

NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS AND FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

The most important question in the current teacher education is whether student teachers will have the necessary knowledge, skills and views that are needed for the realisation of teaching-studying-learning process and of the intended educational innovations embodied in the everyday teacher education. If one neglects this what sort of pre-service and in-service education and support will appeal to teacher students and teachers and how can one ever hope to help them to acquire the knowledge, skills and views they ever need for their professional development and for the development of the teaching in the schools. These questions are at the top of the discussion about teacher education and touch on the essence of the teachers' professionalism and their professional development.

The concept of professionalism is used to refer to the complex whole of views, skills and values professionals, in this case student teachers and teachers have at their disposal and which are used to perform their everyday work in an expert and competent way. An expert has such competencies which differ from anybody else's. We all have experiences from teaching, studying and learning, but not everybody knows how to manage the complex process of teaching-studying-learning and is familiar to teachers' pedagogical thinking.

The professional teachers can be characterised in many ways. I'll do it by emphasising four points. He/she is aware of

1. The control they have of their work situation and the social tasks they have to perform
2. Their ability to adapt flexibly and critically to new aims and rapidly changing circumstances
3. The ability to make connection between their functioning at the classroom and school and far wider in the societal level
4. The capability to legitimise their professional functioning.

Professional development of teacher student and teachers refers to the way teachers acquire and develop knowledge, skills and values they employ in the service of their pupils. Consequently professional development refers to the individual teacher student's/teacher's competence in relation to the performance of his duties. His/her competence consists of the number of aspects: the professional, the methodology, the pedagogical and the organisational.

Student teachers and teachers may differ considerably in their competence on these aspects. In fact, what one is dealing with are capacity profiles. For the

professional development of students and teachers it is extremely important that they learn to reflect on their own thinking and functioning, i.e. their own beliefs and views about teaching, the position in the learning environment and school, their relation and interaction with the other actors, students and colleagues, their self-esteem, self-image and identity as teacher. The reflection of the teaching-studying-learning process and their line of arguing, what good learning implies, are the most important issues. The professional development of teacher students and teachers can be promoted by a whole range of theory and practice based on individual oriented activities. It is the result of a dynamic interaction between the characteristics and capacities of the individual student teacher and the study organisation.

This leads us to the question of complexity nature of the teaching-studying-learning process. First what is teaching? It is not easy to define teaching with one brief concept, because one should consider the background of the whole educational system and those specific curriculum topics that are guiding the educational process. It is interesting to note that the concept describing teaching have different aspects in different languages, maybe because we have different kind of ideas of the meaning and the content of that phenomenon. When somebody want to take most qualities of teaching into consideration, the simple word teaching is no longer sufficient. Teaching is evidently a part of some large system of concepts, especially when the students and their activities, studying and learning are included in those concepts. And of the constructive point of view learning should be emphasised in the phenomenon of teaching process. One could imagine the conceptualisation of teaching by following the definition of Anderson and Burns (1989, 3-15):

Teaching is an interpersonal, interactive activity, typically involving verbal communication, which is undertaken for the purpose of helping one or more students learn or change the ways in which they can or will behave.

One can find the terms of learning and changing in this conceptualisation. Instruction, on the other hand, is conceptualised as broader concept:

As inclusive of teaching (that is, teaching is one aspect or component of instruction). ... Knowing something about instruction helps us gain a more complete understanding of teaching.

The instructional process should consist of all meaningful components that are taking place in the classroom interaction. Besides of that it includes all steering factors defined in the curriculum. The task of an actor in this process is to promote learning in his/her students. The instructional process is thus a totality that includes the teacher's and the pupil's action as well as learning. Instructional process can be called as a teaching-studying-learning process (see Meri, M. 2008).

The constructivist view of learning points strongly to the initiative and activity of the student. This should be the centre of the teaching-studying-learning process. Through the history of education this idea is well known, but it receives according to Kansanen (1999, 88) new meaning. The student or the pupil is called a learner. In this terminology there are some problems. Without analysis of the context, learner may be the correct term because there are no immediate borders

hindering his/her actions. The commitment to the activity aimed at learning should be voluntary and it happens according to learner's free will. Kansanen emphasises that the situation changes radically when this activity is taking place in some institutional context. The participation is not always voluntary and the learner is no longer just a learner because he/she is expected to work according to the targets and goals set forth in the curriculum. The boundaries of the curriculum is not easy the exceed and the degrees of freedom are dictated by the curriculum. This is true in the teacher education. Are the teacher students really learners, who are on the way to professional?

