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Pedagogical Studies in Teacher Education: Reintroducing methodology as the core of pedagogical studies

Abstract

One way to study the historical development of pedagogical studies in Norwegian teacher education is to examine the national curricula. Through documentary analyses of the national curricula for general teacher education from 1837 until the arrival of the differentiated programmes in 2010, this study tries to explain the pedagogical studies' perceived lack of relevance to the profession. The findings show an inconsistent use of concepts in pedagogical studies and varying concepts describing didactic categories of classroom activities and practices, if they are present. The role of pedagogy in teacher education has varied, from being the main subject to a subject of reflection, and from a base for knowledge and tools to a base for reflection and formation. This article suggests that pedagogical studies must primarily include basic concepts concerning central activities or practices of the teaching profession as a way to reintroduce methodology and bring teacher education closer to the profession. With classroom activities as the foundation and framework, combined with the science of education, a pedagogy of teacher education can constitute itself. This approach also brings pedagogical studies back to the curricula covering the 1837–1939 period with teaching as their core content, and teaching methodology and didactics as the real pedagogy of teacher education.

Keywords: student teachers, pedagogical studies, methodology, national curricula, reflection, pedagogy of teacher education

Sammendrag

Den historiske utviklingen til pedagogikkfaget i norsk lærerutdanning kan studeres på mange måter. Gjennom dokumentanalyse av de nasjonale planene fra 1837 til de differensierte utdanningene i 2010, forsøker denne studien å forklare fagets opplevde mangel på relevans for lærerprofesjonen. Resultatene viser at det ikke er noen konsistent bruk av begreper i faget, og begrep som anvendes på didaktiske kategorier i klasserommet har variert. Ulike disipliner har dominert til ulike tider, selv om psykologien totalt sett har vært mest fremtredende. Pedagogikkens rolle har variert fra å være utdanningens viktigste fag til å være et refleksjonsfag og, fra å være et redskapsfag til å ha danning og personlighetsutvikling av lærerstudenten som hovedmål. På bakgrunn av dokumentanalysen og tidligere studier foreslås en lærerutdanningspedagogikk der grunnleggende begreper hentet fra sentrale aktiviteter i klasserommet utgjør fundamentet og rammeverket. På denne måten re-introdueres metodikken i pedagogikkfaget, og undervisningshåndverket får en sentral plass. Overbygningen dannes i kombinasjon med pedagogikken som vitenskap, og slik skapes et område der pedagogikkfaget i lærerutdanningen kan konstituere seg. Ved at undervisningslæren og metodikken får tilbake sin sentrale plass, kan profesjonsnærheten sikres. Da er vi tilbake til den egentlige pedagogikken i lærerutdanningen, pedagogikken fra de nasjonale planene i perioden 1837–1939.

Nøkkelord: lærerstudenter, pedagogikk, metodikk, læreplan, refleksjon, lærerutdanningspedagogikk

Introduction

A recurring question in the debate on pedagogical studies in teacher education and in the general history of pedagogy has been the relation between theory and practice (Dewey, 1904/2008; Lampert et al., 2013). From a teacher educator's viewpoint, this relation may be manifested as the pedagogical studies' relevance to the profession. In Norwegian general teacher education, the debate on pedagogical studies has intensified over the past fifteen years. The critics seem to dominate, with the perceived lack of relevance to the profession as a crucial point (Fossøy & Sataøen, 2008; Haug, 2008a, 2008b; Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanningen (Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education), 2006; Telhaug, 2004). Through documentary analyses of the national curricula, this study investigates possible explanations to this perceived irrelevance. To what extent do the curricula contain central activities and concepts from the classroom and thereby connect pedagogical studies to the profession? In Norway, general teacher education is regulated through national curricula passed by the governing political leadership in any given period. These curricula specify the goals, content, structure and organisation of teacher education.

