-approach to sustainable development, learning and change, and what Vare and Scott refers to as ESD 2 is here similar to Dryzek and Pellizzoni's reasoning and suggestions with regard to the suggested qualities and expectations of a responsible business person.

Table. 2. Two sides of Education for Sustainable Development (Gough and Scott 2003, Vare and Scott 2007)

ESD1		**ESD2**
Type One theories	**Type Two theories**	**Type Three theories**
The problems humanity faces are essentially environmental, and can be understood through science and resolved by appropriate environmental and/or social actions and technologies.	Our fundamental problems are social and/or political, and these problems produce environmental symptoms.	The problem concerns finding appropriate ways forward in a context of social and environmental co-evolution. What is, and can be, known in the present is not adequate. Desired 'end-states' cannot be specified.
ESD ought to promoting informed and skilled behaviour and ways of thinking, where the need for this is clearly identified and agreed. Learning is a tool that facilitates choice between alternative futures, which can be specified on the basis of what is known in the present.		ESD ought to build capacity to think critically about, and beyond, what experts say and to test sustainable development ideas. Focus on social, reflexive and open-ended learning.

Similar to the ESD-approaches portrayed in Table 2 above, are the selective traditions (fact-based, normative and pluralist) of environment and sustainability education that have been identified based on studies of policy documents and educational practice in Sweden (Östman 1995, Öhman and Östman 2001, Sandell et al. 2005, Öhman 2008). Open-ended approaches to education as proposed by Scott, Gough and Vare above has been suggested by Öhman (2008) and investigated empirically by Rudsberg and Öhman (2010), suggesting that pluralist approaches promotes students' critical thinking and action competence and is a way of avoiding indoctrination as it involves highlighting different values and perspectives. Pluralist approaches to sustainability education has strong support from teachers and researchers within the field of environment and sustainability education in Sweden. On the other hand, there is a concern that pluralist approaches to sustainability education might lead to a troublesome relativism (Wals 2010), not being enough (Lotz-Sisitka 2010), and a turn away from the 'environment' (Kopnina 2012). In sum, it can be described as a tension between on the one hand educational objectives relating to emancipation, critical thinking and the encouragement of thinking anew about what a sustainable development is, and on the other hand a sense of urgency that requires a more instrumentalist approach to sustainability education.

Sustainable development in the business curriculum

The interest in sustainability in business education increased significantly in the aftermath of the financial crisis in 2008, which was preceded by the Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change (2006) and Al Gore's film 'An Inconvenient Truth' (2006). This interest is reflected in the increasing number of papers advocating the incorporation of sustainability in the business curriculum in higher education (Cullen 2015). The concept sustainable development, as used for instance in UNESCO policy, foregrounds that education should equip students to work towards a more sustainable future (UNESCO 2006, 2014), although it has also been criticised for having lost this potential. For instance, as Huckle and Wals describe in a review of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development that it is 'business as usual in the end' (2015), an expression that is used in this thesis in its literal and metaphorical sense. The concept has been described as a wolf in sheep's clothing in that it enforces a corporate agenda and fails to change what is needed to address the current situation of rapid environmental degradation and increasing social injustice (Fergus and Rowney 2005, Blühdorn 2007, Huckle and Wals 2015). In relation to the business curriculum, education for sustainable development has been argued as providing a particular challenge. This challenge partly relates to the ambiguity of the role of a business person in sustainability matters and partly to the assumption of 'homo economicus' (see also Chapters 3 and 4). It is argued that the assumption that all the actors in an economy are driven by self-interest has a productive function, for instance when the assumption comes into play in business education. In other words, it is argued that education in economics create individuals that act selfishly, and that this works against 'sustainability' (Springett 2005, Hühn 2014). A number of experimental studies have been carried out to verify or not whether economics education, or business education, makes students behave more selfishly, or whether selfish behaviour is a selection effect[10]. However, the intention in this thesis is not to prove nor disprove such selfish behaviour, but to look at how the various discourses or logics facilitate different roles. As described in the next chapter, this involves analysing assumptions as they are articulated in educational *practice* and identifying the possible implications for a responsible business person. Even if critique is not directed at business education (micro-level) specifically, but to mainstream economics (macro-level), it is important to pay attention to how assumptions of mainstream economics might come into play in other school subjects and what the consequences of this might be. Furthermore, from the perspective of students' integrity, learning to be 'a-political' or 'de-subjectified' could be regarded as a pedagogic problem, regardless of whether it makes students more selfish or not. How the results of the empirical studies are discussed with regard to *educational* qualities is addressed in the next section.

Purposes of education

The 'de-subjectification' of business students that results from learning to become 'a-political' business people implies that students must learn to put their personal feelings aside. This can be seen as a pedagogic problem if retained sensitivity is regarded as an educational quality in itself (Dewey 1938/1997, 25). In order to discuss the results from the perspective of educational qualities, I draw on Gert Biesta's and Carl Anders Säfström's writings about the purposes and functions of education.

Biesta (2009, 2014) suggests a distinction between three different functions of education: a qualification function, a socialisation function and a subjectification function. The *qualification function* involves knowledge that facilitates the performance of certain duties, such as accounting. The *socialisation function* is where the student learns certain values and norms

[10] A review of these studies (Etzioni 2015) suggests that there is evidence for both a selection effect and an indoctrination effect with regard to 'debased moral behaviour and attitudes'.

in order to participate in a certain context. The *subjectification function* involves becoming a subject with a certain degree of independence in relation to the socialisation function. Without discarding the value of the qualification and socialisation function of education, Biesta argues that a subjectification function is necessary if an activity is to be called 'education'. The different functions of education can exist simultaneously, support each other but also be in conflict. Learning to calculate financial indicators (qualification) and using them when making business decisions could for example clash with personal convictions of justice (subjectification). On the other hand, knowing how to calculate and use financial indicators could facilitate business decisions that align with personal convictions. However, Biesta argues that the predominant perspective on education, namely a strong focus on measurement and the effective achievement of pre-specified learning outcomes, risks side-lining the subjectification function and that this needs to be considered.

Similarly, Säfström (2005, 13, 25–26) distinguishes between 'socialisation' and 'education'. According to him, socialisation rather than education takes place when education is about adherence to certain rules, rather than the development of responsible relations. Säfström argues that the main difference between socialisation and education is whether there is scope to be a moral subject. In a socialisation process, the capacity for being moral is placed outside the individual and what is moral is solely the will of society (for a further development of this reasoning see Article I). Inspired by Biesta and Säfström, I understand subjectification as an important quality of education that involves addressing and acknowledging students as moral subjects with a degree of independence. This also resonates with how I understand 'taking moral responsibility' as described in the previous chapter.

The results of the discourse analysis and the roles of a business person that are articulated in business education are therefore discussed in relation to how and in which situations there is a risk of de-subjectification[11] and when and how there is scope for students' subjectivities, i.e. whether students as potential future business people are addressed as moral subjects. My understanding of subjectification, de-subjectification and subjectivity is developed later in the chapter.

[11] What Palmås calls de-subjectification (Chapter 3) and what I, in my reading of Dewey, Biesta and Säfström, regard as a pedagogical problem.

The teacher and subjectification

In this section, the role of a teacher in relation to subjectification is scrutinised. In 'Mind the Gap – Communication and the Educational Relation' (2004), Biesta writes that effective teaching could on the one hand be described as minimising or closing the gap between the knowledge of the teacher and the knowledge of the student. This is described as the predominant perspective on education or teaching expressed by policymakers, politicians and organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation (OECD) and the World Bank. It is manifested in the effective achievement of pre-specified learning outcomes and evidence-based education (Biesta 2010, 2014). On the other hand, the 'gap' between teachers' and students' knowledge can be regarded both as unpredictable and as an opportunity for individuals to be seen and heard. When foregrounding the subjectification function of education it is thus necessary to protect the gap from closure. If we understand 'successful teaching' as the transmission of undistorted information, for instance about how to do business sustainably, the gap, and thereby any scope for subjectivity, is closed. Thus, in order to approach this conundrum we need to understand the role of the teacher as something different from 'closing the knowledge gap'. Subjectivity can happen as a result of teaching, but can never be an expected outcome, or as Hasslöf expresses it, a teacher can make *room* for subjectivity but not expect is as an outcome (Hasslöf and Malmberg 2014).

