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STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE QUALITY OF EDUCATION



BERND KÄPPLINGER, KRISTINKA OVESNI, JELENA VRANJEŠEVIĆ (EDS.)

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Belgrade, 2018

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HOW TO EDUCATE TEACHERS:
WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM RESEARCH INSIGHTS
ON TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION
IN SERBIA AND FROM CONTEMPORARY
UNDERSTANDINGS OF TEACHING¹

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Abstract

Inspired by the fact that teacher education is often seen as the cause of low quality of teaching, but also as a potential solution to this problem, in the paper we look for recommendations on how to educate teachers in Serbia. Starting from an analysis of research data on teacher education, professional development and teaching in Serbia, as well as from contemporary theoretical understandings of teaching, we derived implications for teacher education on two levels – systemic and curricular. As important system measures to be taken we point out: finishing establishment of the initial teacher education system; providing support to the programs of teacher education and induction; changing system of teachers' professional development and taking special care for the status of teacher profession on the state level. The suggestions for the curriculum development and methodical aspects of teacher education are: focusing the curriculum on the teacher competence, basing teaching on dialogue, reflection, interdisciplinary approach and teamwork of teachers and providing context where students feel safe.

Keywords: teacher education, teacher professional development, contemporary understandings of teaching.

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Introduction

If we were to analyse practical implications and recommendations for policy-makers given in publications that research various aspects of teaching, we would probably get an insight that many of them emphasise the importance of introducing changes into a system of initial teacher education and professional development. We could conclude that teacher education is often seen as the worst problem in education today, but at the same time, it is promoted as the best possible solution to all other problem we are facing in education. As other authors boldly put it – without the reform of teacher education there will be no reform of education (Torres, 1996). The ideas behind this are easy to understand. By putting effort into improving teacher education system we can, to some extent, ensure that teachers are well “equipped” with competencies which will enable them to fulfil tasks and roles that teacher is expected to deal with today and thus contribute to the overall quality of education. This kind of thinking resulted in a particularly high interest in teachers and teacher education by various stakeholders in the past couple of decades: international organizations (see: European Commission, 2007; OECD, 2005, 2010; UNICEF/UNESCO, 1996), policy-makers in many countries, teacher professional associations (see: ATEE, 2006), researchers in the field of education, teacher educators themselves. At the level of international education policy, it is emphasised that “teachers matter” (OECD, 2010) and that the quality of education for all can be improved by systemic activities of investing in teachers and their education (UNESCO, 2014).

We share the beforementioned views on the importance of teachers and the need for systemic actions on a national level which would contribute to the quality of teachers’ work and quality of education as a whole. We also agree with the statement that teacher education and professional development play an essential role in accomplishing this goal (in our previous papers we emphasized the need for reforms in this field, as well as for ensuring adequate work conditions, changes in policy which would facilitate social and professional recognition and empowerment of teacher profession, and teacher participation in policy of education see: Mitrović & Radulović, 2014; Radulović & Mitrović, 2015). However, we believe that such declarative commitment to systemic support for teacher and their education and professional development is only a start and that we need to revisit the issues of teacher education to understand better what kind of education could be a genuine support for teachers.

Thus, we intend to provide a brief overview on the current state of teaching in our schools and on how teacher education is organized in Serbia, based on recent researches, our own experience as teacher educators, law and policy documents. Further on, from the standpoint that teaching is the central aspect of school and teachers’ work, for which teachers need to be prepared through education (Meyer, 2002), we will provide an overview of different contemporary

theories of teaching/learning and derive implication from them on how to educate future teachers. Finally, based on the insights we have gained, we will define the recommendations to improve teacher education in Serbia.