Previous research involving 1,219 primary school teachers in Oslo showed that the majority of the respondents experienced a gap between theory and practice in pedagogical studies. Hence, pedagogical studies did not provide them with sufficient tools to function adequately in their profession (Vinje, 2011, 2013). The teachers believed that too many of the concepts and theories they learnt were abstract, less relevant and not adaptive enough for classroom deployment. To describe what they really needed to learn, the respondents used the expression "the craft of the profession". They wanted to learn how to teach, that is, the teaching methodology. International studies noted that the experienced gap between what student teachers learned in their education and what they needed in their profession, was widespread in teacher education programmes (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005; Izadinia, 2012; Lampert et al., 2013; McCormack & Thomas, 2003; Spalding, Klecka, Lin, Wang, & Odell, 2011; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998). Studies on other professional education programmes in Norway indicated that teacher education faced the greatest challenges, not only in the gap between theory and practice but also in integrating pedagogical studies into the education (Hatlevik, 2012; Heggen, 2010). The lack of coherence seemed to be a challenge, not only in Norway but internationally (Heggen & Raaen, 2014; Norgård, 2006). This study analysed national curricula as measures of their relevance to the profession in order to identify concepts and theories corresponding to classroom practices and activities. Such concepts and theories would also constitute a professional language for teachers.

Based on previous research, the following research questions were asked:

1. Do the curricula contain concepts corresponding to central activities in the classroom and the science of education?
2. Do the curricula encompass concepts and theories to postulate a pedagogy of teacher education and a professional language?

Method

The method used comprised documentary analyses of all the national curricula of pedagogical studies in Norwegian general teacher education from 1837 to 2010. This study used the concept of curriculum for all the plans although they might have slightly different forms.

The documentary analyses were performed on two levels – specific and integrated. Specific analyses corresponded to research question 1, involving the search for more specific concepts in each curriculum. This process was done by listing and counting basic terms referring to central activities or practices characterising the profession (e.g., teaching, learning, and learning theories, and the learner), in other words, describing what the curricula would advance as central tasks and activities in pedagogical studies. A condition was that the concepts and activities described should also be concepts found in the science of education, that is, not part of a colloquial language alone. The concepts found in the curricula were not interpreted or defined in any way. For instance, when the concept of teaching occurred, it was only counted and listed in its context. When the curriculum itself defined teaching, it was noted.

Research question 2 expanded question 1. The findings in question 1 should encompass concepts and theories from the profession. To fully speak of a language of the profession, these combined concepts and theories must be present to such an extent as to constitute such language. This required making a list based on an overall, integrated analysis, which concurrently could reveal other characteristics of the curricula (e.g., didactic orientation).

Teaching and *learning* were the basic concepts chosen to be searched in this study. These concepts are common to the classroom activities or practices and the science of education. Exceptions were made to the curricula covering the 1837–1939 period. They had to be analysed in a more integrated way due to their short form that concentrated on content areas. The reason for operating with two concepts only was that a preliminary study of the curricula revealed few concepts fitting the criteria, especially from the 1965 reform and onwards.

Each curriculum was labelled according to its most overarching characteristic or its directive to the teacher educators (e.g., the fundamental didactic orientation). The labels or terms were obtained directly from the curricula themselves and were not derived in any other way.

Findings

Teaching and keeping school

Teaching and upbringing were the overall goals of the pedagogical studies in the 1837 curriculum, as stated in § 2 and § 3 of the first national regulations for teacher education (Kirke-Departementet (Ministry of Church Affairs), 1837, p. 239). The courses consisted of five learning areas (psychology, teaching methodology and instruction, textbooks, discipline and education, and laws and curricula). Teaching methodology and upbringing were two different disciplines that together dominated the studies. Psychology was intended to serve as an ancillary science to methodology and education.

§ 13 of the regulations stated:

The students are to thoroughly learn the most functional teaching methods for primary school, assigning the appropriate method to each content; they are to learn the most important rules for discipline and upbringing and learn practical skills in instruction and overall teaching [...] (Kirke-Departementet (Ministry of Church Affairs), 1837, p. 242) (author's translation here and in all quotations).