A dislocatory moment as a scope for subjectivity

In order to explore room for subjectivity further, I turn to Howarth (2013) and Laclau (1990). Laclau regards dislocatory moments as both traumatic and liberating (Laclau 1990, 44). When it is not clear how to 'go on', a void occurs because the previous guiding principle has been 'taken away'. It is precisely here, in the dislocatory moment, that *subjectivity* is *facilitated,* because in order to 'go on' or move away from the traumatic dislocatory experience, the subject *has* to make a decision, for which subjectivity is necessary. Staying in this 'void' is not possible. In the absence of 'rules' or 'a guiding principle', the subject has to involve affect (including both reason and feelings) and 'identity' in order to make 'her or his own' decision. Affect is necessary in the process of identifying or investing in a new discourse (or logic) that can offer a new guiding principle. In this process of identification, identity changes with the change of discourse.[12] Accordingly, in my reading of Howarth (2013) and Laclau (1990, 30), subjectivity, linked to identity, lies between the 'undecidable' or 'failed' structure and the moment of decision.

When business students make business decisions that are intended to lead to a more sustainable development, they turn to the rules or principles that they are familiar with or have experience of, for instance through previous education. This could be 'that trade always leads to socially optimal outcomes', which implies learning how to make business decisions and developing the capacity to *act* within a social structure. Alternatively, in the absence of a guiding principle, or when the guiding principle has been disrupted (to which a teacher could contribute), students have to use subjectivity (involving reason and feelings, i.e. affect) in order to make or suggest a decision. Howarth refers to this as human agency (Howarth 2013, 155, 158). In this sense, subjectivity, understood as human agency, means something more than the capacity to act. While a person can act *within* a social structure, human agency requires a personal experience of a dislocated social structure. Such an experience can (at first) be traumatic and frustrating, because the previous understanding of how things are and the expectation of what should be done have been 'taken away'. A teacher could create the conditions for such experiences in order to 'make room for subjectivity'. Accordingly, when drawing on Laclau's conceptualisation of subjectivity, dislocatory moments could be important from an educational perspective in that they make room for subjectivity.

Subjectivity, affect, feelings, emotions, subjectification and de-subjectification

Against this background, I understand *subjectivity* as a state in which a person is dependent on affect in order to make a decision. Affect refers to the body and mind and includes reason and feelings (Howarth 2013, 164). Subjectivity can therefore also be described as having scope to involve feelings (as well as reason) when making decisions. Shouse describes feelings as sensations 'that have been checked against previous experiences

[12] This is discussed in the next chapter when describing the discourse analytical approach applied in the thesis.

and labelled' and are linked to identity through our previous experiences. Feelings can be stable and long-lasting. They can also be described as internalised emotions, and in this sense emotions serve as a kind of 'feelings factory[13]'. An emotion is a display or projection of a feeling that is physical, temporary and connected to specific events (Shouse 2005). When we act in accordance with our personal convictions, our actions are in line with our feelings that hold our identities together – what is often referred to as the inner compass.

Subjectivity comes into play when reason and feelings are involved in making a decision. Thus, in my reading of Laclau, Howarth and Pellizoni, 'using subjectivity' is similar to 'acting responsively', in the sense that it involves making a decision in the absence of pre-defined principles by involving feelings and reason and being sensitive to 'the situation'. It could therefore be argued that the subjectification function of education is important in relation to the qualities of responsiveness and reflexivity in a business person. *Subjectification* is thus understood as a process that facilitates subjectivity and what Palmås (2011) calls *de-subjectification,* as a process that prevents subjectivity.

The educational researcher

A teacher's work involves making decisions about how to organise and facilitate students' activities (Hudson and Meyer 2011, 20). In this process a teacher has to consider the purpose of the educational activity, the conditions that prevail, the context, the students, the size of the classroom, access to resources etc. An educational researcher cannot make such decisions because they are dependent on specific contexts. Therefore a researcher cannot tell a teacher what to do and which functions of education to foreground in a specific situation. Inspired by a poststructuralist approach to educational research (Cherryholmes 1988), the role of educational researcher that is adopted in this thesis is intended to contribute knowledge about the different decisions a teacher can make and to discuss the possible consequences of such decisions. Thus, the aim is to contribute

[13] The metaphor 'feelings factory' is taken from http://johnvoris.com/featured-articles/difference-between-emotions-and-feelings/ (accessed 2015-12-07)

to teachers' critical reflections and to those of others involved in designing lessons, educational materials, tests or formulating learning outcomes.

The knowledge gap

A lot of research on sustainability in business studies in higher education advocates the concept or proposes new teaching approaches, although very few empirical studies of these aspects have been conducted (Cullen 2015). Some of the studies that have been conducted include explorations of economics students' conceptions of child labour (Lundholm 2008), socio-economic phenomena (Davies and Lundholm 2012), negative environmental impact and pricing (Ignell, Davies, and Lundholm 2013) and a demonstration of how business students changed their use of metaphors as a result of an intervention course (Kopnina 2015). However, as far as I am aware, empirical studies of discourses coming into play in business education (as privileged in textbooks, articulated by teachers or taken up by students) have not previously been conducted.[14]

In the broader field of environment and sustainability education empirical studies (based on textbooks and classroom observations) of meaning making in educational discourses have been conducted (Öhman and Öhman 2013, Rudsberg, Öhman, and Östman 2013, Rudsberg and Öhman 2014, Öhman and Öhman 2012, Östman 2010, Caiman and Lundegård 2013, Klaar and Öhman 2014, Lundegård and Wickman 2011), and the social construction of gender roles in the school context has been addressed for instance by Martinsson and Reimers (2008). These studies have inspired the methodological approach used in this thesis to capture underpinning assumptions such as homo economicus and the apprehensions of the world that come into play in educational practice. It thereby facilitates an analysis of the roles of a responsible business person that are articulated in business education for sustainability. The methodological approach is described in greater depth in the next chapter.

[14] Based on searches using different combinations of the keywords 'discourse analysis', 'textbook analysis, 'business', 'business education', 'teaching', 'sustainab* OR environment', 'interviews', 'classroom', in the ERIC database in September 2015.

CHAPTER 6

Methodological approach

This chapter describes the processes of selecting and collecting the empirical material, the ethical decisions taken to protect the participants themselves and their identities and the approaches to discourse analysis used in the different studies. The aim in the thesis has been to *maximise variation* and facilitate *detailed descriptions* of the kind of situations in which certain perspectives or discourses are reproduced or challenged in educational practices.

Empirical material and context

The empirical material was collected from 2009–2014 in upper secondary schools in Sweden. As a former teacher I had previous experience of the context of the study and was well acquainted with school policies and steering documents from a teacher's perspective. A reform of upper secondary education was implemented 2011, which meant that two different sets of curricula and syllabuses were in place when the empirical material was collected. This affected the selection of school subjects in the studies. The subject that was found most likely to contain environmental and social issues in a business context before 2011 was international economics. This is why the first study of textbooks focused on this particular subject. The curriculum reform of 2011 involved incorporating the concept of sustainable development into the Business Management and Economics Programme, for instance as expressed in the quote below relating to the diploma goals:

> Economic relationships in the world are complex and changes taking place in one area can often have consequences in completely different areas. The education should thus develop students' knowledge of economic conditions in society,

> about the conditions countries face for trade, and about the foundations for international groupings and agreements. It should also provide knowledge about the conditions for sustainable development, not only from environmental but also economic and social viewpoints. (Swedish National Agency for Education 2012, 197)

The concept is also included in the business economics syllabus:

> Teaching in the subject of business economics should aim at helping students develop their understanding of the role and conditions of business in society from local to global levels. This includes companies' responsibility for sustainable development…. Teaching in the subject of business economics should give students the opportunities to develop … ability to reflect on the responsibility of business for sustainable development and on democratic values, ethics and gender when financial decisions are made. (National Agency of Education 2011)

The studies based on interviews with teachers and classroom observations undertaken as part of the thesis project focus on business economics. As there is no governmental or other control of textbooks, and the only guidance that teachers receive is via the steering documents indicated above, it means that teachers are free to interpret the syllabus and design lesson activities in their own ways.