I summarise the determinants of student teacher's pedagogical development and need to the professional expertise with the herbartian triangle. In the triangle the teacher, the learner and the content are presented at it's points. Although the didactic triangle should be treated as a whole, it is almost impossible to do so in the practice of teacher education. That is why it is usually analysed in pairs. The most usual approach is to take the relation between the teacher and the learner (student teacher) as the starting point (Figure 1). When this is seen as a pedagogical relationship it brings with it certain special meaning. Although the learners are adults the pedagogical relation between the teacher educator and the teacher student is still, however, asymmetrical. The asymmetry can decrease when this relation includes shared pedagogical authority, as Meri (2001) argues. Within this pedagogical authority between the teacher and the student both partners can share this expertise they already have. In many cases we think too simply that the teachers have some knowledge that the students do not yet have. You can think about the ITC-knowledge. Many students are more familiar with it than many teachers.

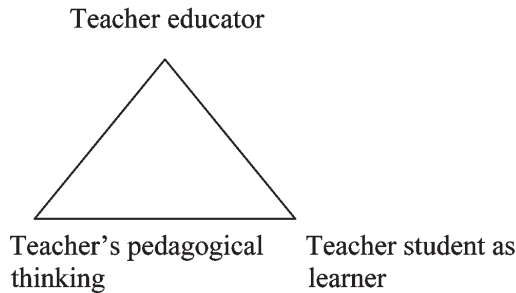


Figure 1. The determinants of teaching-studying-learning process in teacher education

How can one determine the phenomenon on teacher's pedagogical thinking? According to Kansanen, Tirri, Meri, Krokfors, Husu and Jyrhämä (2000) it includes issues like making educational decisions: preparation and planning the curriculum and the lessons, assessment; pedagogical mind set of teacher: educational and school culture determining teacher's teaching frame, professional self frame and student's studying frame, moral perspectives in teacher-(different) actor relationship, rules and recipes of good teaching for management and controlling the

classroom events and argumentation in the instruction. The content of most teaching practice guides refers well this list of teachers' pedagogical thinking (see e.g. Cohen, L. et al. 1999).

For the professional development of teacher student it is obvious to become familiar with to issues of teachers' pedagogical thinking. How can it happen in pre-service education and further on by teachers in in-service education. As Black and Atkin (1996) declare there are several areas in which innovations should happen. Those are learner-directed procedural learning; an awareness of the importance of a thorough learning of central concepts instead of continuous extension of their knowledge of all pedagogical and didactical subject, procedural skills such as the needed to solve instructional problems, to collect information and the criticise information, to communicate successfully, active, inquiring and both independent and in team-organised learning, application of learning and linking theoretical knowledge with instructional practice.

There are some notes and comments by trying to develop the expertise and profession knowledge of the student teachers/teachers:

1. It obvious that teachers find it very difficult to give up the habit of holding forth all the time, and of explaining things, even if they themselves would like to drop this habit;
2. Discarding the coursebook as a reliable guide in dealing with their subject in classroom creates uncertainty especially among novice teachers and teachers preparing pupils for their exams;
3. Learner-oriented teaching also lays a heavier rather than a lighter claim on the teachers' academic expertise in order to guide pupils in their cognitive processes and promote their deeper understanding of what is being studied;
4. Creating links between subject matter and social contexts and suggesting applications of what is being learned often proves to be quite risky;
5. Teachers experience a certain loss of power over that happens in their lessons, over individual learning processes and over pupils' command of the subject matter. This power was probably illusory in the past, but it manifests itself more clearly now;
6. Determining and assessing pupil progress and achievements certainly in the skills area, is far from simple; it takes lot of time; there is tension between testing and assessing on the one hand and formatively diagnosing for feed-back on the learning process on the other; moreover, there is often uncertainty about quality criteria;
7. Orientation towards the learning of the pupils makes the teacher uncertain about the division of roles between himself and the pupils and about his image with colleagues and parents (requires new orientation to pedagogical authority);
8. The relationship between teaching and education is in imbalance, in many cases teaching is behindcoming and education forecoming.

The results of the studies of Anderson (1995) and Black & Atkin (1996) show how fundamental the changes in the role and expertise of the teacher are. The

complete professional repertoire of teachers is at stake. An extensive reconsideration is required not only of their methodology and the nature of the input materials, but also of their basic views of teaching-studying-learning process. That touches especially the becoming teachers. Even if we can solve some dilemmas in teacher education and even if the student teachers will give evidence of learning in their views, generally only little steps appeared to have been made in methodology and the creation of learning experiences for pupils. It should be asked, if we need a new teacher generation for the most important change in teaching-studying-learning process, that is for truly actively and independent learning. Are our students in teacher education in that kinds of situation, that they can reach this aim already? Are we ready to give our students opportunities to do so in their studies? So the ultimate question is how teacher educators can be given the possibility to learn how they can "teach" their students to learn independently. So what it all boils down to is the learning of student teachers or to say it differently, their professional development and how this development can be stimulated in an effective way.