This statement indicates that teaching and instruction comprised the core content of teacher education. The other disciplines were ancillary to help student teachers gain better teaching skills and judgement when using these skills. Moreover, the teacher educators were supposed to teach modelling methods that could be useful for the student teachers in their profession. The curriculum aimed at the profession, expressed in the curriculum's language: "§ 1: *Teaching and keeping school*" (Kirke-Departementet (Ministry of Church Affairs), 1837, p. 239). This phrase was characteristic of the first curriculum and thus constituted the first label. A headmaster wrote the curriculum. In other words, it originated from the academic world, the teacher education itself, rather than being formulated by the government and the politicians, which became the procedure later.

The deep orientation towards the profession continued into the next curriculum, the regulations of 1869 (Kirke-Departementet (Ministry of Church Affairs), 1869), although the studies were reduced to only one combined discipline, teaching and upbringing (Kirke-Departementet (Ministry of Church Affairs), 1869, § 16). The reduction was due to more subjects that were included in primary school, and teacher education had to broaden its range of subjects. Teaching and upbringing constituted the centre of pedagogical studies, which remained a key course in teacher education.

From teaching and upbringing to upbringing and teaching

The orientation towards the profession continued into the subsequent curricula from 1902 to 1939. Nevertheless, these curricula showed signs of change (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church

Affairs), 1902; Kirke- og utdanningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1933; Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1939). The first sign was the expansion of psychology, also manifested by the switch in the order of the two concepts in the discipline, from *teaching and upbringing* to *upbringing and teaching* (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1902), hence the label characterising the 1902 curriculum. Psychology was to be the foundation of upbringing and teaching, which comprised the central discipline in pedagogical studies (Kirke- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1902). The second sign was that the connection between psychology, on one hand, and upbringing and teaching, on the other hand, was not as strong in the 1939 curriculum as it was in the 1933 curriculum. In the 1933 curriculum, psychology was put forward as fundamental in pedagogical studies. The directions underlined that “the actual teaching should concentrate only on what could be of direct use in upbringing and teaching, abandoning everything of theoretical interest only” (Kirke- og utdanningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1933, p. 71).

Based on which disciplines the pedagogical studies encompassed in the subsequent curricula, the tendency was that psychology broadened its influence, and teaching methodology slowly lost its dominant role.

Progressive pedagogy

Under the 1939 curriculum, teacher education became the crucial tool for realising a united comprehensive school. The progressive pedagogy had its impact on the programme:

The work in teacher education must be organised to ensure the student's own activity. The principle of a working school is to lead the work wherever possible (Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1939, p. 60).

According to this excerpt, the didactic orientation, here formulated as a directive, was toward activity or progressive pedagogy. Therefore, the label that best characterised this curriculum was the concept of *progressive pedagogy*. The subject's name was pedagogy, and in the curriculum, child psychology was still intended to serve as the basis of education and teaching (Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1939, p. 97). Nonetheless, society and culture rather than individual child psychology were highlighted to play an important role in education (Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1939, p. 98). The directive that abandoned everything of merely theoretical interest was removed. Compared to previous years, the role of psychology in the formation of student teachers was given greater emphasis (Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1939, p. 97), a sign of what was to come in subsequent curricula.

Understanding and insight

The curriculum of 1965 was a revision of the 1939 plan. The disciplines of the 1965 curriculum were identical to those of the first curriculum of the Institute of Pedagogy at the University of Oslo in 1939. The university did not educate for a profession, and in this sense, pedagogical studies became more academic and further from the teaching profession.

Pedagogical studies were named pedagogical subjects and consisted of pedagogy and methodology. The studies aimed to “[...] give the student teachers a clear understanding of targets and means in education and upbringing [...] and give them special insights into the problems [that] a teacher [would] encounter [...]” (Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1965, p. 70). The two core concepts from this goal constituted the label *understanding and insight* to characterise this curriculum.