As already mentioned, inclusion of the concept of sustainable development in school curricula (globally) has been controversial. Criticism of the concept has been especially strong in countries like Canada and Australia. However, very little criticism has been heard in Sweden, perhaps because the Swedish word for development, 'utveckling', is not always associated with economic growth as might be the case in English, and can be linked to social well-being (Læssøe and Öhman 2010). It is therefore less likely that teachers in Sweden will see the inclusion of sustainable development as controversial.

As a way of approaching the research problem, I decided to analyse the role of a business person as it was presented in the textbooks used at upper secondary level (Article I). In order to acquire information about how the textbooks were used (if they were used at all) and how environmental and social issues were approached in classroom practice, I interviewed teachers and made classroom observations. The introduction of the new curriculum (2011) offered an opportunity to explore how teachers and students approached sustainable development in the classroom. The interviews with the teachers confirmed the relevance of including empirical material in the form of classroom observations, because it became apparent that teachers rarely used textbooks when teaching 'business education for sustainability'. The combination of different methods facilitated the 'taking of samples' in different parts, as indicated in the didactic triangle (see Figure 1, p. 19), and a more in-depth understanding of educational practice.

The textbooks were scrutinised in order to determine the amount of reference to or coverage of environmental and social issues. All the textbooks dealing with environmental and social issues that had more than one edition were included in the analysis. The inclusion of different editions also facilitated comparisons between the first and last editions and how they varied over time. In order to maximise variation when making contact with and selecting teachers for the interview study (Article II), aspects that did not require questions to be asked in advance were considered, such as the socio-economic conditions in the different locations, who the different heads of organisation were and what kind of gender mix there was. At the end of the interviews the teachers were asked whether they would be willing to take part in an observation study. The results of the interview study were also used to maximise variation in the different teaching approaches with regard to methods, content and perspectives on business responsibilities. The selection of the specific case presented in Article IV was made from this larger body of empirical material and was one of few cases in which dislocatory moments could be identified. The selected case facilitated a *detailed description* of a classroom situation when a logic[15], providing a guiding principle for what a responsible business person ought to do, was challenged or disrupted.

In the interviews and classroom observations the aim was to collect empirical material in a way that made it possible to show how the teachers reasoned and to document the classroom dialogues. All the interviews and lessons were therefore audio- and/or video recorded and transcribed in detail (see Table 2). I was a passive observer (Yin 2009) in the lessons and made field notes. The lessons were recorded using a hand-held video camera and a wireless microphone attached to the teacher, with a separate audio-recording as backup. In the classrooms I chose to sit in places that would cause as little disturbance as possible. When recording larger classes a small action camera was used on the whiteboard so that everyone in the

[15] A further elaboration of the concept of a 'logic' is provided in the final section of this chapter.

classroom could be seen. This helped in the transcriptions of the classroom dialogues. The rationale for using video-recordings was primarily to facilitate the documentation of the classroom dialogue, which would have been difficult with audio-recording alone. The interviews were recorded using a dictaphone. In addition, I made field notes as a backup in case of technical failure and also because it made it easier to identify who was speaking. The transcribed video- and audio recordings constituted the main empirical material. The written instructions and educational materials that were used in the lessons, the students' written assignments and the group interviews contributed to my overall understanding. The empirical material was transcribed in a way that made it readable and comprehensible but did not change the meaning. Emphases, for example in the interviews and classroom dialogues, were italicised.

Table. 3. Empirical material

Type	**Date**	**Volume**
Textbooks on International Economics for use in upper secondary schools in Sweden	Published 1994–2008	6 textbooks
Interviews	2012–2013	8 teachers (55 minutes on average), 112 pages/59,300 words transcribed in total.
Video/audio recordings of classroom practices	2013–2014	5 teachers, 20 lessons (77 minutes on average), 134 pages/52,000 words transcribed in total.
Field notes, educational materials, teachers' written instructions, students' written assignments and group interviews.	2013–2014	–

Ethical considerations

When it comes to human participation in research, a basic ethical requirement is that the people involved have expressed a willingness to take part, have consented to do so (informed consent) and that the information and empirical material retrieved will be confidential (Swedish Research Council

2002, 2011). In this section the ethical considerations for managing any potential negative consequences for the individuals involved are described. It is important to underline that ethical aspects were considered when *informing* the teachers and students about the research project, when *collecting* the empirical material and when *presenting* the results.

Telling participants about the research objectives can be problematic. While the information needs to be correct and formulated in a way that is understandable, it can be interpreted differently by different participants, depending on their previous experience or apprehensions of what research might involve. It is also difficult to know in advance what kind of analyses will be relevant or necessary. Too much information could, unintentionally, affect the quality of the results. As I wanted to capture 'ordinary' education in the sense of involving lesson activities that the teachers normally used when teaching 'sustainable development', I was cautious about giving information that would in any way change this. With these considerations in mind, the teachers were told that the focus of the interview study was on teachers' interpretations of how environmental or issues relating to sustainable development could or should be dealt with in economy-related subjects'. The teachers and students taking part in the observation study were told that the research was about 'sustainable development in business education'.

All the students were informed, both orally and in writing, that participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any point. Consent from parents was not necessary, according to Swedish practice, because all the students were over 15 years of age (Swedish Research Council 2011), although the information letter was also addressed to parents but not sent to them personally. They were further informed that the recorded material would be stored in a secure place and that anything that might identify the schools, teachers or students would not be revealed in the presentation of the results. The recordings and the transcripts are stored on external hard drives in a secure setting. The students' written assignments are also included in the empirical material. In order for them to know more specifically what they were consenting to, they were asked for separate approval when their written assignments were being finalised.

Out of the 82 students in the study, 6 did not want to be recorded on video. Their wishes were respected by not pointing the camera at them. If they were accidently captured on camera their faces and voices were either blurred out or removed. During these lessons I made a special effort to describe the lesson and the discussion in the field notes. Even if students agree to take part in research there always is a risk that they will feel obliged to participate, perhaps due to group pressure or not wanting to disappoint the teacher. Factors like these also need to be taken into account. Considering the criticism from students and teachers in the field, which is accounted for in the introduction, it could be argued that the research is in the interests of teachers and students and that the value of the acquired knowledge should be balanced against any potential negative consequences for the participants. In such cases, not doing the research could be considered unethical (Harcourt and Quennerstedt 2014). With these considerations in mind, it was important to ensure that nobody felt uneasy about the situation. As a result, on some occasions, for instance when students were given individual feedback, I moved away and did not record the situation at all. When presenting the results, any information that could identify the students, teachers or the schools has either been excluded or changed.

In order to assess the quality of the results, the teachers were asked whether my presence in the classroom seemed to affect the students' behaviour. Based on these consultations, and my own personal experiences of teaching at upper secondary level, my assessment is that my presence did not appear to affect the students' behaviour in the classroom in a way that influenced the results of the studies. More specifically, the aim was to capture 'the role of a responsible business person' as articulated in ordinary lessons (with no researcher present) and, as far as I can ascertain, my presence did not adversely affect this.

