



Durham
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Centre for Academic Development

Exploring Signature Pedagogies for EAP

Problems, Principles & Practices

Steve Kirk | Durham University

BALEAP Biennial Conference, Warwick | 20.04.2023

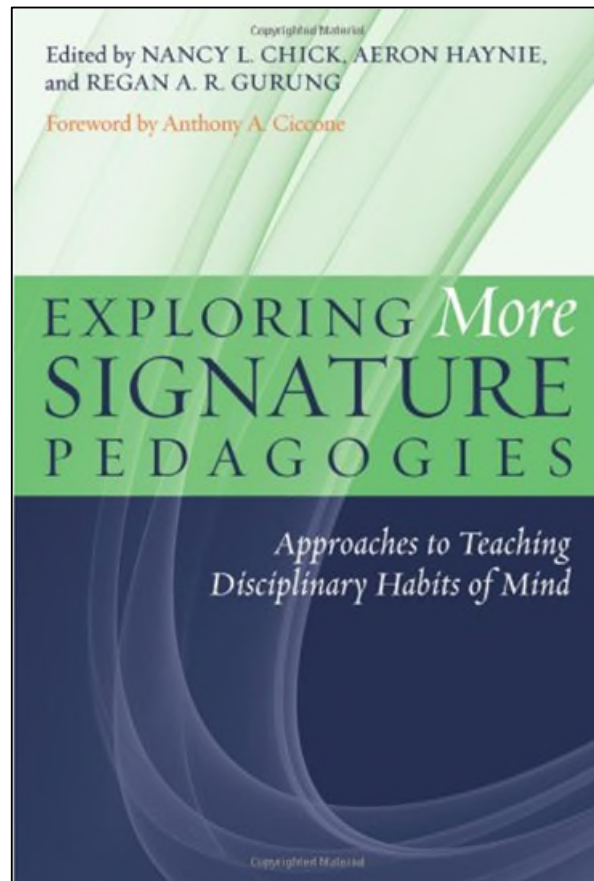
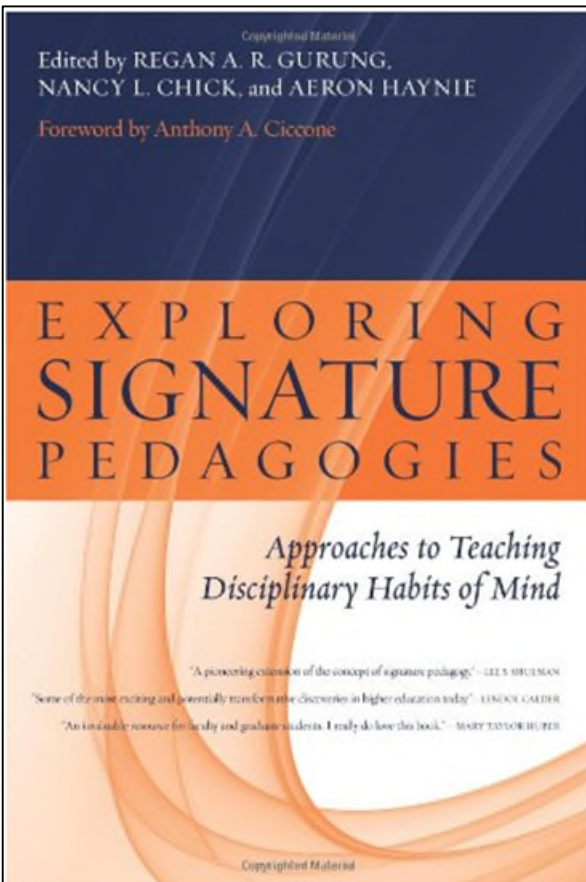
Teaching EAP...





“[S]ignature pedagogies [...] are types of teaching that organize the fundamental ways in which future practitioners are educated for their new professions. In these signature pedagogies, the novices are instructed in critical aspects of the three fundamental dimensions of professional work - to think, to perform, and to act with integrity.”

(Shulman 2005: 52)



Examples:

- (E.g.) *Modelling method and peer instruction* in introductory Physics (Lattery 2009)
- *Communicative approach* in language education (Ham & Schueller 2012)
- *Crits* in graphic design (Motley 2016)
- *Digital storytelling* in the 'New Humanities' (Benmayor 2008)
- *The engineering design process and learning from professionals* in Engineering (Lucas & Hanson 2016)
- Inquiry also extended to include, e.g., *signature assessment & feedback practices* (Pitt & Quinlan 2021)

Signature pedagogies in EAP?

Possible candidates:

Approaches underpinned by
genre theory

Swalesian (ESP)

Sydney School (SFL)



Problem:

EAP is characterised by diversity:

- Local affordances
- Material conditions
- Institutional positioning
- Routes into & through the profession
- Conceptions of 'EAP'



Different views of what we're preparing students for with our EAP...

- Language development via 'academic' carrier topics
- Generic, ostensibly transferable, skills ('essay writing', notetaking, etc)?
- Readiness for participation and engagement in higher education (e.g. demystifying expectations)?
- The specific academic discourse of students' current/ target discipline?
- The pedagogic practices & values of the target/ current discipline? (e.g. lecture participation)?
- The research practices & values of the target/ current discipline? (e.g. ethnography)?
- 'Higher order' (e.g. cross-disciplinary) academic discourse awareness?
- Critical empowerment and emancipation?





How can 'signature pedagogies' help us think about EAP classroom practice in diverse global contexts?



Signature pedagogy: 3 dimensions

‘surface structure’

“concrete, operational acts of teaching and learning...”

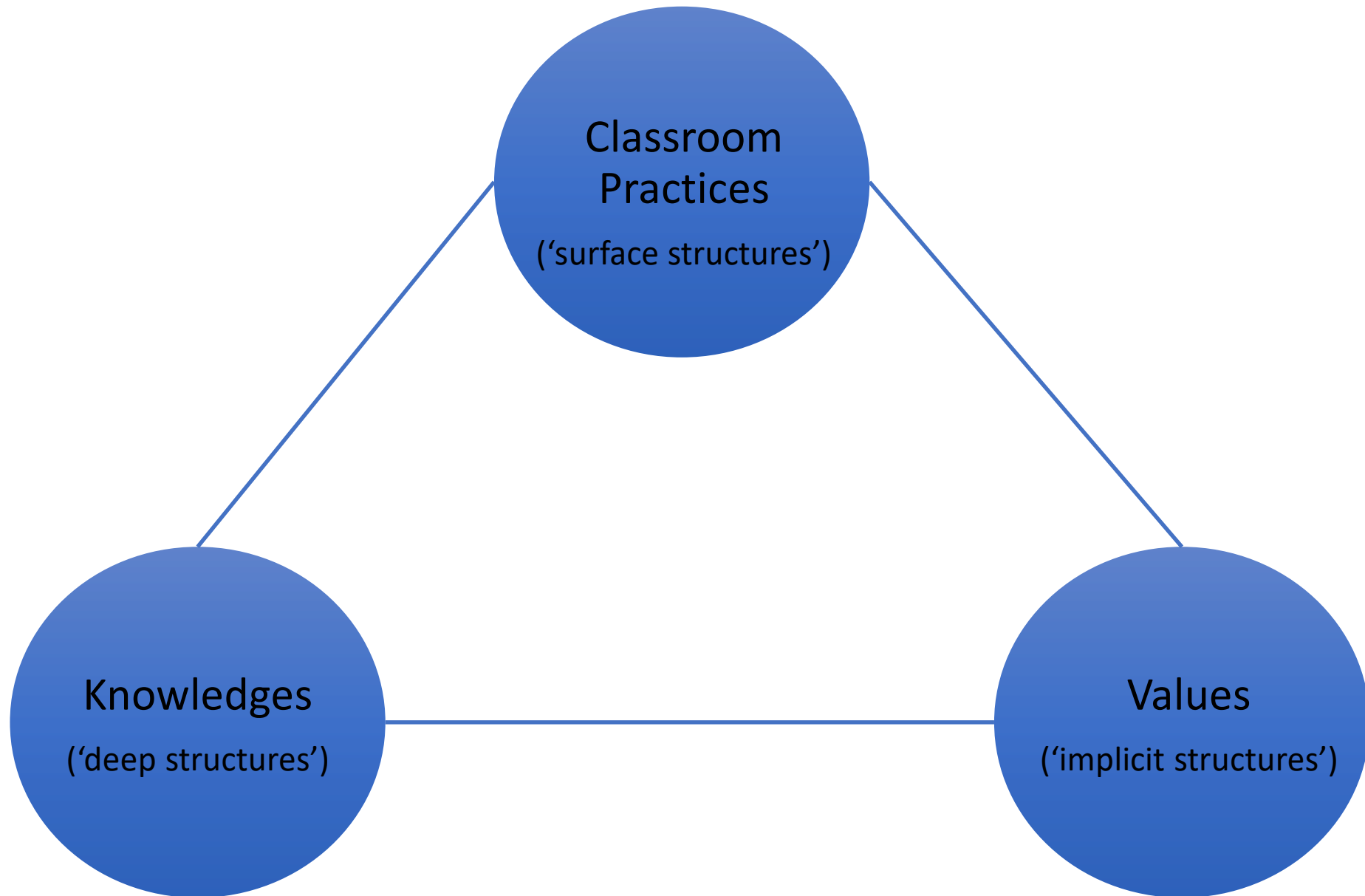
‘deep structure’

“a set of assumptions about how best to impart a certain body of knowledge and know-how”

‘implicit structure’

“a moral dimension that comprises a set of beliefs about professional attitudes, values, and dispositions.”

