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Learning to Teach: A reflexive approach to practice and theory[1]

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Abstract. In this article I present a model for working with teacher-students' understanding of action and behaviour in classrooms. It presents a model for collegial coaching in reflective teams, which can also be used by teachers to learn about what happens in teaching. The article starts out by addressing current trends across Europe, which influence all of higher education, including teacher education (TE). The article outlines an understanding of teaching as relational and as what happens in the present, here and now. A relational model for thinking teaching is presented through a version of the didactical triangle. I propose three foundational questions for TE: How does TE teach relations to content knowledge to students? How does TE prepare students to become caring teachers? How does TE teach students to create a space for mutual recognition in teaching? This article provides an outline for a response to these questions.
Keywords: Teaching, Reflexivity, Practice and Theory, Teacher Education

[es] Aprender a enseñar: Un enfoque reflexivo de la práctica y la teoría

Resumen. Este artículo presenta un modelo para trabajar la comprensión de la acción y el comportamiento de los profesores en las aulas. Se trata de un modelo de coaching universitario en equipos reflexivos, que también puede ser utilizado por los profesores para aprender sobre lo que ocurre en la enseñanza. El artículo comienza abordando las tendencias actuales en Europa, que influyen en toda la enseñanza superior, incluida la formación del profesorado (FP). El artículo esboza una comprensión de la enseñanza como relacional y lo que ocurre en el presente, aquí y ahora. Se presenta un modelo relacional para pensar la enseñanza a través de una versión del triángulo didáctico. Se proponen tres preguntas fundamentales para la formación del profesorado: ¿Cómo se enseña en la formación del profesorado a los alumnos las relaciones con el conocimiento del contenido? ¿Cómo se prepara en la formación del profesorado a los estudiantes para convertirse en profesores comprensivos? ¿Cómo se enseña en la formación del profesorado a los estudiantes a crear un espacio para el reconocimiento mutuo en la enseñanza? Este artículo ofrece un esbozo de respuesta a estas preguntas.
Palabras clave: Enseñanza, Reflexividad, Práctica y Teoría, Formación de profesorado

Summary: 1. Introduction. 2. A background – Teacher education having to answer to international trends. 3. An accountable teacher education. 4. LEARNING to teach for teachers. 5. Learning to teach – a reflexive approach. 6. Summing up. 7. References bibliographic.

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1. Introduction

I have been informed that in Spain there is a need to improve teacher education. I do not know what it needs improvement from, and I do not know in what direction these improvements need to go. My contention is that there are disagreements about this – and I also assume that some of the agreements and disagreements go along some of the same lines as they do across Europe and North America.

I have called this article*: Learning to Teach: A reflexive approach to practice and theory.* This includes an embodied approach - which I do not have the space to elaborate on here (see Hoveid, 2021). In this article I present my take on what I think is lacking and what we are at risk of losing from teacher education – unless we find space for it. Whether this touches upon some of what you need to improve or change in Spanish teacher education needs to be left for a discussion among those involved in Spanish teacher education.

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To grasp my take on teaching and learning processes in teacher education it might make sense to say a few words about my position as an educator and academic. My stance is primarily pedagogical and conceptual – addressing links and tensions between the social and the individual in education. I have worked for more than 16 years in teacher education and my training took place within the discipline Pedagogy. Furthermore, my take on teacher education is embedded in the understanding that we have to TRUST teachers to make decisions about teaching and learning in schools. This trust in teachers is pivotal, and partly lost if politicians or bureaucrats, and even researchers, intervene too much in educational processes, I argue (Hoveid & Hoveid, 2007).

Let me give you a short outline of my paper. I will start by presenting the current background for teacher education as it can be read as an international trend. Then I will argue for a relational model for thinking teaching and learning based on the didactical triangle (Hoveid & Hoveid, 2019)[3]. In my understanding, looking at the didactical triangle as a relational model points to some of the complexity of what student teachers[4] (as well as many in-service teachers) need to learn both as a skillset and as conceptualizations through teacher education. Acquiring the subject knowledge of what they are going to teach is just one aspect of what a teacher must master. In my interpretation, what students often struggle with is related to skills in the practice of giving the others (the pupils) a space to flourish. Mastering this requires practical knowledge, and I argue that this kind of practical knowledge is always linked to experiences of how it can be vitalized in the classroom. Towards the end of my paper, I will suggest a way forward for students to become reflexive practitioners, as a way of working with experiences and skills, i.e. actions from the classroom.