The Current State of Teaching and Teacher Education in Serbia

Teachers and Teaching in our Schools

Our previous research endeavours, aimed at understanding the quality of education in teaching, provide some insights on the teaching practice and everyday teachers' work in our school. One of our research showed that 20 different teaching methods were observed on 354 classes in various schools and various school subjects, whereby they could be interpreted as diverse in term of students activity. However, methods that are not related to teachers' lectures, students' exercises and examination of students' knowledge, such as lectures by students, practical assignments, dialogue and play-like activities, are observed on less than 11% of the classes included in the study. Especially seldom (observed on less than 3% of the classes) are the methods which enable the exchange of experience and meaning between students, peer-learning, dramatisation and role play, brainstorming, creating tables and schemes, research work, i.e. methods and techniques which deviate from traditional teaching. We have also found that the assessment practice in our schools is dominantly traditional when compared to contemporary endeavours to change the paradigm of school assessment to make it purposeful for education (Mitrović, 2014; Mitrović & Radulović, 2014; Mitrović, 2017). Moreover, studies have shown that teachers do not see evaluation as an important process for their practice and their professional development (Stančić, 2014). Thus, systematic approach to self-evaluation and reflection about the quality of work did not yet come to life in our schools. Research also shows that teachers are familiar with various methods of teaching and (self)evaluation but do not use them often (Radulović & Mitrović, 2014, Stančić, 2014).

Similar conclusions are derived from the research on how teachers perceive typical teaching and teachers in schools in Serbia, and how they perceive an ideal teaching and teacher (Radulović & Mitrović, 2015). The results show that majority of teachers consider that typical teaching in schools is transmissive and that typical teacher has a role of "knowledge transmitter" as dominant. These results confirm previous findings that current teaching practice in Serbia is traditional. At the same time, teachers consider that good teaching is related to encouragement of students' cognitive development or nurturing and care for students, whereby the good teacher is the one who organises learning process

and is focused on students. Thus, teachers are not only aware that there is a kind of teaching which is different from the current one (traditional), but they also consider such teaching as better than the traditional one. Still, the way in which the majority of teacher's work is not the one they consider to be good.

In overall, we could say that the current state of teaching in our schools is saturated by a traditional transmissive understanding of education in teaching (Radulović & Mitrović, 2014). Thus, teaching practice did not reach the qualities of modernistic understandings of education in teaching (students active learning, cooperative and interactive teaching methods, evaluation as a tool for development of practice, etc) which are advocated in policy documents that define Standards of quality for work of educational institutions (2012) and Standards of competencies for the teaching profession and their professional development (2011). Such state of practice is surely not in accordance with contemporary tendencies in understanding education in teaching and in conceptualising teaching method, which are underpinned by postmodern ideas, i.e. diversity of methods, teachers' autonomy in creating methods by relying on characteristics of the context (Mitrović & Radulović, 2014).

Studies show that the gap between the contemporary theoretical understandings of teaching and the teaching practice in schools in Serbia is not the only one. There is also a gap between teaching practice and teacher's knowledge and their perspectives of good teaching: teachers are familiar with different teaching methods, but use them rarely; they are aware of possibilities of (self) evaluation, but do not see evaluation as an important process for development of their practice; teachers consider that good teacher organizes students' learning activities and/or cares for students emotions and holistic development of students, but they teach on traditional way. This suggests that teachers' pedagogical-psychological and methodical education is necessary but not just any kind of such education is appropriate. Before we explore the possibilities to organise the relevant teacher education, first we will provide an overview of the existing state of teacher education in Serbia.

Teacher Education in Serbia

To our knowledge, there are no up to date systemic analyses of how the teacher education is organised in Serbia. Thus, we will provide an overview of the legislation regulating the system of teacher education and professional development in Serbia and some available data on the current situation in practice, as reported in recent publications. By changes in the Law on the fundamentals of educational system introduced in 2009 (which are still in place in the newest Law [...], 2017) all teachers that are to be employed in schools must have a master degree in education and a minimum of 30 ECTS in pedagogical-psychological-methodical courses and 6 ECTS of school practice. Analysis of study