(Shulman 2005: 54-55)



Challenge 1: *Social power*

Where do SPs come from?

- The professions (Shulman)
- The disciplines – *epistemic*
- Institutional structures; traditions; norms (Horn 2013)

>> ‘powerful pedagogies’ (Horn 2013)

E.g. Swalesian genre theory...??



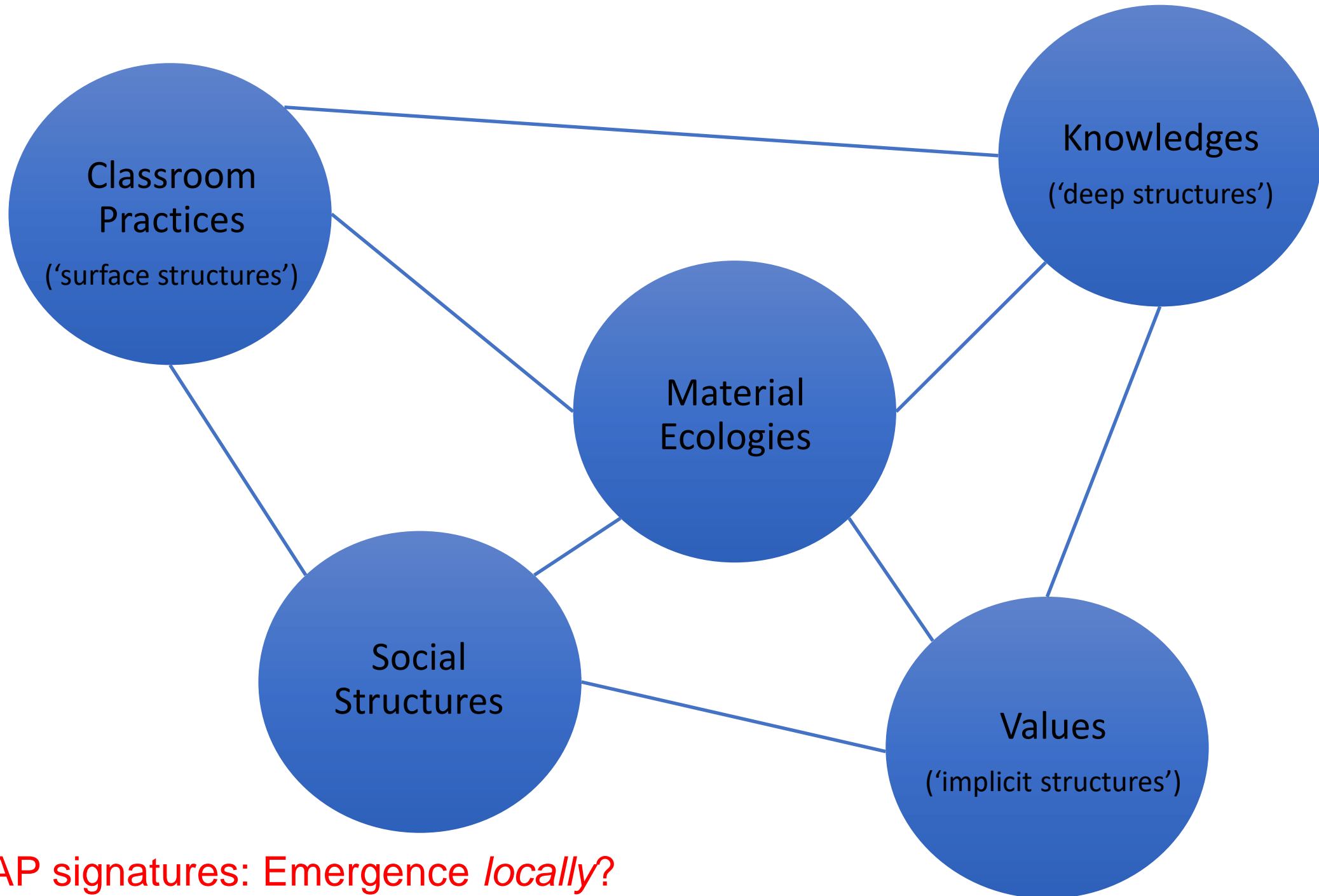
Challenge 2: *Global view*

International contexts + (e.g.)
changing face of UK higher education:

- Local affordances, practices (and success) shaped by:
 - **Embodied realities** – e.g. multilingual Ss (e.g. Canagarajah 2013)
 - Students' prior/existing **material conditions** (Jacobs, 2019)
 - **Material artefacts** – e.g. curriculum