2. A background – Teacher education having to answer to international trends

Teacher education (TE), which in most European countries have a national foundation and tradition, have had to make changes because of international trends. From my own background in Norway, I can identify two states of affairs that have had an impact – PISA and the Bologna Process. PISA[5] by providing assessment on students' achievement sent shock waves across European education systems after its first publication in 2000. In many countries this caused a demand for changes in how pupils were taught in schools and consequently for what teachers needed to teach, or should we say, it induced a demand for teachers to become more learning-oriented and accountable[6]. The Bologna agreement from 1999, initiated a process in higher education and research in Europe of market orientation of education; inherent is a turn towards *what counts is what works* (Bridges et al. 2009). A model for university programs seeking to establish transferability without friction was developed across Europe. This has resulted in a change in many national teacher education programs. The model 3 yrs. (Ba.) +2yrs. (Ma.) +3 yrs. (PhD) has been adopted within many European HE education systems. This way of structuring education programs has altered how many TE-programs are organized, as for instance in Norway.

If we just briefly sum up some of the developments we can see across teacher education, I would like to highlight:

- *From vocational oriented professional schools – to a university degree with a master's*. What was termed the seminar tradition used to organize teacher training closer to the practice field. Moving teacher education into universities and university colleges has had an impact on how teacher training is organized and taught.
- *From a predominantly practice oriented training – to "scientifically" oriented teacher educations (and a claim that teachers need a deeper understanding of subject knowledge – a scientific mindset)*. In Norway, the last reform in TE promotes a need for teachers with an understanding of scientific knowledge to provide good teaching. As a result the research competence (or qualifications) of teacher educators also needs to be enhanced.
- *From a didactic oriented (Continental Bildung tradition) - to a curriculum oriented (Anglo/American) teacher training*. This development is especially relevant for the parts of continental Europe that are/were embedded in the Bildung tradition of teacher training, which has had a stronghold in German speaking countries and in Scandinavia (See: Hopmann; 2015).
- *From a certain degree of autonomy in TE – to higher degrees of political governance (on both national and supra-national level)*. At the same time **in** school: From teaching and learning – to 'learnification' and test-driven schools (i.e. PISA etc.).

Overall, it is fair to say that altogether this has developed a strong demand for accountability on the part of schools and teachers, and hence also on that of teacher education (Cochran-Smith et al., 2018).

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[3] There are many versions of the didactical triangle (see Hopmann 2007; Westbury, 2010; Künzli, 2010).

[4] Throughout the article I use students referring to teacher ed. students, and pupils when I address children and youths in school.

[5] OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment

[6] The move from teaching to learning is well described by Biesta, 2006, 2010. So also the altered understanding of accountability from responsibility to a sort of economic reasoning – based on performance through test scores (Hoveid & Hoveid, 2019)

3. An accountable teacher education

What kind of accountability? As Biesta claims (2010) – one cannot disagree that education as well as TE should be accountable, meaning – *responsible*[7]. But somehow, in education the meaning of *accountable* has become dominated by the managerial, *economi*c reasoning calling for ways of measuring the effects of education and teacher education. In other words, politicians and governments start asking for an economic *output* from their *investment* in education. This is one reason why the scale of assessment in education has changed radically. Resulting in an understanding of education changing from being a vital instrument for individuals' self-formation and as being a humanistic approach for the development of democracies (i.e. Bildung), to, if I exaggerate a bit, a well-run machinery which can effectively produce the workforce needed for society.

We could say with Winnie-the-Pooh: Yes, please may I have both (responsible teachers and an output driven investment in teacher education)? But that is probably not possible. My contention is that the economically driven agenda about what education is *for* does not align with the ideas that want to reclaim education as a humanistic endeavour opening out to a different future (Cf. Cohran-Smith et al. 2018; Hoveid & Hoveid, 2019). Basically, this is a question of whether the overall values we base education, and thus teacher education, on should be derived from an economic outlook on society or if we need to ground it elsewhere (i.e. Bildung). So, asking *What is education for?* is a very fundamental and important question. I believe everyone involved in education needs to answer this, and especially those involved in the governance of TE, because it will have profound repercussions. It is not a matter of producing prosaic descriptions of a good school and good teachers, but a profound question demanding critical scrutiny and decisions. This is a huge question, and it relates to ours, our children's and grandchildren's future. It asks us as educationalists (as well as politicians and teachers) to ponder and discuss what place education should have in society, for humanity and the individual. Within the last decade various scholars address this, like Gert Biesta in much of his work, Jan Masschelein and Maarten Simons (2013) in their book: *In defense of School a public issue*. In the US, Marilyn Cochran-Smith, a prominent scholar who has worked with teacher education and teacher education research for decades, suggests: *"Reclaiming Accountability in Teacher Education"* (2018).