Application of discourse analysis

As already described, a discourse is here understood as a 'shared way of apprehending the world' and that different discourses have implications for the kind of solutions to problems that seem intelligible. A discourse analytical approach enables the underpinning assumptions (for example that all actors are motivated by self-interest), presuppositions, rules and so on that are articulated in a practice to be captured. This also includes the rules and assumptions relating to the role of a business person. Discourse analysis thereby facilitates an exploration of the roles of a responsible business person that are privileged in texts, articulated by teachers in classroom practice or taken up by students. The results of this analysis can then be further analysed or discussed by using other theories or perspectives. The environmental and educational perspectives that are used to analyse the results of the discourse analysis are described in Chapters 4 and 5.

In short, all the four studies explore the role of a responsible business person as articulated in business education for sustainability. The different types of empirical material have required different analytical approaches, although the theoretical starting point is the same. The analytical approaches that are accounted for in this section include descriptions of the following analytical concepts: floating signifiers, subject position, articulation, meaning, logic, dislocatory moment and retroduction.

As indicated elsewhere, 'sustainable development' can be interpreted in different ways and mean different things. It can thus be described as a 'floating signifier' (Laclau and Mouffe 1985/2001, Glynos and Howarth 2007, 134, Howarth 2013, 193, see also Bengtsson and Östman 2013). Understanding the concept as a floating signifier has facilitated an openness to and exploration of the different or new meanings that have appeared in educational practice.

In a poststructuralist discourse theoretical approach, the role of business is understood as a social construction. In order to include the new roles of a business person articulated in the empirical material, which was necessary for the purpose of this thesis, I had to divert from an essentialist understanding of the role of a business. Thinking about the role of a business person as a *subject position* - a *position* that a *subject* has in certain situations – has therefore been useful. A subject position carries expectations about how to behave or not to behave in certain situations in order to be regarded as a man, woman, or as in this study, a business person. A person can hold many different subject positions or combinations of subject positions, such as a teacher, consumer or friend, which together constitute identities. The connection between the subject positions and a person's identity means that roles cannot be easily stepped in and out of. This resonates with the utterances of Nelson and Zaman, quoted in the introduction, about the uneasiness of learning to think and act as an economist in relation to one's identity. The concept subject position has helped me to understand and talk about the role of a business person as changeable, or contingent, because the expectations of a subject position can change as a result of how it is *articulated* (Glynos and Howarth 2007, 177–180) in certain practices. More specifically, by using the concept subject position I have been able to explore (parts of) the social construction of the role of a business person in a specific context by looking at what a business person is expected to do as it is articulated in educational practice. Discourses, for instance environmental discourses, are embedded in language and linked to articulatory practices. Articulation involves putting words and expressions together and thereby linking meanings to words (which do not mean anything in themselves) in social practices. An articulation could be described as the linking of elements together or as the 'act' that establishes a relation between elements (Laclau and Mouffe 1985/2001, 105). In other words, articulations contribute to social constructions.

In Article I, the role of a business person is explored by analysing the relations between business and sustainability issues that are depicted in textbooks. In this way, different meanings about the role of a responsible business are identified. The meanings could be described as 'companion meanings' (Östman 2010), since they are not expressed explicitly but accompany a knowledge content. For example, if the main message is that 'there are severe risks associated with e-waste', the companion meanings could be the different actors that are implicitly ascribed responsibility by being depicted as agents or moral subjects.

In Articles II–IV, a *logics* approach to discourse analysis developed by Glynos and Howarth (2008) is used to analyse the role of a business person. The concept of logics captures the rules, conditions, presuppositions or assumptions that make a practice possible, intelligible and vulnerable. For instance, a lesson design that involves critically analysing historical narratives is intelligible if the objective relates to critical thinking, but make less sense if the overall objective of education is to promote patriotism and love of one's country. Thus, a lesson design that made perfect sense in Sweden in the early 1900's would not be as intelligible today due to their different perspectives on the purpose of education.

Logics position subjects, which implies that a specific way of articulating the subject position of a business person is inherent in a logic. A logic positions a subject within a social structure, which means that it 'tells' subjects how to act in different situations and other people how to respond to these actions. In order to identify the role or position of a business person as articulated in educational practice, I analysed the logics of doing business (sustainably)[16]. The analysis made it possible to capture what is expected of a business person. This also included how a business person is

[16] In similar vein, Hajer (1995) talks about 'storylines' as playing a key role in positioning subjects when the emergence of new storylines re-orders understandings and political change takes place.

expected to deal with personal feelings about sustainability issues when making business decisions and what the scope for subjectivity is.

In Article II, *assumptions* relating to the business ethical responsibilities and *presupposed* purposes of education that are embedded in teachers' reasoning of their practices, including expected learning outcomes, are analysed in order to identify the logics of business education for sustainability.

In Article III, 'the *rules* and *conditions* of doing business sustainably', as depicted by the teachers in classroom practice, are analysed in order to identify the logics of doing business sustainably.

In Article IV, students' *ways of talking* about what they should do when running a business sustainably are analysed in order to capture the (fantasmatic) logics that are *taken up* by students before, during and after a dislocatory moment. Logics provide guidance for the decisions we make. In a dislocatory moment, the logic that guides an action is taken away, which creates a 'void' in which subjectivity is both facilitated and necessary. Subjectivity, understood as human agency, is thus necessary in order to identify with or invest in a new logic that can provide guidance. Thus, when experiencing a dislocatory moment, a logic has the function of closing or pushing the dislocation away.

As logics provide guiding principles they structure our being in the world, which Glynos and Howarth (2007) refer to as the *fantasmatic* dimension of a logic. In other words, logics 'teach' us what is desirable and a change in logic implies a change in what is perceived as desirable. Accordingly, when the logic of doing business sustainably is changed, it also implies a change in the role of a business person in relation to sustainability. In order to illustrate how and in what kind of situations the role of a business person can change, I analyse the emergence and closure of a dislocatory moment. In Chapter 5 a moment of dislocation is described as 'scope for subjectivity', which means that by analysing the emergence and closure of a dislocatory moment in classroom practice, it is also possible to identify a specific group of students' scope for, and involvement of, subjectivity.

Apart from their fantasmatic dimension, logics can also be perceived as social or political, depending on the historical and cultural context in which they occur. If they challenge sedimented norms concerning the role of a business person they are political and if they reproduce existing norms they are social (Gunnarsson Payne 2006, 31, Glynos and Howarth 2007).

The procedure leading up to the identification of the roles of a business person can be described as a *retroductive process,* in the sense of moving from the empirical material to the literature about business and sustainability and back to the empirical material (Glynos and Howarth 2007). The analytical procedure has involved analysing the empirical material without any previous categorisations of the role of business. When analysing the empirical material in Articles I–III, the first steps involved mapping all the relations between business, environment and society as depicted in the textbooks (Article I), abstracting expected learning outcomes from teachers' descriptions of their own practices (Article II), identifying and describing the teachers' actions when talking about doing business sustainably (Article III). In Article IV, I first identified a dislocatory moment in a larger body of empirical material from classroom observations, which then was analysed in detail. For the sake of transparency, all the articles include step by step descriptions of the analytical procedures. Literature relating to business (Chapter 3), sustainability (Chapter 4) and education (Chapter 5) has been used in order to understand and discuss the results of the analysis but has not been used in the process of identifying the roles of a business person as articulated in the empirical material.

CHAPTER 7

Results, discussion and contribution

This chapter presents the results reported in Articles I–IV. What the results mean in terms of future research and educational practice is also discussed and elaborated on. The results relating to how business students can become equipped to address environmental and social challenges are presented first. The roles of a responsible business person, as articulated in Articles I–IV are also presented (RQ1). This is followed by a synthesis of the roles identified in the empirical material. These roles are then compared with the suggested roles of a business person in the environmental discourses and responsibility regimes presented in Chapter 4. Drawing on Dryzek's and Pellizzoni's arguments, the identified roles are discussed in the light of how students can become equipped to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues, depending on which role is articulated in educational practice (RQ4). These findings are discussed in terms of their implications for teachers and others involved in the design of lessons, educational materials and curricula. The articles (I–IV) include illustrative examples of how and in which situations specific roles are privileged, articulated or taken up (RQ2). How these illustrations can be used for critical reflection is also addressed.