>> Consider *material ecologies*



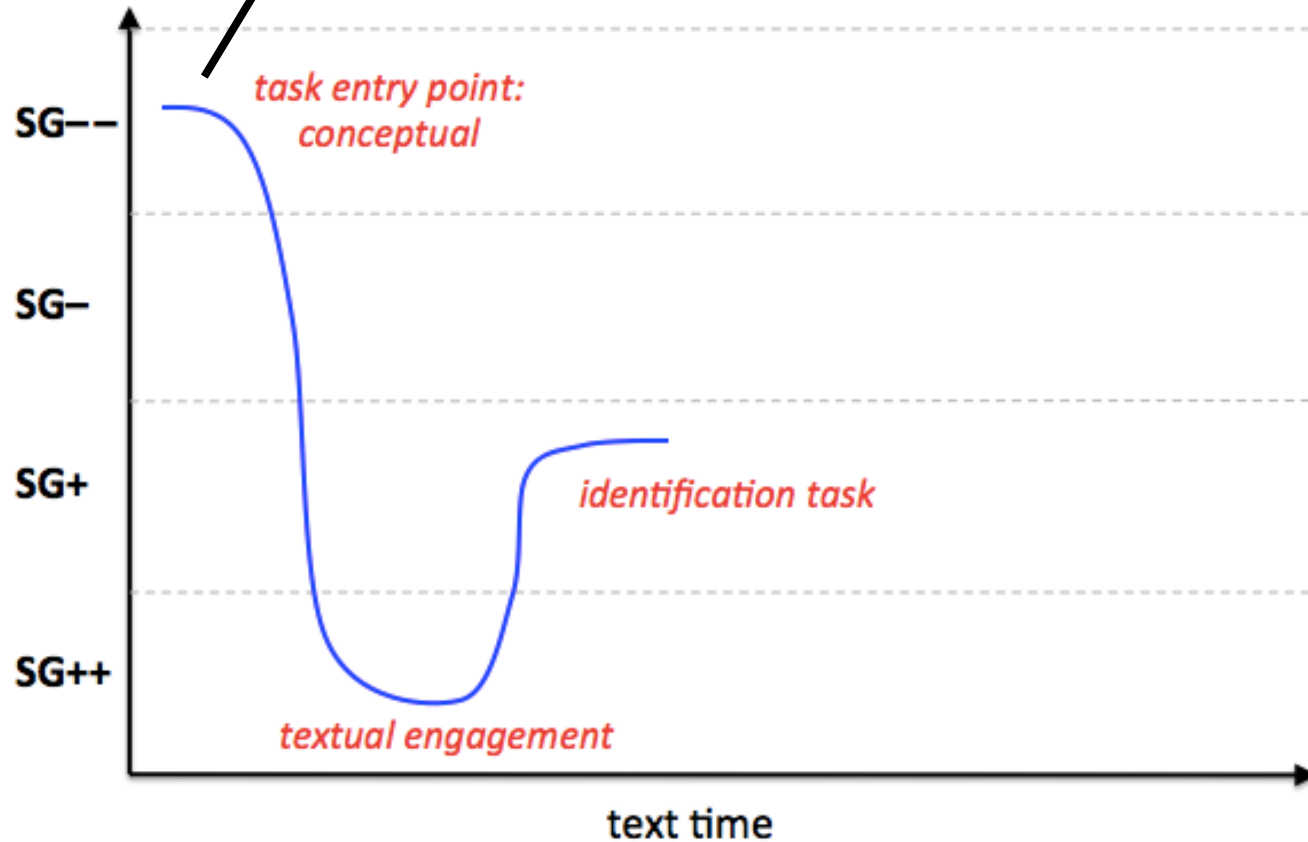


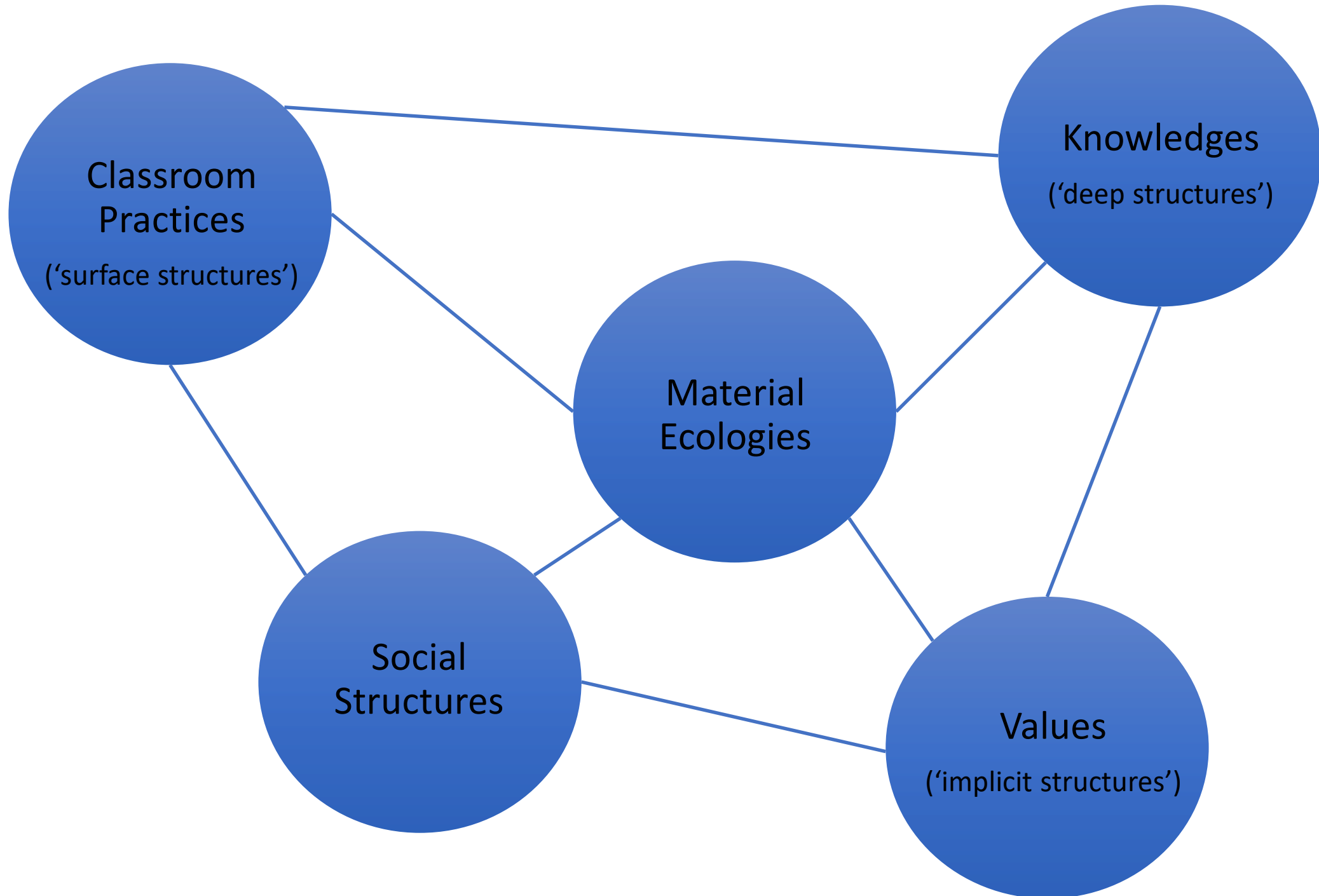
EAP signatures: Emergence *locally*?

Signature task profile (Kirk 2018)

E.g. "what is a research question?"

"what is the difference between a topic and a research question?"





Challenge 3: *Change*

Practices shift. Signatures *evolve*:

- Influences from within and without:
 - new knowledge; practices; technologies; 'inclusivity'; decolonisation; etc
 - **In EAP:** Teachers may also be key – “institutional ‘*trading zone*’” (Horn 2013)
- Can't see *across* signatures to why things are similar/ different

>> Move **beyond 'lists'** of pedagogies

>> Need to be able to see **internal variation** and **change over time**



Legitimation Code Theory (LCT)

A "multidimensional toolkit" (Maton 2014: 17) for educational research, practice and change

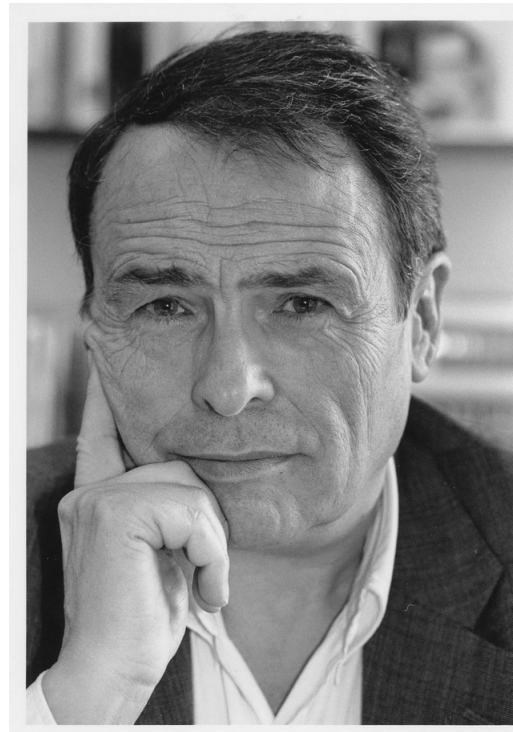


Karl Maton

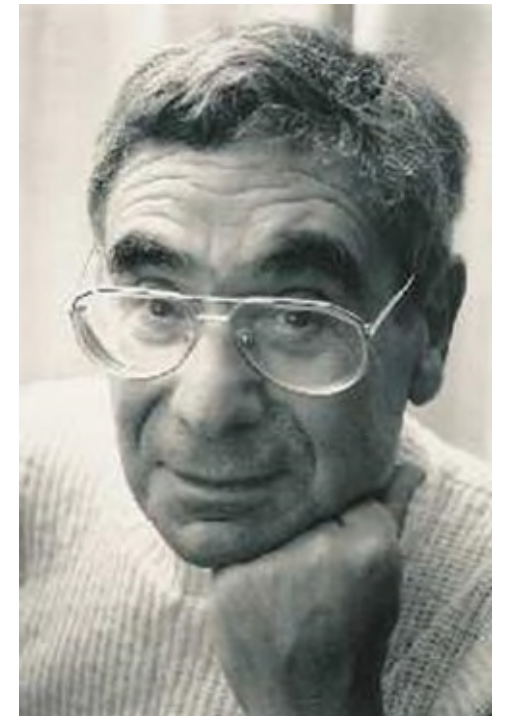
Legitimation Code Theory (LCT)

Principal influences:

Pierre Bourdieu
(Field Theory)



Basil Bernstein
(Code Theory)



Specialization

Offers concepts to explore:
who and what matter in practices

All practices are *about something*
and *by somebody*...giving:

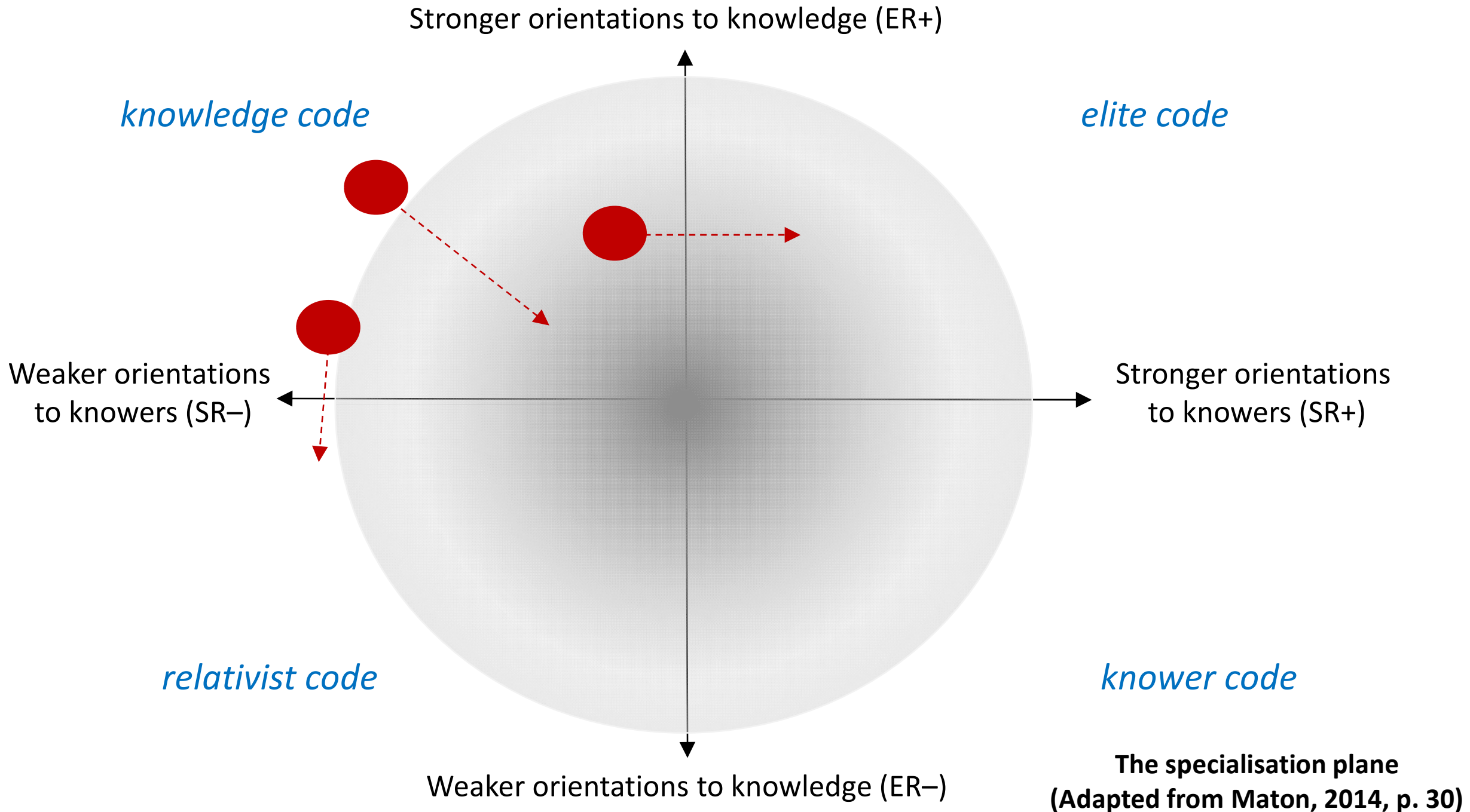
Epistemic relations (ER) or
Relations to knowledge