Where do I stand – and what is my view of the teacher and thus of teacher education? Probably obvious by now: Teachers and teacher educators, the ones closest to educational practices are responsible. It is through their ways of framing social values in classrooms that education happens. If teachers cease to believe that they have responsibilities towards the next generation – especially facing some of the challenges we face in today's societies (climate, increased aggression and war, refugees, just to name a few of the challenges regarding the sustainability of the world we live in), they will become detached from their own actions. I do not believe that the answer is found by making teacher education more scientifically oriented and I believe education overall, and teacher education specifically, must be unleashed from the shackles of economic accountability. Hence, I argue that societies need to re-learn, and TE need to teach how to *trust* teachers. Educating in schools in the 21st century requires us as societies and teacher educators to rethink the values education is based on – and how these values are transformed through teachers and teaching in schools. At the same time, this entails an acknowledgement of the complexity of what teachers must master to teach in the multicultural and complex socio-economic realities of today's schools. In TE one needs to re-think how the complexity of knowledge, skills and sets of values are combined in teaching. My contention is that this is something which goes far beyond the narrow conceptualizations entailed in portrayals of education through competitiveness and economic reasoning. And furthermore, I think finding it (the knowledge, skills and values) in teaching is a collective challenge. It requires cooperation – and for educational researchers and teacher educators, in cooperation with teachers (and I do not rule out parents and politicians in this) to start addressing what kind of humanity and democracy we envision – this means addressing the future on the level of *what knowledge, skills and values we want to safeguard and share* – it will not be easy!

4. LEARNING to teach for teachers

Let me be more specific. When I worked in TE, we used to start off the first meeting with the students by asking them why they wanted to become teachers and what they thought was a good teacher. This was always an interesting exercise – and the usual answer from the students was that they *loved* children and wanted to help children learn – often expressed in these generic terms. I think this is a good starting point for a teacher – a teacher without love for children will probably never be a good teacher. But in addition to *love for children*, also a *love for the whatever content* one teaches and maybe also *for the world we live in*, are all good starting points for prospective teachers – all of which can be shared and expanded through TE.

Before I go on, let me first clarify, when I address TE, I cannot avoid also addressing the teacher and teaching. I think we need to distinguish between *teaching student teachers* (in TE) and *teachers teaching pupils* (in school). Being trained to become a teacher requires other relations to the teaching and learning processes – what I call a reflexive approach (and I'll get back to this towards the end of my article). As a teacher, your actions in the classroom are directed, here and now, towards the pupils and the content. In teacher education these are the actions prospective

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[7] For an in depth elaboration of responsability, see Barbra Stengel. (Forthcoming). Responsibility. In Hoveid, Munday & Shuffleton (eds.). Philosphy of Education in Practice Series. Bloomsbury.

teachers (students) need to address. This requires another approach by the teacher-educator. Actions in the classroom cannot be directly modelled on TE, as a mimetic approach to learning (meaning - we do in TE – what we want teachers (students) to do in their classrooms in school). I have experienced teacher-educators who mix up these two levels, or they totally abolish the distinction. I do think this is unfortunate and it does not grasp the complexity of what teachers (students) need to know and do. All of this raises two questions: H*ow can students learn to teach in teacher education? and, How does teacher education teach them to teach?*

The underlying question to this is: What kind of teachers do we (actually) want? Let me start by framing what I mean by **teaching**.

4.1. TEACHING: happens between teacher – pupil – content

In my answer to the questions above I will focus on how TE teaches students to teach. To do so we need a clear picture of what is meant by teaching. As I have said already, teaching cannot be grasped by terms derived from economics and a linear way of thinking. Teaching, I argue, is something performed in the *here and now* – in a classroom (in a wide sense – classrooms can be created in many environments)[8]. Teaching happens in the relations between *teachers*, *pupils* and a *subject matter* (content). The teaching itself is expressed in the actions performed in the relational space this can open up. Hence teaching collapses if this relational space is not established. Teaching is here modelled by the didactical triangle. In the model the various arrows point to the possible relations open to these three entities:

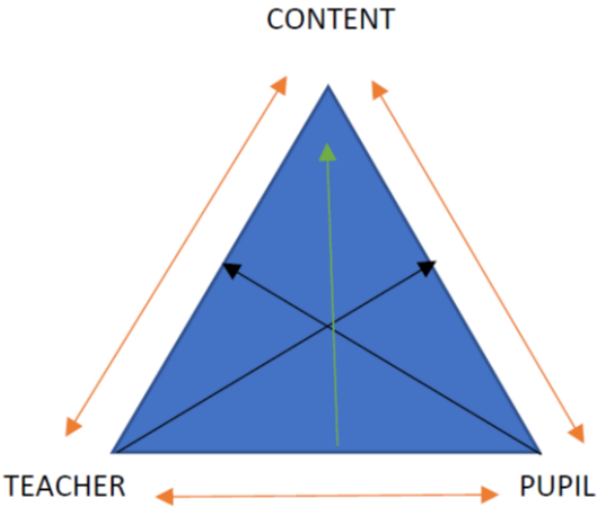

Figure 1. The Didactical triangle, a relational mode

Before teaching comes planning, but planning can only affect teaching up to a certain point, since I stress that teaching happens in the *here and now* (in the present)[9]. Remember, also, these here-and-now's happen over longer timespans – sometimes years (I'll return to this later). After teaching comes evaluations and reflection on what happened – in the classroom – which then (ideally) lays the groundwork for the continuous planning and development of teaching (here and now). This creates a never-ending *movement* between being *in* teaching and being *withdrawn from* (or being distant from) teaching. I place emphasis on what happens *in* the classroom – as a sort of co-figuration happening between teachers, pupils and the content. The attentiveness and flexibility of the teacher in the present will determine what learning takes place. But, this form of learning cannot be grasped or documented as a measurable entity. What is learned is decided after teaching has taken place (happened), often many years down the line (understood as acquiring insight and understanding of knowledge, skills and values)[10]. What can at best be measured is what pupils have memorized – seldom what is learned (in this substantial understanding of learning).