Secondly, the results relating to the scope for business students' emotions and personal feelings about sustainability issues are presented. Here, the implications of the three categories of roles with regard to how a business person should or could deal with personal feelings relating to sustainability issues when making business decisions are clarified (RQ5). This is followed by a discussion about how and in which situations there is scope for business students' subjectivities or a risk for de-subjectification (RQ6).

Finally, the results of the case study (Article IV) illustrating how and in which situations the role of a business person, as taken up by students in a classroom, can change are presented (RQ3). As the case illustrates how subjectivity is involved when students identify with new roles, the scope for subjectivity in classroom practice is also discussed (RQ6).

The role of a responsible business person in business education

The four studies contribute knowledge about the role of a responsible business person as privileged in textbooks, as articulated in teachers' expected learning outcomes, as coming into play by teachers' actions and as taken up by students in classroom practice.

… as privileged in textbooks

In the study presented in Article I, *A Business to change the world – moral responsibility in textbooks for International Economics*, four different meanings of the role of a business person are identified as: a) following legal and/or consumer demands, b) making demands (within limits) on subcontractors, c) making demands on subcontractors and d) using a business to make changes towards sustainable development. The meanings were identified by analysing how businesses were depicted in relation to the environment and society. The four meanings could be described as 'companion meanings', i.e. meanings that accompany the knowledge content and reflect the discourses that are available in a wider social context.

The first role, 'following legal and/or consumer demands', implies that a business can *only* take responsibility for the environment if laws are in place that protect the environment and/or consumers demand environmentally friendly products, which excludes the possibility for a business (person) to act proactively and take moral responsibility, i.e. be a moral subject. The rationale for using the word 'only' is that there are no depictions of businesses taking actions for the environment or society without being described as a response to external demands. Businesses as agents only feature as 'bad guys' dumping environmentally hazardous waste in less developed countries and moving environmentally hazardous production to countries with weak legislation. Thus, although in the textbooks there is a strong general message that we must take care of the environment, initiatives for this caring are depicted as external to the business and as coming from consumers or authorities.

The second and third role, 'making demands on subcontractors', is divided into two because a slight rephrasing is identified between the first and last editions of the textbooks. The change in the text concerns how far a business can go when making demands. This implies that the role of a business person is to 'make demands on a subcontractor up to a certain point but not beyond that. Formulating and making demands could be seen as acts that facilitate a *scope* for taking moral responsibility, although this is not a requirement. A business could also make demands by adopting a guideline that has been formulated by someone else as a way of responding to consumers' demands.

The fourth role implies using a business as a tool for changing the world so that it is more sustainable. Here, people running businesses are described as drivers or forces for change, which can also include deciding not to stock or sell environmentally hazardous products. This also implies there are purposes for running a business other than making a profit.

… as articulated in teachers' expected learning outcomes

In the study presented in Article II, *Logics of business education for sustainability*, three logics positioning the role of a responsible business person in different ways are identified: a) the logic of profit-oriented business education, b) the logic of social-oriented business education and c) the logic of radical-oriented business education. The logics are identified in the teachers' narratives about their own practices and capture the role of a business person as articulated in teachers' expected learning outcomes. Thus, Article II explicitly captures the role of a business person that the teachers consider the students ought to learn. The logics position the business person as someone who should: a) *adapt to* ethical values as expressed by consumers' demands and laws and regulations while maximising profit (logic of profit-oriented business education), b) *add* ethical values and go beyond what the law requires for instance by adding a purpose to promote sustainability (logic of social-oriented business education), or c) *create* ethical values emanating from her or his own ideas, values and convictions about sustainability when doing business (logic of radical-oriented business education). A comparative summary of the logics is found in Article II, p. 13.

… as coming into play by teachers' actions

In Article III, *Equipped for responsibility – a case of business education for sustainability*, the three logics of doing business sustainably that came into play through teachers' actions in classroom practice are identified as: a) the logic of self-interest, b) the logic of conscious consumers and c) the logic of stakeholders' interests. The logics are identified by analysing how the teachers describe the rules and conditions of doing business and the role of a business person in the context of talking about sustainable development.

The logics position the business person as someone who should: use financial performance indicators to assess whether a business ought to work for sustainability (logic of self-interest), work for sustainability by meeting the demands of conscious consumers (logic of conscious consumers), or contribute to sustainability and be sensitive to stakeholders diverging interests when making decisions (logic of stakeholders' interests). These three roles imply differences in how a responsible business person could or should to deal with personal feelings in relation to sustainability issues. Within the logic of self-interest, personal feelings need to be put aside when financial performance indicators 'say so'. The logic of conscious consumers includes scope for a business person's personal feelings, while the logic of stakeholders' interest requires the involvement of personal feelings in order to be sensitive to diverging interests.

… as taken up by students in classroom practice

In Article IV, *Business as unusual through dislocatory moments*, five logics of doing business responsibly are identified. The logics are identified as taken up and/or rejected by students prior to, during and after a dislocatory moment, i.e. a moment when the students no longer know how they should 'go on' because the existing logic guiding their actions is challenged. The role of a responsible business person within each of the logics is to: a) comply with legislation, b) purchase products locally, c) give to charity, d) close the production cycle and e) be transparent and have control of all the steps in the supply chain.

Adapting, adding or creating roles

In Articles I–IV, three broad categories of the role of a responsible business person can be identified. These categories imply that a business person is expected to either adapt to, add or create ethical values.

Adapting to ethical values implies that a business person is expected to maximise profit while following the law (Article II), follow the law (Article I and IV) and use financial performance indicators to assess whether to prioritise work for sustainability (Article III). Maximising profit also requires responding to consumers' demands, which implies adapting to consumers' ethical values (which could be perceived as unethical or not ethical enough) as expressed in consumption choices.

Adding ethical values that are formulated by 'someone else' implies taking steps beyond what is required according to the law and regulations (Article II), adopting sustainability guidelines and making demands on subcontractors (Article I), controlling the supply chain (Article IV), purchasing products locally (Article IV), giving to charity (Article IV), responding to consumers' demands for sustainable products (Article I and III) and closing the production cycle (Article IV). Taking these steps and 'going beyond' the law is facilitated by consumers demanding 'sustainable' products.

Creating ethical values (Article II) implies using the business to make change, using the business as a tool for change (Article I) and being sensitive and responsive to the diverging interests of different stakeholders when making business decisions (Article IV).

Some of the expectations of a responsible business person in the above categories require clarification. Although 'purchasing products locally', 'giving to charity', 'closing the production cycle' (categorised as adding roles above) appear to be similar to 'using the business to bring about change' (categorised as a creating role above), an important distinction between them is the moral driver of business behaviour, which is *external* to the business when adapting or adding ethical values, but is *internal* when creating ethical values. For instance, when talking about ´purchasing products locally', 'giving to charity' or 'closing the production cycle' *in order to* address customers' demands, it implies reproducing a view that the moral driver is or should be external to the business. As all these aspects are reflected in the empirical material they are understood as ways of 'taking steps beyond the law' and adding rather than creating ethical values. Furthermore, the expectations listed here should be understood as principles that guide a person's actions (fantasmatic logics), and not as if taking total control or completely closing a production cycle is possible.

The adapting, adding and creating roles are mutually exclusive in that they cannot be articulated together in a sensible way. You can only be guided by one role (at a time) because they relate differently to the law and to consumers. The adapting role relies on the law alone and excludes 'proactive' decisions, whereas the adding and creating roles consider the law to be insufficient. Furthermore, according to the adapting and adding roles consumers are always right, while the creating role could regard consumers as 'being wrong'. The roles are also mutually exclusive with regard to how personal feelings should be dealt with when making business decisions (see Table 4, below). Thus, as guiding principles the roles differ, although this does not necessarily mean that there are differences in the suggested actions. This means that the three roles could serve as categories to analyse how business people motivate their decisions, but not for the actions in themselves.