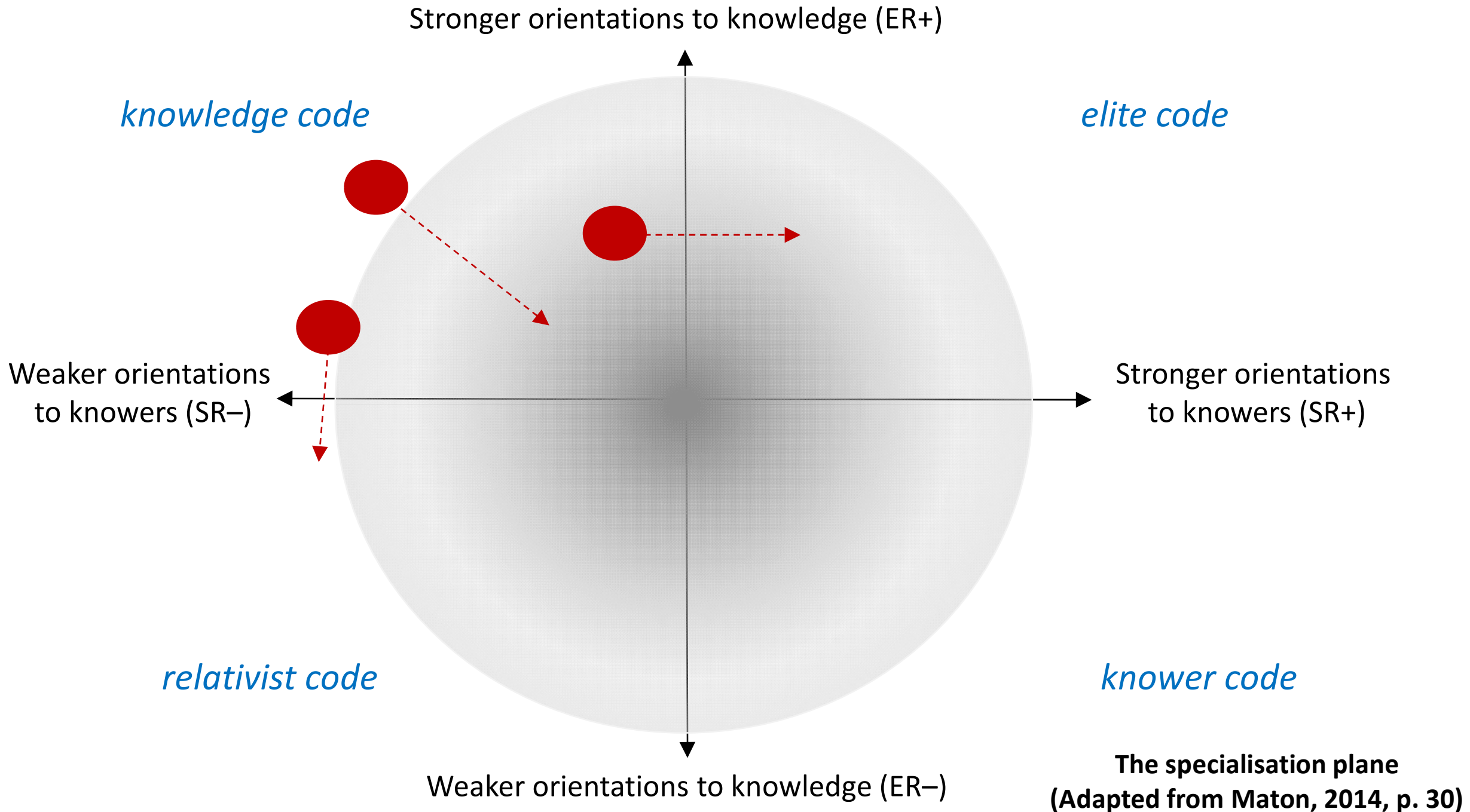
Social relations (SR) or
Relations to knowers

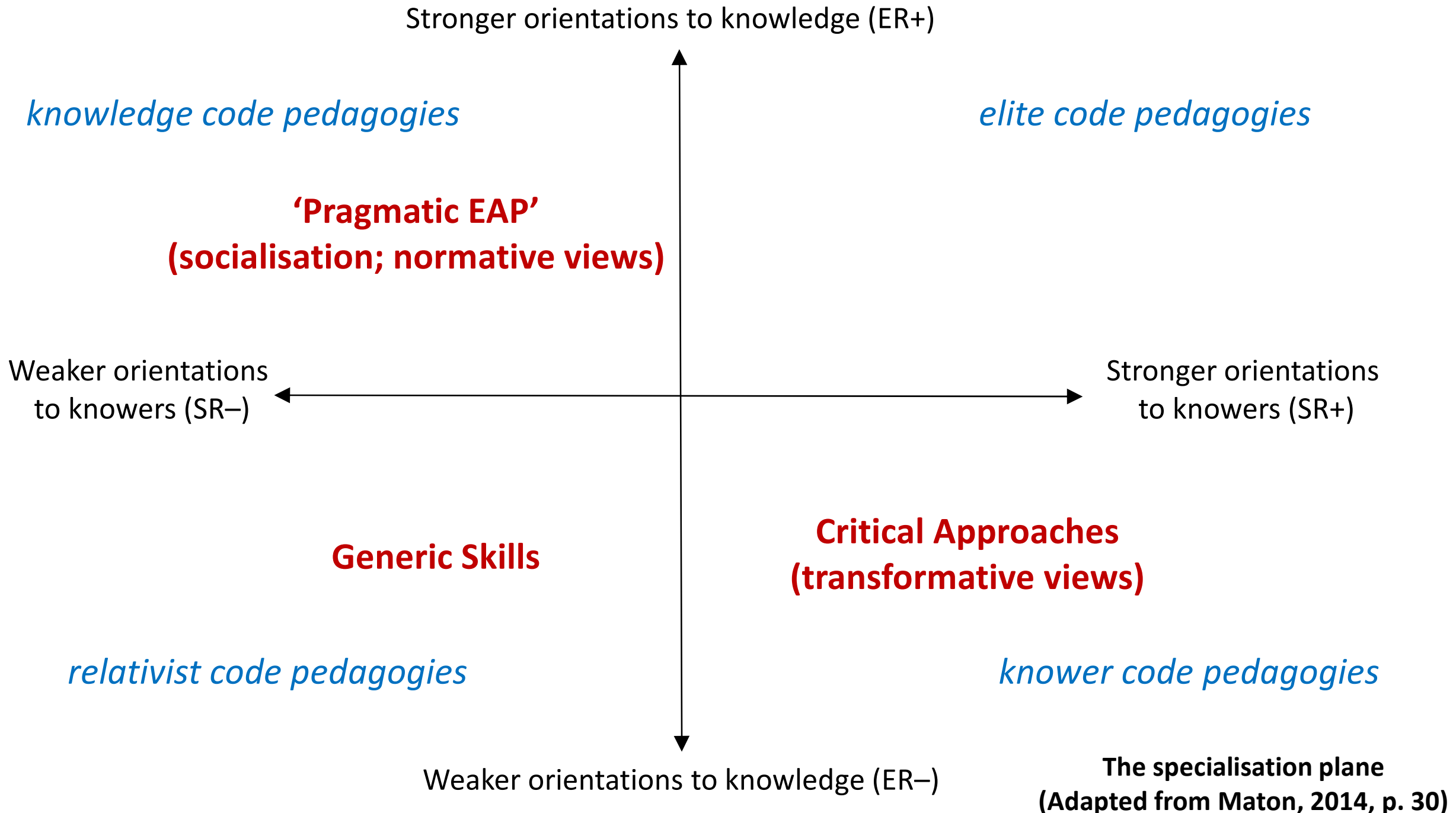
(Maton 2014: 29-33)