In the professional development of teacher students/teachers a number of partly overlapping phases are to be distinguished: initiation, implementation and institutionalisation. In applying this phasing to individual actors, the interface between initiation and implementation seems to be of crucial importance. The most important question is how to get the studying-learning process of actors started. Research provides us heuristics for the design of promising approaches. Such a design should emphatically recognise the studying-learning process character of the intended changes in the actor him/herself. With this in mind, one can try to use a number of appointments that apply to studying-learning process in general for actors who want to develop their pedagogical thinking. I'll refer to study of Black and Atkin (1996), see also Uljens (1997):

1. Change in behaviour (learning) starts with the kind of disturbance of equilibrium. What needs doing is demonstrating to the student teacher/teacher that current practice is not conducive to realising the intended new way of acting. Acquainting actors with new ideas, sources and activities can make them aware of the possibilities to develop and intensify that there are alternatives for the current approach;
2. The fact that new ways and habits for the classroom life already do exist, offers moral support for the actors and is real challenge for them;
3. Demonstrating of classroom activities which reflect new ideas in several different learning environments make the actors' understanding of them more profound and intensifies the credibility of these ideas;
4. Personal support (expert and nearby) is essential to minimise the innovation risk and the threatening implementation dip. Co-operation between actors in this is invaluable;
5. Most general principle that is mentioned in the literature of teachers' pedagogical thinking is the encouragement of self-reflection, co-operation and interaction between actors. Networks of different kind of schools and actors offer more possibilities and effectiveness for the individual development.

In any case the most important determinant in supporting to develop teacher students/teachers' pedagogical thinking is the student and his/her achieving the aims and the goals of the curriculum of teacher education. The teacher educator's task is to try to guide him/her to the didactic relation (Figure 2). There is always the relation between the student and the content of the teacher education. Is that exactly the intention to learn to reflect and to evaluate, more than only to follow rules and recipes for good teaching? This relation is manifest as studying, and latent as learning and other changes. Further on the teacher educator should have a relation to the relation between teacher student and the content of studies. In other words the teacher educator has a relation to studying, and at the same time this relation is to the learning and other processes. And that can be called didactic relation (cf. Klingberg 1995 pp. 77–84).

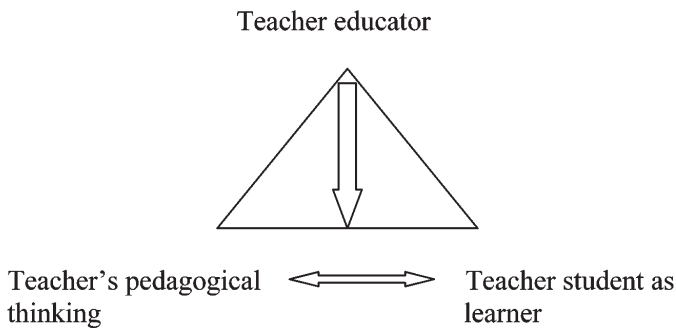


Figure 2. The didactic relation in the didactic triangle

To highlight the importance of the didactic relation in the professional development of teacher student/teacher it may be emphasised that concentrating on the contents of teacher education makes an educator an expert and concentrating on students makes the educator a caretaker of the pedagogical relation. To concentrate on the relation between the student and the content of teacher education or on studying is, however, the core of teacher's profession.

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Мати Мери

ЗАХТЕВИ САВРЕМЕНОГ ОБРАЗОВАЊА И ПРОФЕСИОНАЛНОГ УСАВРШАВАЊА УЧИТЕЉА И НАСТАВНИКА

РЕЗИМЕ

У раду се полази од гледишта да је најзначајније питање савременог образовања учитеља и наставника да ли они стичу одговарајућа знања, вештине и ставове који су неопходни за успешно одвијање васпитно-образовног процеса, као и за увођење иновација у свакодневну наставну праксу. Поред бројних компетенција, које имају више аспеката (професионалне, методичке, педагошке и организационе), за увођење иновација веома је важно педагошко размишљање будућих учитеља и учитеља и наставника у пракси.

Аутор дефинише појам наставе (поучавања), учења, конструктивистички приступ у настави, и васпитно-образовни процес. Такође, описује процес професионалног усавршавања кроз неколико фаза које се међусобно преклапају. Да бисмо нагласили значај дидактичког односа у професионалном образовању и усавршавању студената, будућих учитеља, као и учитеља и наставника у пракси, истаћи ћемо да фокусирањем на садржину образовања учитеља професор постаје стручњак у својој области, док га усредсређеност на студенте чини креатором педагошког односа. Ипак, суштина наставничке професије јесте у усредсређеност на однос између студента, будућег учитеља, и садржине његовог образовања, односно на учење.