Describing the expectations of a responsible business person as *articulated* in business education (as is the case here) is not the same as describing how business people or teachers in business studies *are*. This means that a business leader could be driven by a strong internal moral conviction (creating) and work very hard to follow sustainability guidelines (adding) at the same time as her/his actions are officially described, for instance on a business website or in an annual report, in terms of what is necessary in order to maximise profit (adapting). A business person could also act responsively and sensitively to others' needs (creating) while describing these actions in terms of what someone else expects (adding). Likewise, a teacher could be very driven by her or his own moral convictions (creating) and encourage students to engage in doing business (more) sustainably by responding to what the customer or society wants (adapting or adding). The results presented here are based on the role of a business person as articulated in business education and are therefore limited to the role of business understood as *subject matter*. This is important from a discourse theoretical point of view, because the articulated roles (implied by the discourses or logics) equip and restrict our imagination. In this way, the articulated roles have a productive function and could affect how sustainability issues are addressed by students as budding business people.

So far the roles of a responsible business person articulated in business education with a sustainable development content have been described. The reason for presenting the *variety* of different roles is to de-naturalise the role of a responsible business person and facilitate critical reflection. The results should not be regarded as correct descriptions of how business education generally *is* or *ought* to be. In order to draw conclusions and make further suggestions about how business students could be better equipped to address sustainability issues, other perspectives are needed. In this sense, the work of the discourse analyst stops here. In the following sections the perspectives of Dryzek and Pellizzoni are included in order to discuss how complex sustainability issues could best be addressed.

Environmental perspectives in business educational practice

In order to be in a position to draw conclusions about whether or how students are or are not equipped to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues, the three roles identified in the empirical material are compared with the roles of a responsible business person described in Chapter 4, implied by Dryzek's environmental discourses and the responsibility regimes developed by Pellizzoni. Here, Dryzek's overview of environmental discourses can also be seen as a map of the discourses that are available in the wider social context in which the studied educational practices are situated (see Figure 1, p. 19). In this way, the comparison presented here illuminates the connections between the educational practice and the wider social context.

The adapting role resembles the role of a business person within a *liability* regime and to some extent an *accountability* regime. The common characteristics here are that environmental problems are best solved if businesses are left to pursue their material interests (Promethean discourse) and abide by the rules of society (Friedman). This way of thinking can be seen as a legacy of the discourse of administrative rationalism. Maximising profit to appease the demands of business owners can also be described as being accountable to them and in this respect adapting to ethical values also corresponds with the role of business within an accountability regime (for a further elaboration see Article III).

The adding role resembles the role of a business person within an *accountability* regime. Here, the common characteristics are that a responsible business person should do more than just follow the law. More specifically, as in the limits and survival discourse and the discourse of techno-corporate ecological modernisation, a responsible business person, should adopt and follow the guidelines or sustainability principles set by experts. If the sustainability guidelines or principles prescribe deliberation or measures that could be categorised as 'responsive', a move from accountability to what here is called a responsiveness regime (see below) is implied.

The creating role resembles the role of a business person within a *responsiveness* regime. The common characteristics are that there are no predefined problem definitions or principles. This means not presuming to know in advance what the stakeholders' needs are, but listening to what they have to say before deciding what to do. This implies a role of a business as taking an active part in a reflexive process (the discourse of reflexive ecological modernisation) as a sub-political actor (Beck) or 'quasi-radical' business person (Palmås).

In a *care* regime the role of a responsible business person is to provide for what she or he presumes are others' needs. It could be argued that the creating role is similar if business decisions are not preceded by listening to socio-ecological conditions or stakeholders' needs. However, as the empirical material includes aspects of 'listening', it is reasonable to suggest that 'creating ethical values' resembles the role of business within a responsiveness regime. Nevertheless, it is important to note that radical businesses working for sustainability could be authoritarian or paternalistic, rather than democratic.

Equipped for uncertain and complex sustainability issues?

Taking the findings presented above as the point of departure, how might students, as future business people, be best able to address sustainability issues that are often uncertain and complex? In this context, Dryzek argues that institutions and discourses are needed that are capable of learning, i.e. *reflexivity*, while Pellizzoni argues for an understanding of responsibility in terms of *responsiveness*.

These two perspectives imply that a responsible business person cannot *only* rely on laws and regulations or adopting predefined principles or guidelines. A responsible business person needs to be sensitive and receptive to others' needs or 'the condition of socio-ecological systems' before deciding what to do. In addition to reason, this kind of judgement requires the involvement of personal feelings because there are no pre-defined principles or goals to follow. Following Pellizzoni's and Dryzek's lines of argument, it can therefore be argued that:

First, business education that articulates a role of business as *adapting to* ethical values as they are expressed in laws and regulations, business owners' interests (in maximising profit) and consumers (not demanding 'sustainable products' to a sufficient extent) could mean that students are *unequipped* to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues. In other words, when the assumption that all actors are driven by self-interest is articulated as a description of the state of things in business educational practice, the business person that is articulated or reproduced is one who is unequipped to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues because they do not have the necessary 'tools' with which to address such issues.

Second, business education that articulates a role of business as *adding* ethical values or 'going beyond the law by adopting predefined principles' could mean that students are *ill-equipped* to address complex and uncertain sustainability issues. The rationale for taking steps for sustainability that go beyond what the law requires is expressed (in the empirical material) as what consumers demand. When a general conviction that consumers demand or will demand 'sustainable' products is communicated in business education it facilitates or encourages 'sustainable' business practices. However, this conviction implies vulnerability if consumers are poorly informed or do not act accordingly. While it might encourage more sustainable business practices, the end result will depend on the consumers. Furthermore, adopting predefined principles is helpful when you know in advance what to ask for, but is less helpful for addressing complexity and uncertainty. The rationale for the prefix 'ill' (-equipped) is vulnerability linked to a dependence on consumers who are well-informed and act accordingly and the lack of predefined principles in relation to complexity and uncertainty. In this case a 'tool' is available that could work in specific circumstances.

Third, business education that articulates a role of business as *creating* ethical values and change could mean that students are *better equipped* to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues. Encouraging students to explore their personal feelings and to be sensitive to others needs is a way of encouraging responsiveness and reflexivity and being prepared to take action for sustainability in the absence of predefined principles. It also takes into account that a business person *could* be better informed about sustainability than consumers.

Implications for future research and educational practice

Questions relating to how education ought to be arranged and what and how teachers ought to teach and students ought to learn in order to address sustainability issues are central to the broader field of environment and sustainability education research. This section discusses the implications of this broader field of research and the field of sustainability education within business education specifically.

Comparing the adapting, adding and creating role with the 'ESD learning outcomes', as suggested by Vare and Scott (2007), it could be argued that: the adapting and adding role is similar to the ESD 1 approach in that these roles are based on the prerequisite that predefined sustainability principles are established and agreed on before the educational event and that the creating role is similar to the ESD 2 approach, because it suggests the need for reflexivity and responsiveness in relation to what sustainability is.

Based on the empirical material (see Article III) in which the creating role is identified, it could be argued that the pluralist teaching approaches used contribute to this particular role. The approaches used in the case referred to here, make use of value exercises in which the students are asked to discuss and take a stand on different sustainability issues relating to doing business. It is argued that pluralist approaches promote students' critical thinking and action competence and help to avoid indoctrination, because they involve highlighting different values and perspectives (Öhman 2008). Pluralist approaches to sustainability education are supported by teachers and researchers within the field of environment and sustainability education in Sweden. On the other hand, there is a concern that pluralist approaches to sustainability education could lead to a troublesome relativism (Wals 2010), not being enough (Lotz-Sisitka 2010) and a turning away from the 'environment' (Kopnina 2012). In short, it can be described as a tension between educational objectives relating to emancipation, critical thinking and the encouragement of thinking anew about what a sustainable development is and a sense of urgency that requires a more instrumentalist approach to sustainability education. A similar discussion is also found in research relating to teaching business ethics, which could be described as a tension between teaching approaches appealing to students' moral identities and rule based teaching (see also Article III).