Furthermore, and importantly, to create good teaching is seldom a one-wo/man show – it is a collective effort by a group of colleagues (that is teachers) working together and analysing together what they do and how their teaching evolves. I know as well as you that so many things happen in teaching, so many challenges pile up and teachers only have time to address some of them in the flow of events in a classroom. But unless teachers discuss what they do with colleagues, they will most likely become either burned out or insensitive to (detached from) all that happens in

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[8] I am using teaching in the classroom in school, with pupils and teachers as an example here. The teaching going on between teachers and students in TE is based on this model, but it must be addressed reflexively, as teaching about teaching.

[9] I am talking about teaching as physical presence. I do not rule out other forms of teaching - but I restrict my talk of teaching to physical presence when I write about it here.

[10] Remember that all forms of social learning take place in the present. If a pupil thinks about her/himself as stupid – this is something s/he most likely has learned in the classroom.

the classroom. "Anesthetized", Michel Serres[11] calls it if a human ceases to recognize what her/his sensing tells her/him (1985/2016). This is why I argue that students need to acquire ways of speaking about and recognising the social complexity they work in, while they are in TE.

Now let me turn to the relations in the didactical triangle. By highlighting the relations embedded in this simple model my hope is that one might begin to appreciate the complexity of teaching and learning. Let me start with the relation between the teacher and content.

4.2. The teacher – content relation

Teachers need to know the subject they are going to teach, and they will acquire some of that knowledge in teacher education. In addition to subject knowledge teachers also need pedagogical (and didactical) knowledge.

A classical didactic approach to teaching requires of the teacher that he/she has enough knowledge of the content to make a good *selection* of the subject knowledge for teaching. Knowing something, as in having knowledge that is successful in a quiz, is a limited way of knowing. It relates to factual knowledge. There is a lot of factual knowledge that a teacher will have to acquire, but today a lot of content can easily be looked up using a computer. So, in addition to having knowledge about a field of knowledge, for instance biology, a teacher must know what content in biology to select, in relation to what she thinks will engage the pupils. Within a didactical framework, the teacher would also select the content she teaches based on the objectives (today often referred to as learning outcomes[12]) for the grade of the pupils she is teaching. The teacher must also know how to make *progression* in the teaching, as well as *coherence* and *connections* in the content of the knowledge he/she teaches. Thus, he/she needs to acquire insight into the content knowledge, to make decisions about what is relevant and not so relevant within the field/subject. In other words, this means the teacher needs *interpretative knowledge* of what content knowledge is relevant within the field for the given group of pupils.

When teaching is understood as transmission of information, the fear that one has not covered *everything* is prominent both among teachers in schools and lecturers in higher education. To cover everything in teaching rejects the didactical principles I have pointed to above (selection, coherence, connection, interpretation) and reduces teaching and learning to acquisition of information and memorization. It also happens that teachers rely too heavily on the curriculum as their guide as to what subject knowledge to teach (in Norway we used to have a content-based national Lehreplan/curriculum) or they base their teaching on the selections already made by textbooks. Both are problematic.

In addition, a teacher needs to be able to *communicate*, to recount what he/she knows. Having a love for the knowledge he/she teaches will be helpful (but not enough to be able to teach). The relation the teacher has to knowledge and the field of knowledge he/she teaches, will affect their teaching. Therefore, a student teacher needs to have a space to address this aspect of teaching in teacher education. In other words, to acquire subject-knowledge as a teacher requires more than documenting that one can reproduce the factual knowledge (content) from a subject (e.g. Biology). A teacher must also acquire a didactical approach to knowledge. And, unfortunately, and in my experience, this is too often taken for granted and thus teachers are made dependent on textbooks, for instance.

A misguided notion, I believe, is that teachers need to be trained as scientists. There is so much more to knowledge in teaching – and this is not covered by a scientific approach to knowledge. Above I have pointed to various didactical principles relevant for teaching. Meaning, teachers also need to develop knowledge about how to address knowledge in very practical and concrete ways. That is, for instance, how to decipher how the knowledge they communicate in teaching is perceived by pupils. Sometimes teachers must know how to make knowledge "useable" (i.e. practical/ functional) – this becomes especially pertinent when teaching in social settings where acquiring "school" knowledge has a very low status. There is nothing wrong with being a scientist, but if we start educating teachers as scientists, we will take them away from their vocation. Their vocation is to work with teaching and learning processes – in relation to content and pupils. A scientist is basically interested in the content, and how to scientifically develop a field of knowledge.