The concepts of *teaching* and *learning* were absent from this curriculum although teaching was mentioned once under the goal of developmental psychology: “[...] understand, teach and educate children [...]” (Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1965, p. 70). Psychology was the dominant discipline, and an important content target was the students’ psychological understanding of themselves (Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1965, p. 70). Sociology appeared for the first time as an independent component in pedagogical studies, probably as a consequence of the overall radicalisation.

Regarding pedagogical studies, the Curriculum Proposition of the National Council for Innovation in Education stated:

[...] [Pedagogical studies are] often said to be remote from what the student teachers’ everyday experience in school will be. It is said that pedagogical studies stop where they should begin – in the actual school settings (Forsøksrådet (The National Council for Innovation in Education (NCIE)), 1967, p. 37).

This quote shows an emerging shift in the weighting between disciplines. The rising demand for theory with a clearer connection to the profession strengthened psychology and methodology as the main disciplines. Didactics did not secure a more central role as the main discipline until 1980, when psychology was substituted with didactics to some degree.

Teaching became work organisation

By 1969, compulsory school had been extended from seven to nine years. New groups of pupils were entering, and organisational differentiation was postponed. Child upbringing became more social (Forsøksrådet (The National Council for Innovation in Education (NCIE)), 1967, p. 16), and in the 1967 curriculum, the societal perspective and sociology became important (Forsøksrådet (NCIE), 1967, p. 47). The child-centred activity pedagogy from the 1939 curriculum was underscored as a change in the teacher’s role. “The

teacher's functions as a work leader and an organiser become central" (Forsøksrådet, (NCIE), 1967, p. 20). This point was mentioned several times in different contexts, in the introduction and elsewhere, thus the label: *Teaching became work organisation*. It was designated as a change in pedagogical practice. The curriculum stated that student teachers should approach the content, including school and society in general, with a problematising attitude. This attitude was strengthened in the 1970s. The student teachers' own experiences and views were considered valid knowledge, parallel to textbooks (Forsøksrådet (NCIE), 1967). Based on their experiences, student teachers could establish their own concepts of what defined valid knowledge. The written examination was removed; the student teachers' class attendance and their delivery of hand-ins constituted the assessment. The guidance underscored that the content of the syllabus was not a learning target itself but a means to gain insights into child upbringing (Forsøksrådet (NCIE), 1967, p. 47).

The curriculum acted on the aforementioned criticisms towards pedagogical studies and expressed understanding for the student teachers' "[...] often unreasonable demands for pedagogical studies and methodology to provide them with recipes on how teaching might take place" (Forsøksrådet (NCIE), 1967, p. 38). The answer to this concern was that the methodology was not intended to issue rules on best practices in different teaching situations. The teachers and the problems they confronted were underlined as the crux of the matter, and it was vital to move away from a "[...] formalistic pedagogy oriented towards control of knowledge [...]" (Forsøksrådet (NCIE), 1967, p. 39). The plan recommended that theory should closely relate to what student teachers would encounter in the profession. Consequently, psychology was strengthened even more (Forsøksrådet (NCIE), 1967, p. 25), aiming at helping student teachers understand themselves. The subject's name was pedagogy and methodology, indicating that the useful methods in the profession were crucial. Moreover, methodology was recommended as a course of its own, giving student teachers opportunities to reflect on teaching methods and principles. As already noted, the plan defined methodology in terms of problem orientation and reflections, rather than methods of teaching and instruction.

The concept of *teaching* was mentioned under the methodology of teaching (one of four content areas) as *principles for teaching and work organisation in school*; otherwise, the concept was absent. However, as indicated, the curriculum contained strong directions for what the syllabus should exclude. *Learning* was mentioned only as learning psychology under general psychology, equal to the psychology of personality and social-psychological questions. Learning psychology comprised a minimal part of the curriculum and was not placed in context of teaching.