However, in the context of business education, the potential deficits of pluralist or open-ended approaches to sustainability education (ESD 2) could be a lesser problem in relation to the potential impact of underpinning assumptions in mainstream economics. These assumptions are connected to the metaphorical understanding of the economy as a machine and the invisible hand as automatically providing for the common good. In line with Springett´s (2005) and Hühn´s (2014) reasoning about the impact of this metaphorical understanding, and based on the results presented above, I argue that it is more important to pay attention to the obstacles implied by 'the a-political' or 'de-subjectified' business person as an ideal. This ideal excludes making decisions proactively or taking any initiative that is not legitimised by laws or regulations. For sustainability education research this means paying attention to when the ideal of a de-subjectified business person comes into play in educational practice. From this perspective, I suggest that researchers, teachers and others involved in the design of lessons, education materials and curricula should pay attention to and critically reflect on the articulated roles of a business person. Although business education is important, attention does not need to be limited to business education, but could include other subjects and social practices, because the role (s) of a business person could be facilitated, privileged or constructed in any social practice.

In order to facilitate critical reflection on the role of a responsible business person in the context of business education, the articles include illustrative examples from the empirical material. The illustrative examples come from textbooks, teachers' reasoning and teacher-student dialogues in the classroom and exemplify how and in what kind of situations specific roles of a business person are articulated, reproduced or taken up. Together with the analysis drawing on Dryzek and Pellizzoni above, these examples could for instance be used in order to identify and avoid pitfalls relating to (anything goes) relativism.

Few examples of *different* meanings and logics articulated in the same context, for example in one textbook or one interview, are found in the empirical material. Also in the observed lessons, no change of logic articulated by the teacher was identified. This may be due to the subject matter included in the lessons, such as 'calculating financial indicators' (logic of self-interest) or 'branding' (logic of stakeholders' interests). It could also reflect the teacher's understanding of the subject, which would mean that the subject matter offered to a specific group of students is limited to one business role. Here, a relevant question to ask is whether the role of a responsible business person offered to a specific group of students is limited to one role or whether it changes depending on the subject matter dealt with in the textbooks or lessons. This calls for some clarification with regard to the relation between the teacher (s) and logics or meanings. I understand logics or meanings to be discursive resources that a teacher has access to in a specific situation, which in turn means that the educational practice (which could be a classroom) is situated in a wider social context. On the other hand, logics (or discourses) could also be disrupted or challenged in social practices, for instance by a teacher in the classroom. In order to be able to *consciously* reproduce or challenge a logic, meaning or discourse, a teacher first needs to see (in detail) how and in what kind of situations specific logics come into play. The illustrative empirical examples presented in the articles can be described as facilitating the seeing of logics, meanings and discourses in educational practice. Teachers, or others involved in the design of lessons or education materials, could then look at the meanings and logics as discursive resources and make (more) conscious decisions about which 'resources' to use. However, making conscious decisions like this in the classroom is not easy. Logics and discourses usually go unnoticed because 'it is just how people usually talk' in a specific context. Consciously challenging a logic requires time to reflect on the logics that come into play and the ability to see how other logics could be articulated. Apart from using the illustrative examples as a starting point for this reflection, it might be helpful to ask questions such as: When and how is it relevant or important to talk about consumers, business owners or other actors in terms of self-interest? When and how is it relevant or important to talk about consumers in terms of demanding 'sustainable products'? When and how is it important to address students as moral subjects or change agents?

The concern raised in the previous section about how the adapting role may mean that business students are unequipped to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues calls for some further elaboration and clarification. This role is implicated by the following the law-meaning, in the logic of profit-oriented business education and in the logic of self-interest, all of which are based on the metaphorical understanding of the economy as a machine driven by self-interest, which in turn is intertwined with the invisible hand metaphor used by Adam Smith to show how a person, while promoting their self-interest also provides what is good for society at large. As the logic of self-interest might be detrimental to sustainable business practices, it could be concluded that teachers should jettison the image of the invisible hand and the economy as a machine. This is not my intention. Rather, the problem occurs when we think about models as facts and forget that they are based on assumptions and not observations of actual businesses and households. When we do this, we fail to recognise the variety of different decisions that can be made because there are humans, with all their complexities, behind every business decision. When making judgements, self-interest is one of many moving springs and when you only have access to one driving force or moving spring – self-interest, the toolbox accessible for addressing environmental and social challenges is limited to tools that fit 'self-interest'. Thus, by recognising and taking into account that 'an invisible hand' is only one of many possible metaphors, a bigger 'toolbox' for addressing environmental and social challenges is accessed. In other words, in order to gain access to tools that can help to address uncertain and complex sustainability issues, the (using Palmås' terminology) ideal of the de-subjectified business person must be discarded.

Scope for subjectivity and the risk of de-subjectification

In this section the risk of de-subjectification and the scope for subjectivity are further elaborated on and clarified. The voices of Nelson and Zaman in the first chapter of the thesis illustrate that education in economics and personal feelings relating to sustainability issues do not always go together. This is a pedagogic problem that also relates to the scope for subjectivity and the risk for de-subjectification.

The question of how and when there is, or is not, scope for business students' subjectivities is addressed in different ways in the four studies. In Articles I–III, subjectivity is linked to the role of a business person as articulated in business education for sustainability. Broadly speaking, it is about the scope for subjectivity in the subject matter that is '*offered to*' the students. Article IV is about the role of a business person as it is *taken up by* a group of students in a classroom situation. The situation involves a dislocatory moment, which implies that the role of a business person in which the students invest is disrupted. In order to move away from this frustrating situation the students have to involve subjectivity in order to invest in or identify with another role. In this way, it is also about students involving subjectivity in the classroom situation and the conditions that can facilitate this.

… in the subject matter offered to students

The results of Articles I–III, which capture subjectivity linked to the role of a business person as *offered to* the students, are presented here. As already indicated, business education for sustainability articulates different ways in which a business person ought to deal with personal feelings about sustainability issues. The main difference concerns whether a business person *should refrain from* involving or *has to* involve personal feelings for sustainability when making business decisions. Apart from these two opposing positions, the results also exemplify how and in what kind of situations business education for sustainability allows *scope for* personal feelings when addressing external demands for sustainability. These different aspects are indicated in Table 4, below.

Table 4. The role of a business person and the involvement of personal feelings

	The adapting role	**The adding role**	**The creating role**
	Should refrain from involving personal feelings when making business decisions	Has scope for personal feelings when making business decisions	Has to involve personal feelings when making business decisions
Meanings in textbooks (Article I)	Follow the law	Making demands	Tool for change (making demands)
Logics in teachers' reasoning (Article II)	Profit-oriented business education	Social-oriented business education	Radical-oriented business education
Logics in classrooms (Article III)	Logic of self-interest	Logic of conscious consumers	Logic of stakeholders' interests

With reference to the above table, in Article I the different meanings identified in the textbooks indicate a difference in the scope for a business person to be a moral subject (including feeling responsible and taking moral responsibility). The meanings differ as to whether they exclude a business person as a moral subject (following the law), allow scope for being a moral subject when formulating demands relating to sustainability (making demands), or recognise a business person as a moral subject (tool for change).

In Article II, the different logics identified in the expected learning outcomes from the teachers' reasoning of their own practices indicate a difference as to whether a business person ought to put emotions or feelings aside (profit-oriented business education), can encompass (social-oriented business education) or must involve feelings/emotions (radical-oriented business education). The expression 'involve' feelings (or emotions) does not suggest that business decisions should be based on feelings alone.