The didactical triangle I have drawn above points to a relation between the teacher and the pupil. Severing this relation and reducing teaching to a relation between the teacher and scientific knowledge (to be transferred to the pupil), leaves the third part – the pupil – on the outside. Meaning *in* teaching, all three have to be taken into account.

All of this raises a fundamental question for teacher education (TE), especially if what is sought is autonomous responsible teachers: *How do teacher educators teach relations with content knowledge to students?*

4.3. The teacher - pupil relation

In teaching, a teacher not only has a relation to the content he/she teaches, he/she also must establish a relation to the pupils(s). So, what is it about this relation that is important? In a caring relation, I agree that *love* is essential. To be able to see, accept and value the diversity of the pupils. To care for them both as individuals and as a group. As a teacher you are an important person in another human being's life – and most teachers know this. For teachers,

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[11] (1930 -2019). A French philosopher.

[12] I find learning outcomes a misleading term. It gives the impression that learning is something measurable after teaching has taken place. Didactically I understand the objective of a lesson as something the teacher would like the students to take away from the lesson – a message, at the same time understanding that the teacher can never control what pupils will learn.

knowledge about relations and skills to handle relations is key. In other words, a teacher needs both to know about human relationality and how to collaborate with other human beings. In education these are relations where one is a teacher – the other a pupil – but where these positions at times can become inverted.

For a teacher this means, *listening, being attentive*, and to *recognize and make space for the other* – the pupil (and the pupils' perception of the content knowledge) – and being able to make connections with what he/she senses in relation to her pupils and what he/she herself does (Hoveid, 2021). This kind of knowledge and skills, which I frame as practical knowledge, is necessary for a teacher. And I believe there is a need to develop the way students work with this practical knowledge in TE. The so called "practice shock" that student teachers often refer to is in my understanding partly caused by a lack in TE of working with what student teachers know and what they do, i.e. their practical knowledge and skills.

If one wants teachers to recognize the teacher–pupil relation in their teaching, this raises another question for teacher education (TE): *Can we teach students to be caring*, or put differently, *how do we prepare students for being caring teachers?*

What we have talked about so far is still within the reach of what a teacher can grasp from themselves. It positions the teacher in a first-person position – as a person who has a certain degree of command of their own actions in teaching (here and now). Their practical knowledge and skills must also incorporate something beyond them. This is the pupils' relation to the content knowledge and also to the person who is their teacher, in other words, the left side of the triangle above.

4.4. The pupil - content relation and the pupil - teacher relation

As a teacher you get to work with a group of pupils, you cannot decide what they know beforehand and what they bring with them into teaching.

From the perspective of the pupil, I want to point at relations which in some ways are beyond the teacher, as something he/she cannot fully grasp. So, a teacher's attentiveness will also require something else from him/her – a sort of distancing from themselves and what they do. It is necessary for the teacher to recognize and give space to the other – the pupil – in his or her particularity. If this is neglected it tends to have something to do with school and the way relations are institutionalised as a one-way-relation *from* the teacher *to* the pupil. The more open way of human communicating, taking into account there being (at least) *two* in a relation, equally needing their space for communication to happen, is then lost.

To open up for this kind of open communication can be challenging in teaching. A usual stance is that pupils are appropriated under the teacher's understanding of what a pupil should do and how she/he should be and how the relation should be understood. *Who* the pupil is then escapes the teacher – he/she then lacks the attentiveness to the otherness of the other (the pupils' relations to the teacher and to knowledge). Pupils' relations to the content and their relations to the teacher require of the teacher that he/she can open a space for the pupil to express her/himself. I argue that grasping this relies on an understanding of *difference* in human relational thinking – which goes beyond the logic of sameness (Irigaray, 1984, 2001; Hoveid, 2013).

To appropriate the other under one's own understanding is easy to do. Grasping otherness means grasping something beyond oneself. Therefore, I argue you can only do this by opening up to and by giving space *for* the other. In education the perimeters are not limitless – the institution provides a whole set of rules for us all – but there is still room for otherness – if there is willingness to create the spaces for it, I argue.

To make this a little more concrete, the *space* I am talking about is opened when a teacher becomes a *listener*, it is evoked by their attentiveness to what happens in the classroom between themselves and the pupils, the pupils and the content, and between pupils. In the classroom teachers are used to saying that pupils need to learn how to be attentive. Here I talk about the need for teachers to be attentive. Their attentiveness must be directed at what happens in relations between the pupils, and teachers must take the time to engage with and get to know *who* their pupils are, *where* they come from and *what* they do, to get an insight into how the pupils approach the content knowledge and the individual who is their teacher. This also entails taking into account that there might be a whole different way of perceiving what the teacher just said and did – one that the latter had not even thought about themselves.