Problem orientation

In the curriculum of 1974 (Kirke- og utdanningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1974) and the interim plan of 1976, the term pedagogical studies was renamed pedagogical theory and practice. Traces of the change in direction could be observed from the new order of the disciplines. Didactics was placed over psychology, showing the first signs of didactics gaining ground at the expense of psychology. The instructions for teacher educators on how to design plans for each semester emphasised that these should be problem oriented, starting with the problems that the student teachers would encounter in their profession (Kirke- og utdanningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1974, p. 134), hence the label *problem orientation*. The changed role of the teacher from the 1967 plan was strengthened, as was the case in all the Nordic countries: “The teacher’s role as disseminator of knowledge has ceased to exist [...]; the teacher plays a more activating role in today’s school” (Nordisk utvalg (Nordic committee), 1976). The teaching methodology seemed redundant when the teacher was supposed to activate rather than teach. Teaching was thoroughly elucidated in the introduction, which provided guidance and direction for the studies. Learning was not mentioned. The concept of *teaching* was stated in the overall goals: “[...] the students are to develop insight, skills and attitudes to plan, implement and evaluate the work of teaching and upbringing” (Kirke- og utdanningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1974, p. 129). They were also urged “to understand, accept, and help each pupil on subjects and personal matters” (Kirke- og utdanningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1974, p. 129). Teaching and upbringing were thoroughly covered in the didactics section, which was one of five topics in the curriculum. The curriculum gave examples of “problem areas” under each topic and theme, and didactics concentrated on analyses and discussions of a more principal nature rather than knowledge oriented towards subject matters. *Learning* was categorised under pedagogical psychology (psychology in education), where it was one of seven topics. Learning was not mentioned in the examples of problem areas, whereas “teaching, studying and working methods seen as social phenomena” were (Kirke- og utdanningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1974, p. 132). This social orientation spanned the entire curriculum programme.

Personal development and involvement

Similar to the previous curricula, general teacher education in the 1980s mainly targeted educating the class teacher as opposed to the subject teacher. The 1980 plan consisted of targets and main working areas and topics. Philosophy, pedagogical ideas and school history were reduced for the benefit of the community perspective, which strengthened the role of sociology although psychology remained the ruling discipline in the 1980s. Perhaps the most

important change was the removal of teaching and upbringing as an independent area, although didactics was given a central place in pedagogical studies (Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1980, p. 228). The concept of *teaching* was mentioned in two of the topic lists but did not exist in the curriculum's general vocabulary. The concept of *working methods* had taken its place, signalling that the child-centred attitude still played an important role in teacher education. This concept emphasised equality in the relationship between teacher and pupil and ensured the latter's activity and participation. For the teacher to achieve this role, "the student teacher's personal development and involvement must have a central place in the curriculum" (Kyrkje- og undervisningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Church Affairs), 1980, p. 7), and *personal development and involvement* emerged as a characteristic label for this period. The concept of *learning* seemed to be replaced with *development*, which of course contained aspects of learning but failed to accentuate learning as the main purpose of school. Central activities of the profession, for instance instructional strategies, were absent in the plan.

Critical reflection and interaction

The curriculum of 1992/1994 (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1994) expanded teacher education to four years, but pedagogical studies as a subject was reduced. Psychology was somewhat pushed aside for the benefit of learning and didactics. Pedagogical studies as a subject was established as one of reflection: "Through their studies, the students have to acquire basic competence in exercising critical reflection on the grounds of increasingly richer pedagogical concepts" (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1994, p. 304). The studies were intended to be built on cooperation and interaction, which were also proposed as ways of working in the classroom. These two central concepts from the plan, *critical reflection and interaction*, constituted its label.

The curriculum stated that pedagogical studies should emphasise discussions on ideas and theories. Consequently, the subject could not contribute with directions for practical pedagogical work (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1994, p. 304). With this statement, the subject failed to provide student teachers with useful tools and directions for the profession. It became even more accentuated as a reflection base, a foundation for professional activities, not encompassing the activities themselves.