programs for the initial education of class teachers conducted in 2013 shows that subject didactics course make 20 to 36% of all courses, pedagogical and psychological courses – 10 to 15%, while teaching practice takes 5 to 7% (Simić, Bauchman & Stančić, 2013). As for initial teacher education for subject teachers, the situation is much diverse depending on the subject. Faculties of natural sciences (e.g. chemistry, biology, physics, mathematics) usually have separate study programs for teachers. Faculties in the field of social sciences (including languages) usually have special modules within study programs or a set of elective courses dedicated to initial teacher education. Still, the differences between the faculties are great – some faculties have up to 48% of all ECTS (300) dedicated to courses that prepare students for teacher profession, while many of them have none, especially faculties from the field of engineering, medicine, etc. (Simić et al., 2013). To this day, new master and lifelong learning programs at the universities have been introduced with the purpose to provide initial teacher education for graduate students from various faculties, but also for teachers already employed in schools. However, even though master programs for subject teacher education are implemented at the state universities in Serbia since 2013, graduated students cannot get employed in schools. The professional title they obtain is not in the rulebooks that regulate who can get employed as a teacher in schools. From our own experience as teacher educators we can also add that, even though these are the newly introduced master programs, their implementation is not supported by allocating more human resources in the institutions who implement them.

The *induction program* requires that novice teacher has an experienced teacher as a mentor (he has to hold a license and have at least five years of experience in the field of education), whereas mentors role is to enable the novice teacher to pass the state license exam and work autonomously, by providing support in planning and realization of teaching and monitoring his/her work and progress (Rulebook on license for teachers, preschool educators and professional associates, 2008). Studies on teachers' experiences during the induction period show that in many cases novices do not even know who their mentor is or when they did – he/she was not a teacher of the same subject or from the same school or city, and quite rarely mentors were estimated as motivated for the role (Rajović& Radulović, 2010; Stančić, 2015). Furthermore, support from the mentor was estimated as the weakest contribution to teachers learning during the induction period (Stančić, 2015).

As of *professional development of teacher during their work*, the Rulebook on continuous professional development [...] from 2016 defined several forms of professional development (e.g. accredited short programs – so-called “seminars”, lifelong learning programs organized by higher education institutions, professional conferences, summer and winter schools, study trips, performing innovative classes and activities in the school, participation in research and projects, publishing articles and schoolbooks, etc.) The teacher is required to col-

lect at least 100 credits in 5 years through different forms of professional development, whereas 80 credits need to be gathered by attending the seminars that can last from one to three days (8 credits per day). However, there are no clear regulations on how others forms of professional development are converted into credits, except for accredited conferences (1 credit per day). Studies have shown that the seminars offered, even though they are numerous and cover different topics, are not planned and chosen based on the systemic analysis of teachers' needs (Alibabic & Segrt, 2010; Kundačina & Stamatović, 2012; Munčan, 2011). Novice teachers are more satisfied with the offer of programs than experienced teachers, and class teachers are more satisfied than subject teachers. It could be concluded that the actual system of teacher professional development is not equally adjusted to the teachers' needs concerning different stages of their career cycle (Marušić & Pejatović, 2013). Also, seminars are usually based on a transmissive model that does not secure the real change in teachers attitudes. Thus they cannot ensure application of knowledge in practice (Pesikan, Antić & Marinković, 2010).

From the previous overview, we can conclude that the system of teacher education in Serbia is still in the process of establishment, especially the part of this system which is related to initial subject teacher education and teachers' professional development. Thus, it is not a surprise that there are not enough systemic studies on the contribution of various programs to the teaching practice in Serbia. According to research results obtained before introducing changes in legislation related to teacher education in Serbia, teachers have gained extensive academic knowledge (mostly from their subject field), while knowledge from the field of pedagogy, psychology and subject didactics were neglected. If they acquired such knowledge, it was as academic knowledge, based on outdated sources, without linking it to practice, if organised practice existed at all (Rosandić et al., 2002). Research related to pedagogical education of subject teachers in Serbia (Rajović & Radulović, 2007; Vujisić-Živković, 2007) and studies in other countries (Kansanen, et al., 2000; Korthagen, 2001; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1981) also show that existence of pedagogical-psychological and methodical education at the initial level is not a guarantee that future teachers will develop appropriate competencies, which are in line with contemporary understandings of teaching/learning. That is why, according to teachers' view, they entered schools unprepared for work and had to rely mostly on advice from their colleagues and their own experience as students (Cvijan, 2011; Rajović & Radulović, 2007).