To acquire this kind of attitude towards the other in teaching, I have called opening a space of *mutual recognition* (Hoveid & Hoveid, 2019). I believe this is necessary to address for a teacher to truly become a successful teacher. This raises another crucial question for teacher education (TE)**:** *How do we teach students to create a space for mutual recognition in teaching?*

Let me briefly sum up what it is students need to learn in terms of teaching. They need to learn that teaching happens in relations between *teacher-pupils-content* – in the here and now (present). They also need to understand that learning happens in longer timespans (future) – which is beyond what a teacher can decide the outcome of. A relational model for thinking teacher-pupil-content relations results in the construction of a relational model for thinking teacher competence:

As an input for this relational model I propose three foundational questions for teacher education (TE):

- How does TE teach relations with content knowledge to students?
- How does TE prepare students to become caring teachers?
- How does TE teach students to create a space for mutual recognition in teaching?

Together my three questions ask: *How can TE teach teaching (and learning) to students?* Teaching I have already said is what happens here and now, teaching is action. Meaning it is dynamic – it is live – it takes place in the complex settings of classrooms where teachers and pupils are present. Classrooms can be made lifeless - my point is not to go into that. What I want to elaborate on is how teaching can sustain a lively and flourishing classroom[13].

When I address TE through this relational model, I am thinking that we need to work with the complexity of all these relations in teaching students, and this is what I call a reflexive approach to teaching. At the end of the article I will sum up my answer to these questions.

5. Learning to teach – a reflexive approach

I must emphasise – what I present here is a sketch. It is partly based on my own experiences from teacher education on various courses working with students and in-service teachers. There are many ways to answer the questions I pose. To answer the overall question: How can we teach teaching to students? I believe that there are three areas that are underdeveloped – or which are scarcely addressed in TE. These areas I argue need strengthening.

- Firstly, I believe teachers need to become **reflexive practitioners** (I then distinguish between reflection and reflexivity).
- Secondly, in order to become reflexive practitioners, students need to work with their **attentiveness in teaching**. Attentiveness to me has to do with sensitivity – the abilities to sense and later interpret action (including behaviour) in the classroom.
- Thirdly, and as part of this attentiveness, a student must be able to **communicate** what he/she senses - to themselves (self-critical), to other teachers (collegial communication), and to the pupils (in teaching). Here I use communication in a broad sense – understanding communication as what one does through one's body gestures, by signs, and by speaking and not speaking.

Since teaching, as I determine it, is what you do as a teacher in the classroom – this entails action you can prepare for – like musicians rehearsing before a big concert. But, different teaching processes happens over longer timespans, and a teacher goes in and out of teaching continually during a workday, over weeks and years – boundaries are blurred. So, when is a teacher teaching - when is he/she not? For instance, is he/she still teaching when he/she chats with the pupils after class in the hall?

Training to become a reflexive practitioner is demanding. It takes time, there is no quick fix. *In* teaching there is a demand for action – for having to act. Things occur and the demand on the teacher to act can at times be overwhelming. In many situations there is no time to reflect – the demand to do something now is often urgent. A lot of what a teacher does therefore relies on reflexes and habits. Habits are by definition action without pre-flection, and sometimes hard to become aware of even in re-flection, in thinking about what you did. Therefore, in training to become a teacher, it is urgent that there is space for reflection on action before and after teaching. By addressing what you did as a teacher, what your habits and reflexes communicate, what you/the community/society want to communicate, the broader understanding of what happens *in* teaching is opened[14].

5.1. Becoming reflexive practitioners: how is that possible?

The emphasis on reflection in/on action (teaching) (cf. Schön, 1992) has been great. I believe a more nuanced language about reflection in relation to teaching is needed. Reflection can mean thinking, meaning thinking is also an act. Then reflection is an act that turns back on itself. Thinking also has a temporal dimension; you can think about what happened in the past and you can think about what to do in a possible future. Reflection as thinking about teaching does not necessarily enable the teacher to comprehend a more complex scope of what they do in the here-and-now. Their reflections are too often already remote from what they do in the present. Remember, thinking about action, what you have done or want to do, does not by default change how you act. To fully comprehend and change actions you must address actions in a way which combine what you think with what you sense in action. This is tricky, because what is done, is done here and now, and every time you address action it will be in retrospect. Using film/video observation as a ground for discussion of action is therefore helpful. The missing link we need to address in TE – to put it that way – is how a student can link their sensing in actions with their own thinking and understanding.

As already mentioned, students often point to a theory - practice gap (shock), it is recurrent in most teacher training. This means TE is not able to equip prospective teachers with enough confidence about what they do, their own actions *in class*. The theoretical languages of the subjects studied at university, whether this is biology or pedagogy, does not seem to help students with this gap, and thus we talk about students experiencing a practice shock when they enter the profession. My claim is that teachers lack language to speak about what they do (Hoveid,

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[13] On a historical note, I know that schools have many likenesses with industry – schools looking like factories where children are placed on a "production line" - individualized and organized in rows - to facilitate, or produce a given outcome. I portray a different kind of classroom, see Hoveid and Hoveid, 2019.

[14] I say this in light of a new development in Norwegian schools – where more and more pupils are opposed to school and stop attending school.