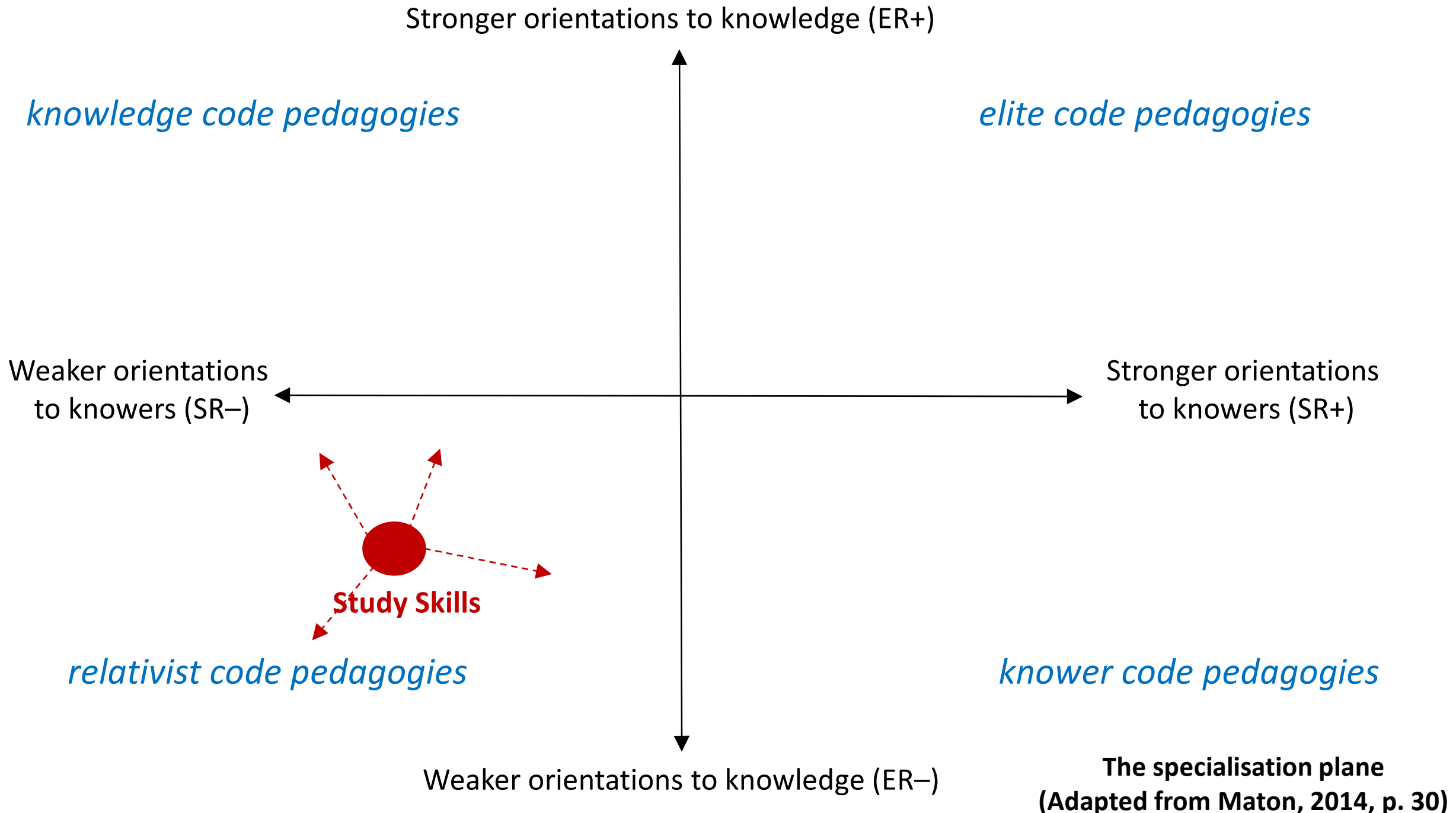


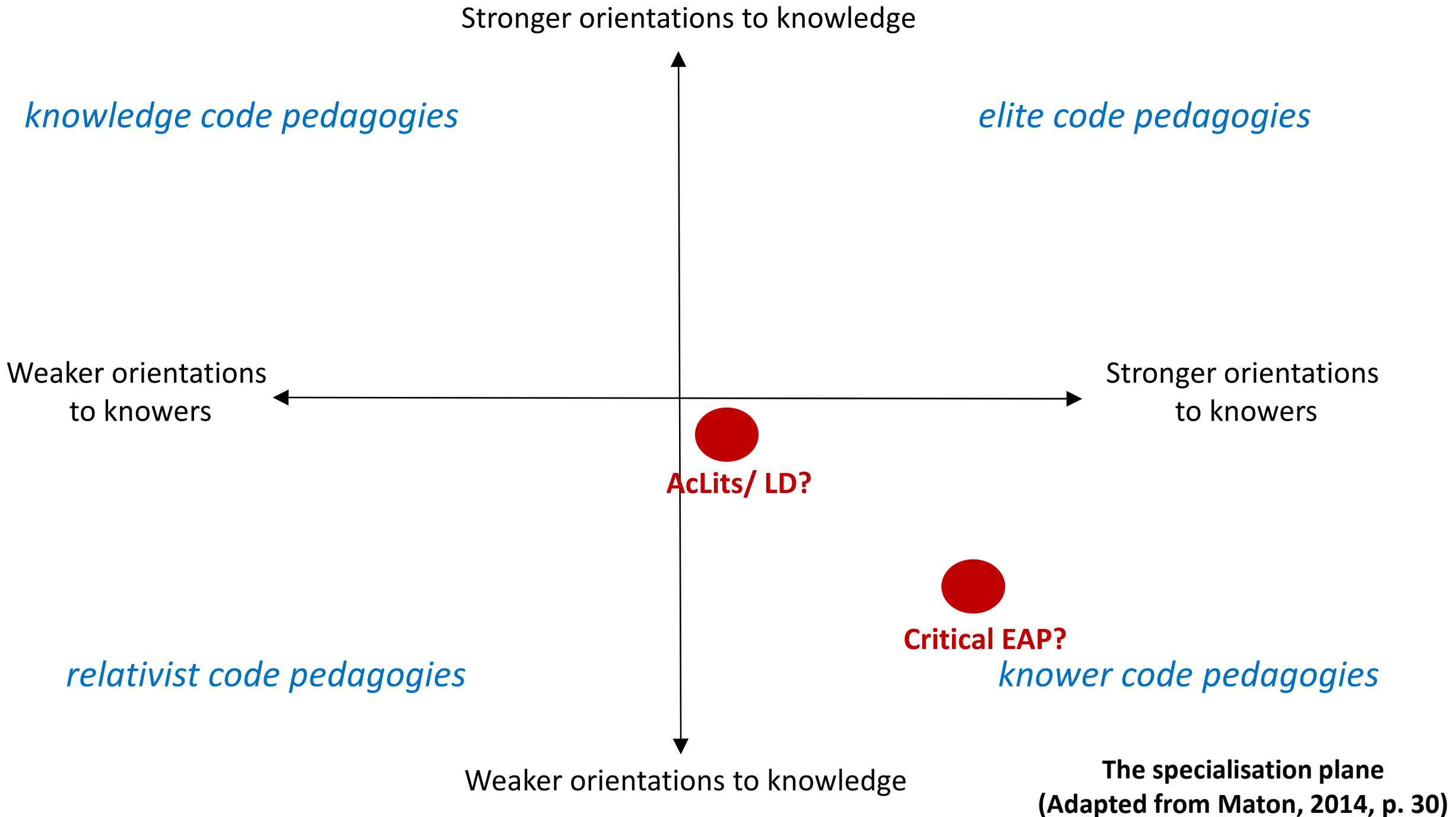
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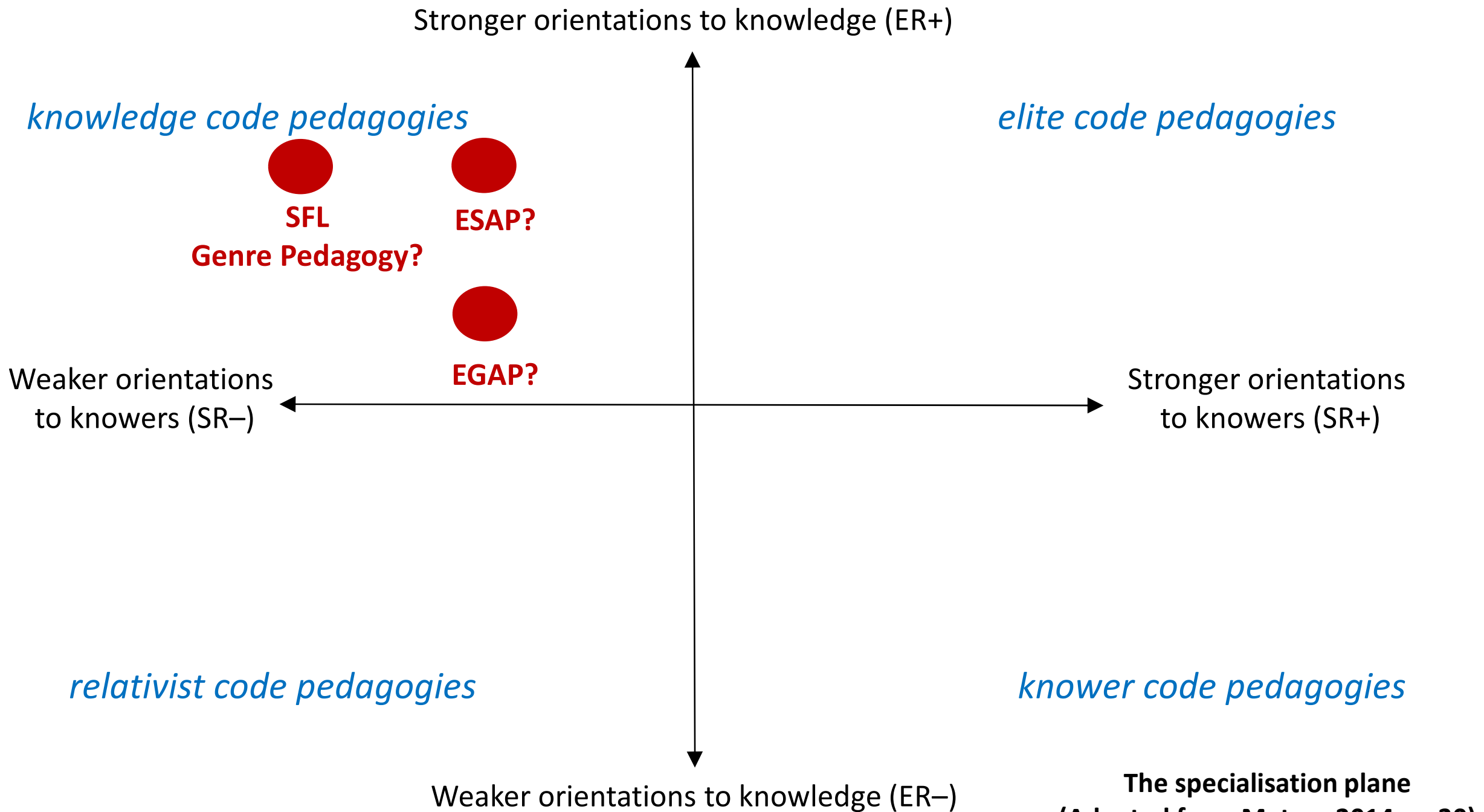