The introduction stated that "[...] the student teachers must be trained in asking critical questions about their own and the schools' work" (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1994, p. 304). Concerning the subject matter, namely knowledge, the students' experiences and attitudes were crucial. Pedagogical theory and teachers' experiences were juxtaposed with the student teachers' own school experiences as

knowledge content (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1994, p. 305).

Regarding the curriculum's language, the concept of *teaching* was mentioned in the introduction but not in the main areas or topics. Learning was replaced by *facilitating learning processes*, and the word *development* was the basic concept used in the main areas, with *learning* in their headings. Although the concepts of teaching and learning were mentioned in the goals, the descriptions indicated nothing about teaching and learning strategies. The reflections seemed to be the most important content, and the social perspective was fundamental to all analyses of pedagogical studies.

Analysis and reflection

The 1997 draft of the national curriculum covered all teacher education from kindergarten to high school (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1997). It described pedagogical studies as dominated by the scientific-oriented psychology up to the 1970s, and then becoming more oriented towards values, culture and society (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1997, p. 40). It gave examples of disciplines in pedagogy, with philosophy coming first. The pedagogy subject was intended to:

[...] give student teachers knowledge about the Norwegian society and the institutions on which it stands. The student teachers are to acquire first-hand knowledge of school, its values, content and distinctive character, in addition to knowledge about operators and factors of significance to the interaction between teacher and pupil [...] (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1997, p. 41).

The concept of *teaching* was used once in the main goals, parallel to *learning processes*. Teaching and learning were not mentioned as independent learning topics. *Critical* and *reflection* were concepts characterising the goals, and even the understanding had to be critical (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1997, p. 44). The main activities aimed to entail the student teachers' analysis and reflection based on cultural competence, as indicated in the definition of pedagogical studies as a subject:

[...] characterised by conflicts and changes, both concerning values and different ways of understanding and acting. This reflects the different opinions of teaching, childhood and conditions of growing up in society (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1997, p. 41).

The lack of concepts concerning didactics and learning made it hard to find basic concepts of relevance to the teachers' actual work in the classroom. The student teachers must have found it even more difficult, often lacking the ability to use philosophical statements to draw conclusions about teaching.

Socio-cultural theory as official theory of teacher education

From 1995 onwards, teacher education was regulated via the Act Related to Universities and University Colleges. The demands of teacher education had to comply with the academic standards at university levels (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1999, p. 19). The name of the discipline was changed from pedagogical theory and practice to pedagogy. Practice was no longer the responsibility of pedagogical studies, a decline made visible in the national curriculum by then (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1999, p. 49). Similar to previous curricula, the 1999 curriculum lacked the concept of *teaching* and did not mention teaching as a competence. It contained four target areas and four perspectives but failed to present the concept of *learning*. Regarding learning targets or student teachers' activities, reflection still played a central role, combined with critical understanding and insight (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1999, p. 42). One of the perspectives was socio-cultural (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1999, p. 41), which sent a strong signal to teacher educators. Through this viewpoint, Vygotsky became the official learning theoretician in pedagogical studies as the leading representative of the socio-cultural perspective in Norwegian teacher education. Learning was a product of social activities and cooperation; little weight was placed on individual learning.

Teaching was not mentioned as a concept. The teacher's role was described as an organiser of learning environments and an adviser (Kirke-, utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of ERC Affairs), 1999, p. 15). This statement highlighted the more traditional manner of teaching as an irrelevant option. The pupil, rather than the teacher, should be active. Working interdisciplinarily, preferably on projects, was emphasised, and no concept described the teacher's actual work. The phrase *working procedure* referred to both the pupils' and the teacher's ways of working. The didactic categories of the classroom activities and practices appeared diffused because the language of education was more characterised by colloquial speech. With no concepts describing the classroom's didactic categories, a specialised language of education was missing.