2009). I address this as teachers' personal language use – meaning teachers need to develop and use language about what they do. This is to develop their own understanding of the theory and practice of teaching and learning. I refer to this as a practical and useful (functional) language that teachers can develop in relation to what they sense and do, which can help elucidate actions made in the classroom. Connections to abstract theories can be made and developed - but an understanding of action (including behaviour) in a classroom for a teacher does not usually start in the abstract – in theory.

It can start with the teacher (student) addressing what he/she does and what he/she senses and experiences in teaching and learning processes. Elaborating this language then requires sensitivity – what I have addressed as attentiveness. It is embodied – because the experience of what you do as a teacher requires bodily awareness. Simply an awareness of what your body (and other bodies) do and communicate *in* teaching. A language about what you do *in* teaching is necessary, I argue, because without this teacher language-use I fear teachers will not be able to acquire autonomy as teachers. But, even more importantly, if teachers are going to be flexible *in* action, that is *in* teaching – they must be able to address what they do individually and as a collective. And remember, what a teacher does – how he/she acts – in the constant stream of what happens in a classroom – can never fully be grasped[15].

I think there are many ways of working with a reflexive approach to teaching. In my approach to teachers' personal language use I have found collegial coaching in reflective teams as helpful (2009). The approach I have used and developed is described by Andersen (2003) and was used in family therapy. I have added an action theoretical approach to the collegial coaching approach using Paul Ricoeur's understanding of action as meaningful action and the possibility of reading action as a text (1991). This way of addressing action asks for motives for acting and motives for acting can then be addressed at different layers – acknowledging that what a human does is not always part of the conscious, and also, that a motive for action made by the teacher may evoke re-actions he/she could not anticipate – and maybe does not recognize or pay attention to[16].

5.2. Collegial coaching in reflective teams

The reflective team model was developed by the Norwegian Tom Andersen (2003) and has been implemented in teacher education (Hoveid, 2009; Ulleberg, 2004). This is a concrete method of mentoring/coaching or counselling (in No.' veiledning' meaning leading the way) that can get at a deeper level of addressing actions and motives in the classroom (Hoveid, 2009). Andersen talks about conversations and conversations about conversations. In his practice this has to do with a therapeutic conversation with a client, and then how that client (or clients -i.e., family) was given the opportunity to listen to the conversations a team of therapists had about the first conversation. Gregory Batson's theories represent part of the theoretical background for this approach, and he talks about a difference that creates a difference (Cf. Andersen, 2003), meaning a dialectic where something which is done in one place, creates a movement when addressed in another place. I refer to this movement as a dialectic of difference (Hoveid, 2009). And as noted above, it entails movement between what is sensed (in teaching) and interpretation and reflection about this. Put differently, this is working with self-reflection as a way of combining sensing, action and thinking.

My experience is that "collegial mentoring" (in reflective teams**)** is a way forward if one wants to develop a reflexive approach to teaching. In the reflective team conversations one addresses what is done – actions – in the classroom and discuss motives for action. Actions can be addressed both through motives and through the senses in a given situation. For me, a teacher's sensitivity is what develops their attentiveness towards what they themselves do and towards what their pupils do. Carol A. Rogers calls this, practising of presence (2020). Through conversations about actions – what was done – re-interpretations of actions are possible and this can provide an insight that opens up ways of modifying one's own actions back in the classroom (here-and-now). This risks sounding as if a reflexive approach is a linear process, that once one understands various motives for acting – one can change one's way of acting. That is usually not the case. Altering one's way of acting takes time, insight and understanding. Furthermore, mind and body (thinking and sensing) are not always connected in what one does – how one acts. And most of all – I argue – changing one's actions (in relation to others) requires a space in you for the other to be different, for the pupil or student to be interpreted differently for you – or simply for you to acknowledge that she/he is an enigma. As a teacher, you do not always have to understand why a pupil does what she/he does. Just acknowledging that the pupil is acting in ways that are meaningful for him/her is enough. By addressing this *not-knowing* a teacher could have a starting point for an inquiry into what and why pupils do what they do, why this is meaningful for them – whether this is about what the teacher sees as a behavioural problem or a very unorthodox way of solving a mathematical problem.

5.3. Collegial mentoring in a reflective team

My brief presentation here will address reflective teams as a way of addressing actions happening in a classroom. This version of it is based on my approach which combines this way of doing collegial coaching with an action

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[15] I look at this from a systemic perspective, meaning a teacher can do something about his/her own actions –the social system (communication in the classroom) is thereby impacted – and pupils may be given a space to act, or not.

[16] The action theoretical approach this builds on, inspired by Paul Ricoeur's philosophy, would require another article to discuss. My work with this approach is published mainly in Norwegian, but parts of it may be found in most of what I have published in English.

theoretical understanding of the processes. The idea is to develop teachers (students) language-use about teaching and learning processes.