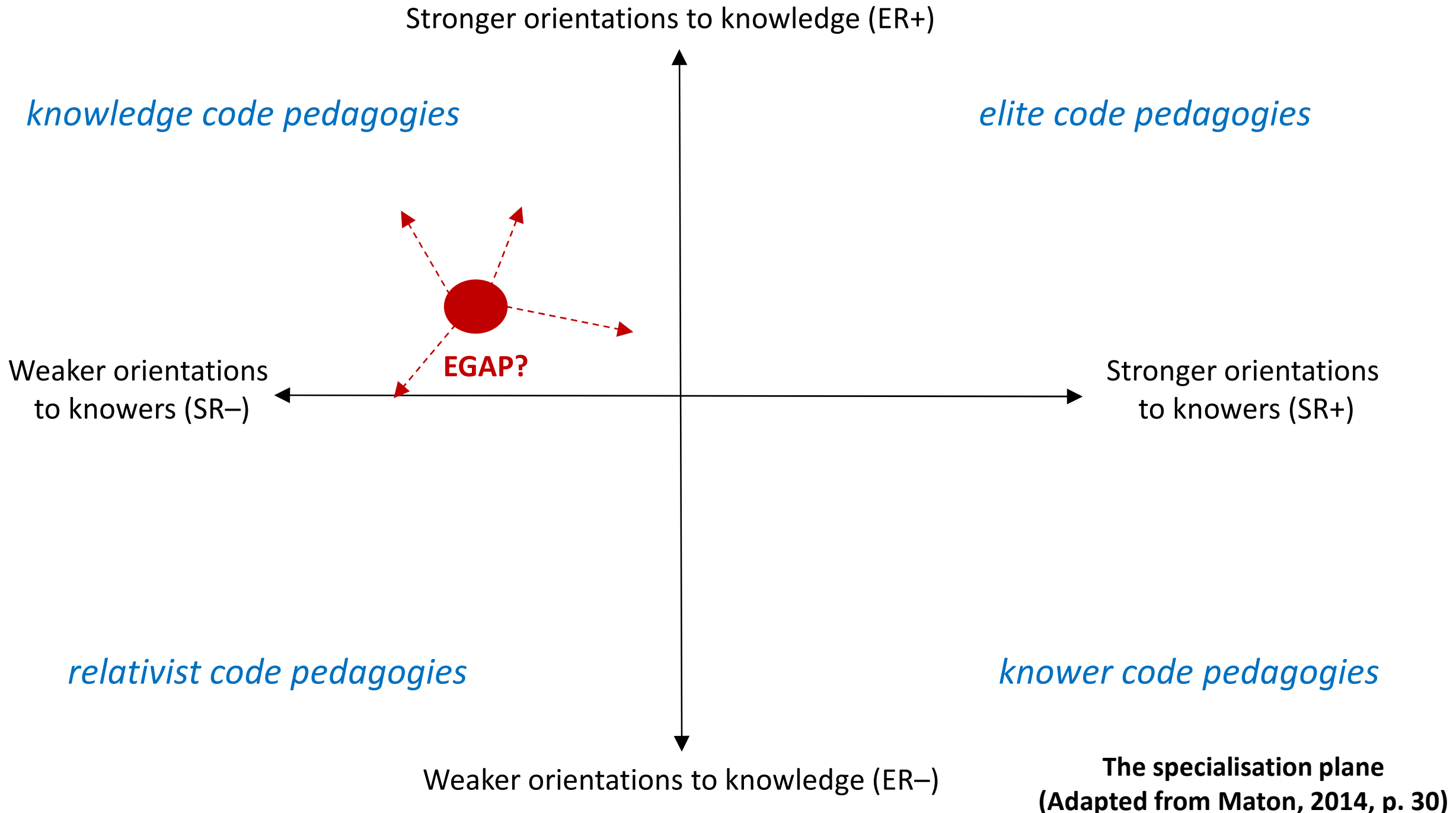


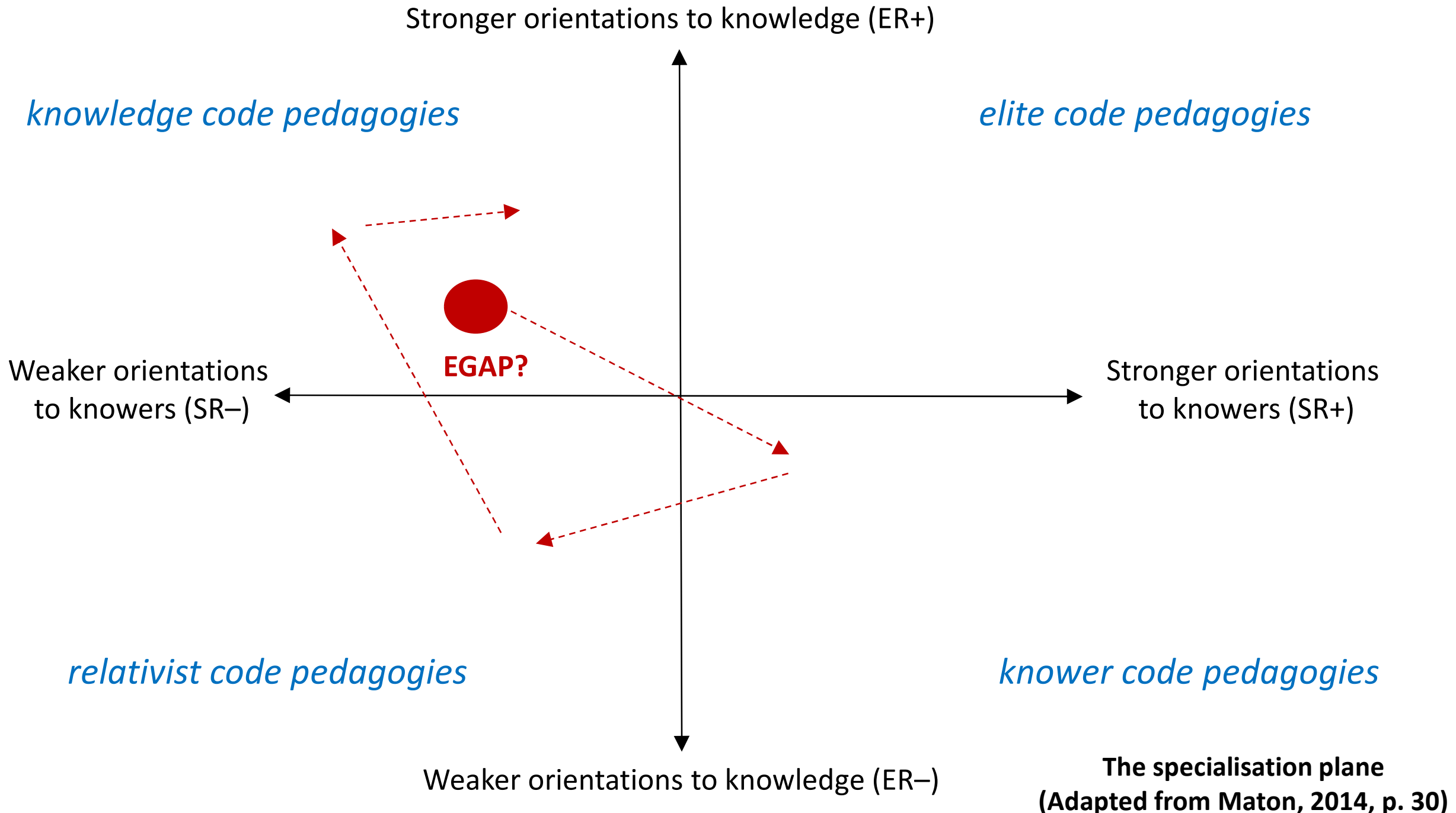


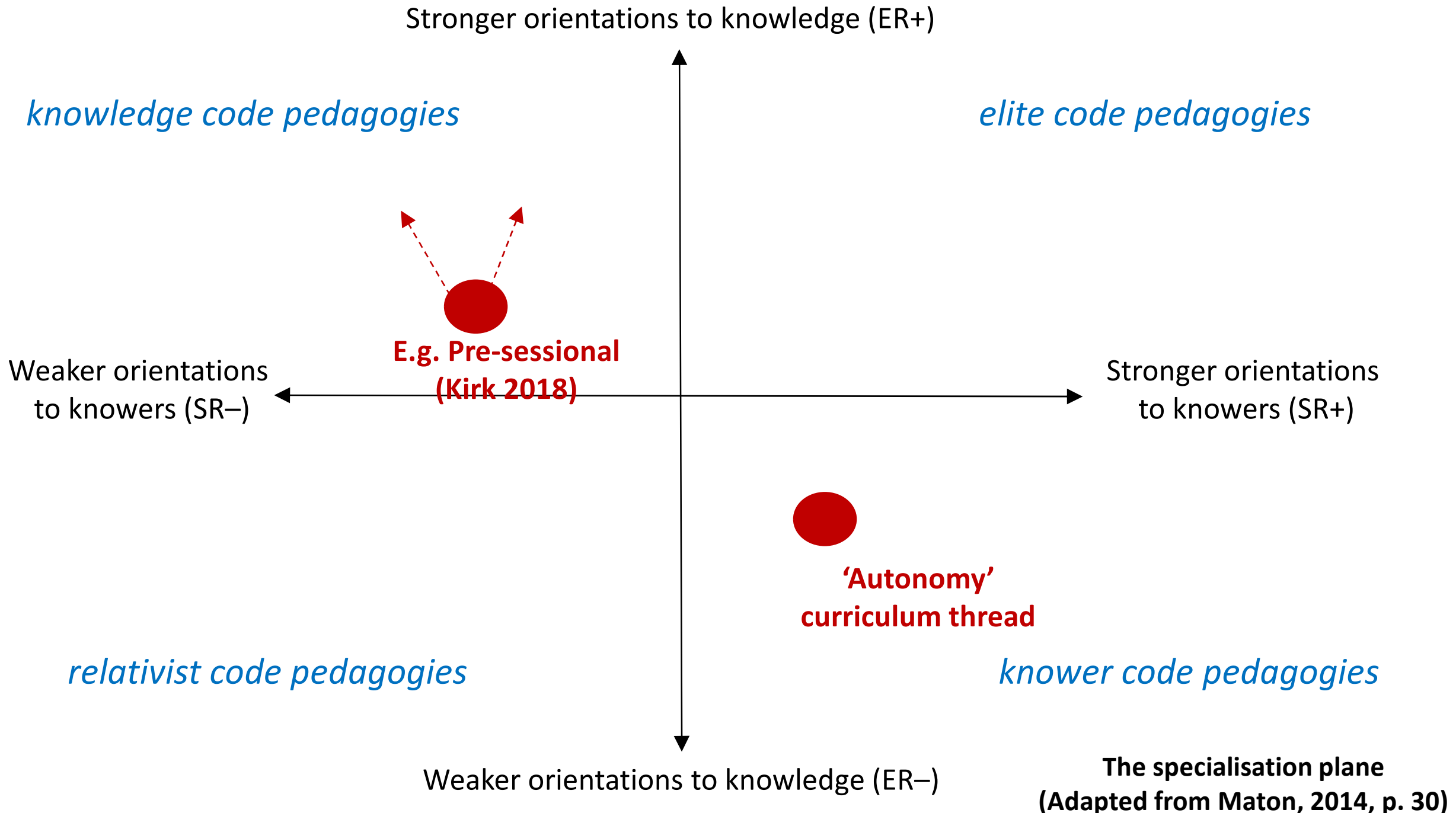


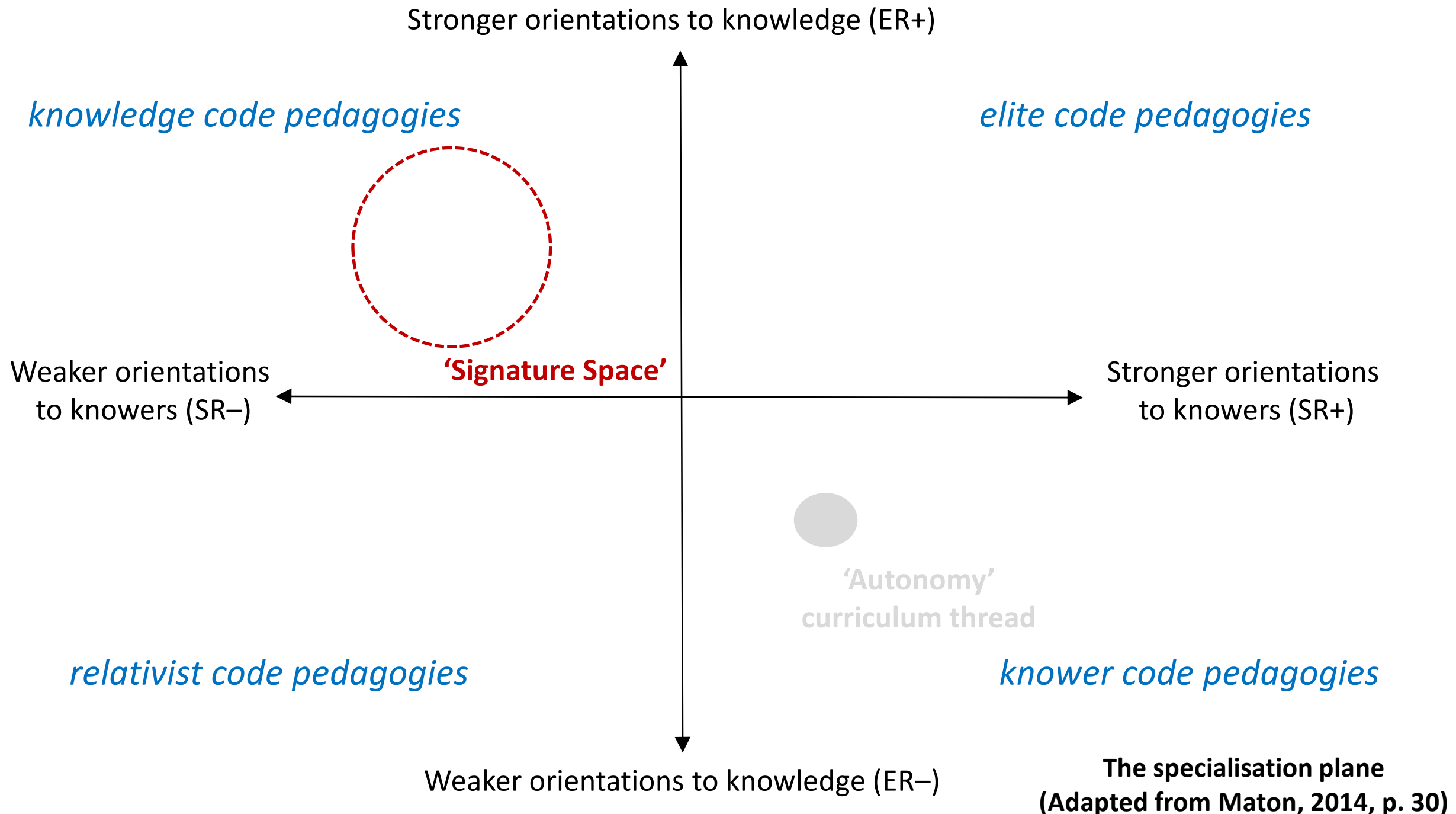


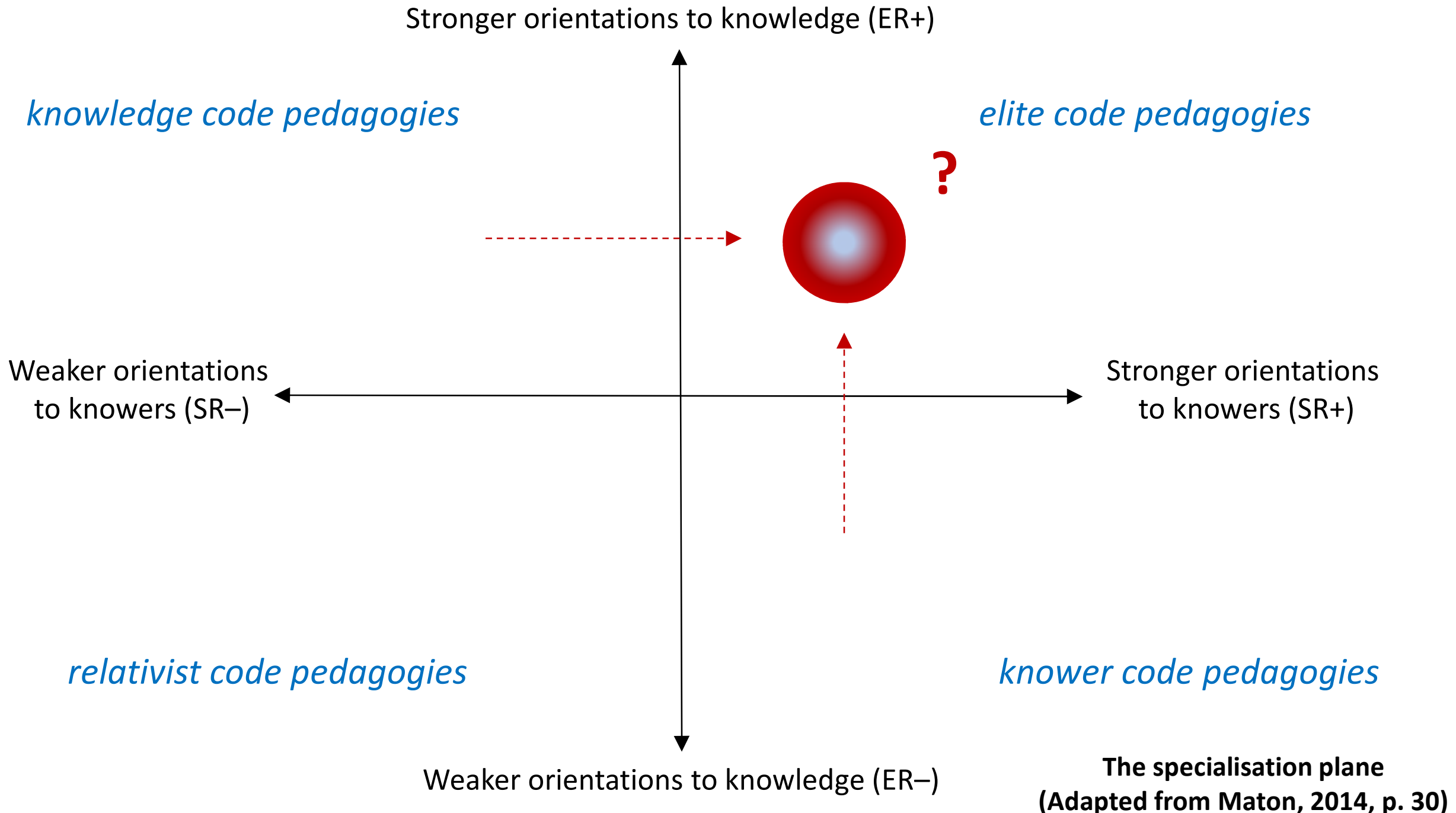












Signature / Powerful Pedagogies for EAP?

Emerge in relation to social and material ecologies...

...in addition to

- Classroom practices
- Underpinning knowledges
- Driving axiology (values)



Signature / Powerful Pedagogies for EAP?

Practices operate in four spaces...

- ‘Signature spaces’ probably emerge locally + via networks (e.g. BALEAP)
- Not all ‘powerful’ pedagogies are *epistemically* powerful...
- EAP pedagogies may vary mostly *within* a space (quadrant)...