Didactic reflection

Student teachers' personal maturity and self-understanding remained goals in the new national curriculum of 2003 (Utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Research), 2003/2009, p. 8). The debate leading up to the curriculum revolved around the identity of the subject of pedagogy, and it became clear that this identity was not yet settled (Fossøy & Sataøen, 2008, p. 6). Reflection was still the main purpose of the subject. The same tendency was observed in Danish pedagogy:

The student teachers expect that pedagogical studies would give descriptions of how to handle pedagogical practice. This is a contradiction to the teachers' expectations that the subject's primary goal is to exercise their reflective abilities (Fossøy & Sataøen, 2008, p. 21).

This excerpt signalled a discrepancy between what the student teachers wanted to learn and what the educators wanted them to learn. The issue of student teachers asking about the relevance of pedagogical studies in teacher education must be perceived as nothing less than catastrophic for pedagogy as a subject in teacher education. Consequently, didactics was given greater emphasis in the 2003 curriculum. The objectives defined pedagogical studies as an educative subjectⁱ, and “[...] the student teachers [should] acquire knowledge and experience to critically analyse the work of the teacher and the pupil” (Utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Research), 2003/2009, p. 22). In this curriculum, reflection was noted as didactic, hence the label *didactic reflection* for this period. Out of three target areas, only one dealt with didactics, although this must still be regarded as a step forward for didactics. Concepts from didactics were found in the target areas, that is, the concept of learning strategies. The student teachers should be “able to analyse pupils’ learning strategies and apply this knowledge in organising an inclusive learning environment” (Utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Research), 2003/2009, p. 22). The concept of *teaching* was nowhere to be found and seemed to be replaced with organising an inclusive learning environment. The concept of *learning* was mentioned under class leadership. The student teachers must be “able to facilitate individual learning” (Utdannings- og forskningsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Research), 2003/2009, p. 22), which might also be interpreted as teaching.

Discussion

When student teachers start their preparation as teachers, they should begin by acquiring a clear set of central concepts, similar to those of any other vocational or professional education. The concepts should concentrate on the central activities characterising the profession in which students educate themselves, such as *sawing* for the carpenter, *drilling* for the dentist, and *teaching* for the teacher.

The analyses of the documents revealed few basic concepts or others corresponding to the central activities or practices in the classroom and the science of pedagogy (research question 1). *Teaching* and *learning* are fundamental concepts to be found under any time period and any educational policy regime, covering most of the classroom activities. Measured by the absence of these concepts, meaning is conveyed by the teachers’ evaluations of pedagogical studies as too distant from their profession. Concepts are hard to use in classrooms when they do not reflect actual classroom activities.

Neither the specific nor the integrated search uncovered *teaching* and *learning* or other basic, common concepts as consistent throughout the national curricula. Defined from this perspective, the curricula lacked a coherent and consistent language of the profession (research question 2). As shown, teaching could be interpreted as substituted with other descriptions of the teacher's activities (e.g., organising and advising), resulting from the changes in didactic and political orientations. It was more difficult to find substitutions for the concept of learning. Concerning the curricula's general language, it scarcely encompassed concepts from the science of education – the pedagogy itself. The 1967 curriculum gave the impression that its language had too much in common with a colloquial language to be called a language of education. As such, it was incapable of providing the profession with its own specialised concepts and terminology – a professional language.

This conclusion must consider that the actual teaching or the syllabi of pedagogical studies in different institutions were not covered in this study. The national curricula have been intended to function as directions and frames in constructing institutional curricula and syllabi. Teacher educators have always been obliged to work within the national curricula, focusing and giving directions on important content. It should be presumed that a relationship of some kind has existed between the curricula and the actual content of teacher education. This relationship is beyond the scope of this study but will be an interesting theme for further research.