For this kind of collegial mentoring to work it needs to be set up as a systematic approach. It works best within a group of colleagues working together over a longer timespan (i.e. a school year). The counselling happens through a systematic way of speaking together as colleagues addressing a specific case – film sequence[17] – from teaching in the classroom.

The reflective team consists of one who acts as a mentor,[18] leading the discussion, a mentee, the teacher whose case is discussed, and the reflective team, the other teachers in the group. The mentoring goes through three phases. The first is a descriptive analysis. Here the mentor and the mentee discuss what they see in the film and how they interpret and understand the various actions (and behaviours). It is the mentee who decides what s/he wants to address in the chosen case (film). In this phase the rest of the team do not speak, they listen to the conversation. The primary objective of the first conversation is to try to understand action – not to assess it. This usually takes some training to be able to do. When this first conversation is over the mentor directs his/her attention towards the group of colleagues (reflective team). In this second phase, the mentee must withdraw to listen to what is said. The mentor continues the conversation with the group of colleagues, analysing what they see and interpret from the film and how they interpret the first conversation.

My experience is that this expands the insight into the case being discussed which goes beyond first-hand and habitual interpretations. At its best it deepens the understanding of action and why people do what they do. It develops a language derived from practice – a language use that inquires into motives for action[19] – with the purpose of understanding (better) human social interaction.

An important aspect of this kind of mentoring process is learning to be silent – *and* of listening. When using silence and listening as a space to comprehend otherness (listen to others interpret your actions) – something happens. One cannot say beforehand what – but ways of broadening one's interpretations and understandings of what happens in the classroom is developed. If developed through a systematic approach within a group of colleagues, the possibility (or variation) of interpreting action is developed – as a re-action to reified and habitual acting of teachers in a classroom. This is an approach to developing teachers' relational understanding of teaching and learning processes – an approach that can address the complexity of what is going on in a classroom. In the third phase, the whole group meta-analyse the conversation and the conversation about the conversation – what insight was gained, what different perspectives were pointed out – in short, what interpretations of action were brought into the conversation.

So, collegial mentoring starts in the descriptive – describing action - and then moves on to interpretations of action – from various perspectives. This creates a reflexive approach to teaching.

The three core relations I addressed in the first part of this paper (see fig. 1) can be used as a model for analysing and discussing teacher actions. Analysing these relations in a systematic manner through a team of teachers (students), will **over time** evolve an understanding of teaching and learning that is needed for teachers (students) to be able to acquire flexibility *in* teaching, for them to keep teaching alive - as something dynamic, and to develop autonomy as teachers. It will develop a self-reflexive attitude towards teaching.

6. Summing up

Let me conclude with some short answers to the questions I have posed – which I do hope are questions that are relevant for the discussion around Spanish teacher training:

How does TE teach relations with content knowledge to students?

Acquiring the relevant content of the content knowledge (discipline, e.g. history, biology) is necessary for a prospective teacher. But this is only a starting point – it might be worth mentioning that the content does not teach itself. The teacher is more than a messenger of a given content. In TE this requires a didactical approach to content knowledge. Didactically this is a matter of *selection* – and requires an informed discussion of *what, how* and *why* one should teach the content one teaches. In this – systematic collegial mentoring in a reflective team is useful, not least to address one's own assumptions as a student, one's own relations and the pupils' relations to content knowledge. All of this needs continuous attention in teaching.

How does TE prepare students to become caring teachers?

This cannot be *trained* - or addressed as the relation with content knowledge. If someone is given the label – not fit to be a teacher – it usually has to do with their abilities to care. To care is something you learn through practice and experience and by being cared for. A student's abilities to care for others can be expanded on. One can learn to understand more about caring relations in TE. It requires of students that they develop their own language about caring

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[17] A film sequence works best, 10 min is often enough – it gives a better connection to the here and now of the classroom.

[18] These positions are rotated as new cases are discussed.

[19] For a discussion of motives for acting see Ricoeur, 1991.

relations – how they (themselves) care, and not least – what they fear and find difficult in caring relations. In TE these relations need continuous attention. And again, I believe a collegial mentoring group is a good tool for creating a collective and systematic approach to this.

How does TE teach students to create a space for mutual recognition in teaching?

In relation to this we may have to challenge students and ask that they challenge themselves. A space for mutual recognition in teaching takes time to evolve – and students seldom spend enough time lingering in the uncertainty of what it means to experience this. While training to become teachers, students might be able to experience if that space is there in the classrooms they visit/work in. So, discussing differences between classrooms is a possible starting point. My contention is that a space of mutual recognition is what is needed in teaching and learning processes. Identifying it - or not finding it - in film sequences could represent a search for when these instances of mutual recognition happen in education.

All this requires time to let curiosity prevail, to develop a mindset that accepts uncertainty and constant movements, and that progress is not an instant reward. I believe this is where teacher training might really fail if the emphasis is put on competitiveness and efficiency. Then there is little space for what I am proposing, and I think this literally means we are draining education of its human potentials.

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