In Article III, the different logics that are identified as coming into play through teachers' actions in classroom practice indicate whether a business person: should put personal feelings aside because consumers are not 'acting ethically' to a sufficient extent (logic of self-interest), has scope for personal feelings because consumers demand 'sustainable' products (logic of conscious consumers), or has to involve personal feelings (or empathy) when making business decisions sensitive to stakeholders' interests (logic of stakeholders interests). Also here the involvement of personal feelings does not suggest that business decisions should be based on feelings alone.

In line with Biesta and Säfström, I maintain that the subjectification function of education is important. Drawing on Howarth, I further describe my understanding of subjectivity as a state in which a person is both dependent on and has the scope to involve feelings, together with reason, when making a (business) decision. From this perspective, it follows that there is scope for subjectivity in business education when the articulated role of a business person implies that making business decisions requires the involvement of personal feelings. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the tool for change-meaning, the logic of radical-oriented business education and the logic of stakeholders' interests contribute to a subjectification function of education. It can also be concluded that the follow law and regulations-meaning, the logic of profit-oriented business education and the logic of self-interest could lead to what I in my reading of Palmås and Biesta call de-subjectification, because these logics imply that a business person should refrain from involving personal feelings when making decisions.

The empirical examples that are used to exemplify the different meanings and logics in Articles I–III illustrate how and when there is a scope for subjectivity or a risk for de-subjectification. These illustrative examples could be used as the starting point for reflections on and the further development of business education and how the subjectification function of education could be enhanced.

The necessity of subjectivity when investing in new roles

This section elaborates on the scope for subjectivity as it can occur in a dislocatory moment and discusses how and when the role of a responsible business person can change. When a logic is perceived as a description of how things are it can be described as social. When it is perceived as challenging the sedimented norms of how things ought to be it can be described as political. This means that logics can be perceived as social or political depending on the historical and cultural context in which they occur. For instance, when the idea that people ought to 'vote with their wallets' became a sedimented norm, the 'conscious consumer logic' could be argued as changing from a political to a social logic. This means that today 'the conscious consumer logic' could be argued as having become less political and more 'the obvious way' of making change for a more sustainable future. A logic also has a fantasmatic dimension, i.e. as structuring our being in the world and providing a guiding principle for our actions. As logics position subjects, a change of logic implies a change of roles, for instance the role of a responsible business person. How a dislocatory moment can facilitate a change in the role of a business person striving to do business sustainably as taken up by the students is illustrated in Article IV. This also includes the necessity of subjectivity when investing in new roles. More specifically, an analytical framework for analysing the emergence, closure and change of a logic facilitated by a dislocatory moment is presented. Applying the framework to a case involving a dislocatory moment illuminates how a teacher contributes to the emergence and closure of a dislocatory moment. In the specific case, the teacher creates conditions for a dislocatory moment by politicising global trade and challenging the students' logic that doing business sustainably means purchasing products locally. The teacher then contributes to the closure of the dislocatory moment by asking the students what they have come up with, which helps the students recall other ideas (as described previously in this chapter).

Implications for future research and educational practice

The presented case illustrates how a dislocatory moment can lead to a change of logic. It can therefore be argued that dislocatory moments are important for reflexivity and for any kind of learning that involves change. I therefore suggest that teachers (and others) should create conditions that are conducive to dislocatory moments when making a difference or when change is an educational objective. This may seem somewhat paradoxical, given that clarity, rather than frustration and confusion about what a student is expected to learn could be described as a 'teaching virtue' – a teaching virtue that is connected to pre-specified learning outcomes, as criticised by Biesta. This indicates that the current emphasis in school policy on measuring pre-specified learning outcomes might not be conducive to dislocatory moments. I therefore suggest that knowledge about conditions that are or seem conducive to or hinder the emergence of dislocatory moments is important for future research on environmental and sustainability education.

Furthermore, as dislocatory moments facilitate subjectivity (understood as human agency), they are also worth acknowledging and paying attention to in relation to other educational objectives, such as critical thinking and acting independently (or to use Biesta's terminology, the subjectification function of education). Accordingly, educational objectives relating to both emancipation and change can be seen as intertwined in a dislocatory moment, which here has been illustrated as the change and 'freeing' of, understood as opening up for subjectivity within, the role of a responsible business person.

Svensk sammanfattning (Swedish summary)

I kölvattnet av den finanskris som kulminerade 2008 och växande uppmärksamhet för olika miljö- och hållbarhetsutmaningar, som exempelvis klimatförändringar, har uppmaningar till integrering av 'hållbar utveckling' i ekonomiutbildningar ökat internationellt. Miljö och hållbarhetsfrågor har sedan tidigare varit framskrivna i gymnasieskolans styrdokument men i samband med den senaste gymnasiereformen 2011 skrevs begreppet hållbar utveckling tydligare in i Företagsekonomiämnets ämnesplan.

Denna avhandling undersöker integrering av hållbarhetsfrågor inom ramen för undervisning i företagsekonomi och närliggande ekonomiämnen på gymnasienivå. Utifrån ett poststrukturalistiskt perspektiv är det övergripande syftet att identifiera vilka företagarroller som artikuleras i läromedel och undervisning, och även att diskutera i vilken utsträckning dessa roller förbereder de studerande, som framtida företagare, att hantera hållbarhetsfrågor. Avhandlingen består av fyra delstudier som baseras på analyser av läroböcker, lärarintervjuer och klassrumsobservationer. Tre kategorier av företagarroller, som rymmer olika förväntningar på en ansvarstagande företagare har identifierats. Dessa olika roller innebär att en företagare förväntas antingen: *anpassa sig till* etiska värden som uttrycks i lagar och regler, *addera* etiska värden som efterfrågas av andra, eller *skapa* etiska värden. Rollerna skiljer sig åt huruvida en företagare: skall hålla egna känslor för hållbarhetsfrågor åt sidan (anpassande rollen), har utrymme för egna känslor (adderande rollen) eller måste involvera egna känslor (skapande rollen), vid fattande av affärsbeslut. Dessa roller jämförs med de företagarroller som impliceras i Dryzeks miljödiskurser och Pellizzonis ansvarsregimer. Utifrån Dryzeks och Pellizzonis argument om vilka kvaliteter som är viktiga för att hantera hållbarhetsfrågor dras slutsatsen att de studerande kan bli: *icke rustade* (den anpassande rollen), *illa rustade* (den adderande rollen) eller *bättre rustade* (den skapande rollen), att hantera osäkra och komplexa hållbarhetsfrågor, beroende på hur hållbarhetsfrågor integreras i företagsekonomiundervisningen. De fyra artiklarna innehåller detaljerade exempel på hur och i vilka situationer specifika företagarroller artikuleras eller privilegieras. Exemplen visar också i vilka situationer utbildningen tilltalar de studerande och potentiellt blivande företagarna som moraliska subjekt och ger utrymme för de studerandes subjektivitet (som inbegriper förnuft och egna känslor).

Dessa exempel kan användas av (bl a) lärare som utgångspunkt för kritisk reflektion i syfte att förstärka de studerandes förmågor att som framtida företagare hantera osäkra och komplexa hållbarhetsfrågor, samt för att utveckla utbildningens kvalitet avseende dess subjektifierande funktion.

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Calls for the inclusion of 'sustainable development' in the business curriculum have increased in the wake of financial crises and increased concern about climate change. As a result, new initiatives are emerging and new teaching approaches are being developed. This thesis pays attention to the roles of a business person articulated in business education when the concept of sustainable development is included in the curriculum. Four studies have been con-ducted based on textbook analyses, teacher interviews and classroom observations of business education at the upper secondary school level in Sweden. The issues addressed relate to how business students can become equipped to address sustainability issues and the scope for subjectivity in business education.

Pernilla Andersson carries out research in the field of environment and sustainability education and this is her doctoral thesis.

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