The fact that educationalists often mean different things when referring to the same concepts, even when the concepts are central to their subject, is overlooked here. Probably, a relationship also exists between the curricula and the political situation/ideology prevailing in each period covered in this study. This paper has not discussed political influences on pedagogy; this could be another theme for further studies.

The teachers' statements that the theories they learned seemed too abstract for actual use in the classroom (Vinje, 2011) could be explained by psychology progressively acquiring a more independent and dominating role as a discipline. Sociology and the social perspective gained precedence over disciplines and theories that were more directed towards actual classroom work. During certain periods, the curricula focused more on student teachers' reflections and critical attitudes than on classroom activities. For student teachers, the push for reflections must have been a challenge. There is reason to emphasise that reflection is a relatively advanced cognitive form of higher-order thinking, including re-evaluation of prior knowledge (critical thinking) (Ausubel, 1963; Budsankom, Sawangboon, Damrongpanit, & Chuensirimongkol, 2015; Garrison & Archer, 2000). This issue also challenged teacher educators on how to teach about and assess student teachers' reflections. Assessment in general is a challenging task for any teacher. Goals formulated as reflections make it even more difficult. Assessing reflections may also incorporate a high degree of subjectivity, which

makes the assessment process less objective and more vulnerable to being kept private.

According to the national curricula, teaching methodology was neither emphasised nor totally missing after 1939. From 1967 onwards, pedagogical studies openly disclaimed responsibility for giving concrete instructions or guidelines for teaching and learning, that is, practical pedagogical work. Social and personal development was rendered as the main objective. Hammerness (2013) confirmed this reluctance to provide opportunities for student teachers to learn specific instructional strategies. It illustrated the strength of the resistance against teaching methodology from 1967 to the 1980s and 1990s. Hammerness (2013) also showed that teacher education faculty members were more concerned with what kind of teacher educators they wanted to be rather than what kind of teachers they wanted to educate. The faculties' goal was to provide student teachers with experiences rather than learning opportunities (Hammerness, 2013, p. 410).

What possible consequences did this situation have on student teachers and their future as teachers? Failing to provide them with a methodology during their teacher education came close to giving them the message that teaching was not a profession. Simultaneously, the schools where they started working were left with the responsibility for this aspect of teacher education, or the student teachers were left to learn from experience, both being hazardous alternatives.

Overall, these factors might contribute to explaining how and why the teachers failed to learn the craft of their profession – teaching – and what they learned instead. The solution offered here is to re-establish teaching methodology as the most central aspect of pedagogical studies and through this, return to what Dahl (1959) defined as the *real* pedagogy, the teacher education pedagogy from pre-1939. This issue may also be relevant for the Minister of Education and Research to examine after his proposal to replace pedagogical studies with professional studies where pedagogy and didactics will be included (Kunnskapsdepartementet (Ministry of Education and Research), 2015, p. 3).

To illustrate the reintroduction of methodology, a framework of a teacher education pedagogy is suggested (Figure 1). To secure this methodology, the starting point is in the profession itself, illustrated with the classroom. The central activities or practices extracted from the classroom constitute the core concepts that should be presented to student teachers as soon as they start their education. These include both concrete teaching and instructional methods, as well as concepts and theories on which to reflect and act when confronting teaching and learning situations. These basic concepts form the foundation and framework of pedagogical studies; they are the source from which everything else originates. Extracted from the classroom, they are also crucial in building a professional language.

Figure 1. Pedagogy of teacher education

A pedagogy of teacher education must also encompass relevant concepts and theories from the science of education (the language of the science of education, as shown in the black area in Figure 1), extracted to fit the foundation. Within what now becomes a language of education, this pedagogy of teacher education can constitute itself as a subject, including both the classroom and the science. Pedagogical studies will then encompass or even be synonymous with the third language, that is, the language of the classroom or the profession. This is the language that student teachers can bring to their future profession, comprising and springing from its activities and practices.

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ⁱ In the sense of *Bildung* (Norwegian: *dannelsesfag*).