- ...but may *code shift* through:
 - Movement of practitioners/ expertise
 - Institutional change
 - Scholarship



Signature / Powerful Pedagogies for EAP?

Might an *espoused* signature space be emerging in the *elite code*?

- ...i.e. EAP pedagogies that orient ***both*** to academic discourse(s) ***and*** to students' material conditions & lived experience
- >> A centring of knowledge *and* a centring of social justice
- >> *Powerful pedagogies* in both senses – epistemic & social



Signature / Powerful Pedagogies for EAP?

Might an *espoused* signature space be emerging in the *elite code*?

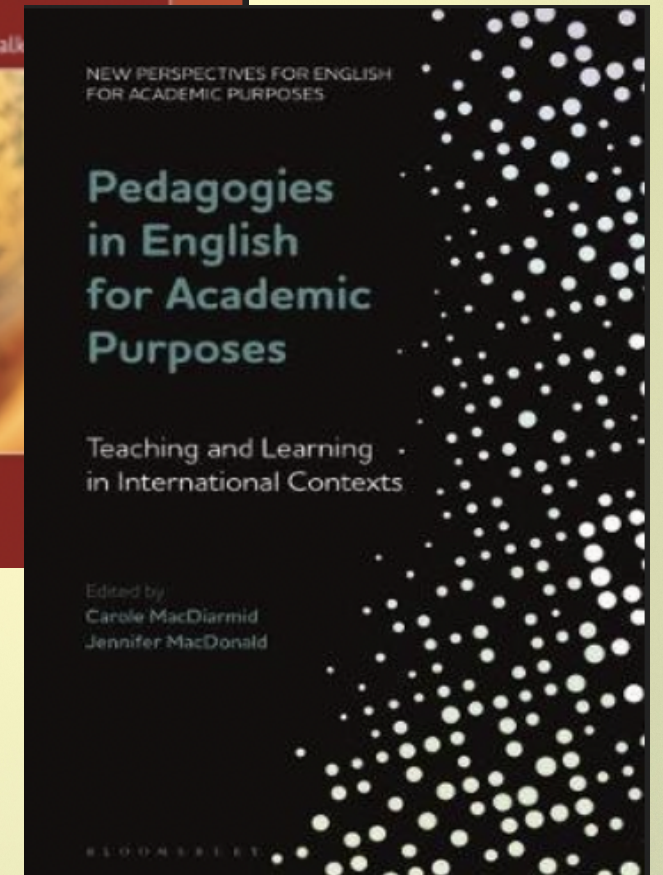
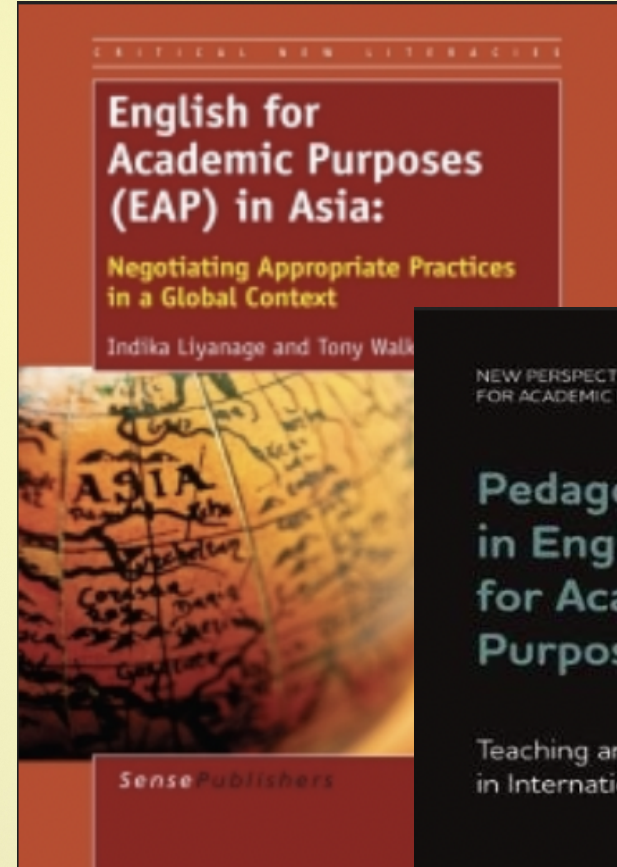
- = A challenge for EAP practitioner education and development, if so...
- ...but all teachers should have access to these powerful pedagogies
- = an issue of social justice also for staff



Signature / Powerful Pedagogies for EAP?

Reminds us that individual *repertoires* become community *reservoirs* through:

- Communities of open classrooms
- Making explicit the principles & values underpinning 'surface' EAP practices
(*E.g.* via peer observation + critical discussion; curriculum conversations; etc)
- Engagement across borders
(*E.g.* via network building; reading across contexts; voices from the Global South)



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Thank you

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