A recent study on student-teacher perspectives on teaching (Stančić, Jovanović, Simić, 2013), which included students who attended psychological and pedagogical courses at the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, shows somewhat similar results – majority of students did not yet form a specific perspective on teaching. However, having in mind that this study was organised during initial education, it is important to emphasise that the results also point out the dif-

ference in dominant perspectives of teaching among students depending on the number of teacher education related courses they attended. That is, dominant perspective on teaching as transmission of knowledge is more frequent among students that just started attending teacher education courses, while perspective of teaching as a road to social change is more frequent among students who attended these courses for a longer period (Stančić, Jovanović, Simić, 2013). These findings could be taken with optimism: initial teacher education could contribute to the competence of teachers if it is organised properly.

As for programs of teachers' professional development during work, the important questions is how to ensure that teachers participate in them. Research on factors that influence secondary school teachers' participation in different forms of professional development in Serbia (Marušić & Pejatović, 2013), shows that there are no great differences between teachers of various age, previous education and type of the school. Authors of the paper interpret some smaller differences related to the type of programs that teachers choose in the light of teachers' initial education. VET teachers mostly do not have any psychological-pedagogical and methodical education, so they choose programs from this field more often. As potential factors that influence these findings, they also state changes in teachers' needs throughout the career, their understandings of knowledge, as well as the availability of different forms of professional development. As the most important factors they point out teachers' awareness of the importance of professional development for the quality of teaching and for the teaching profession, as well as teachers' satisfaction with own position and roles; while extrinsic motives, such as obligingness of professional development, have a minor role (Marušić & Pejatović, 2013). Not putting in question any of the beforementioned factors, we consider that availability of programs is of particular importance, that is, the possibility that teacher can make a choice of which program he or she will attend. That choice is not related only to their professional judgment, aspirations and needs, but also to objective availability, i.e. proximity to the place where programs are organized, their price. Thus, a factor of personal choice and factors of institutional and systemic support are in interplay.

Contemporary Theories of Teaching and Implications for Teacher Education

There are several possibilities to classify teaching theories. Here we will start from the Bonk and Cunningham (1998) classification which is based on the contemporary understanding of learning. According to this, Bonk and Cunningham present the three general theoretical perspectives on which the contemporary theories of learning and teaching are based: learner centred instruction, constructivist (cognitive and social constructivism) and sociocultural approach.

What are the main ideas about teaching from the perspective of learner-centred instruction theory? From that perspective teaching, as intentional process of constructing knowledge from information and experience should be based on learners' developmental and individual capacities – not on the program and externally planned contents and goals. Thus, in teaching, we have to take into account learners' individual characteristics and differences between learners – their capabilities for learning, learning habits, styles and approaches, their interests, their language, cultural and social background... Teaching should develop students' motivation for learning and interest in topics of learning, provide different learning experiences and develop different learning skills. From this perspective, good atmosphere in a classroom and positive emotions are essential for the process of learning. Criteria for assessment should respect individual differences, and we should evaluate not only achievement but individual learning progress also. Also, assessment should be an integral part of the teaching process, not an isolated activity (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998; Radulović, 2017).

From the perspective of cognitive-constructivist approach to learning and teaching, teaching should facilitate learner's cognitive activity and provide the learner with opportunities to recognise and apply patterns. So, teaching tasks should be adjusted to learner's cognitive scheme and organised around learner's previous knowledge and misconceptions, while contents should be organised around concepts, problems, questions, relations – not around individual information. Also, contents and teaching activities should have a sense for learners and should initiate learner's investigation, reconsideration, reflection on learning process and strategies. Assessment should be focused on individual cognitive development, in accordance with developmental stages (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998; Radulović, 2017). Social constructivist approach highlights that teaching should start not only from previous individual knowledge but also on mutual learners' interests and experiences and topics which are relevant for learners. Teaching should enable active learning through the group activities and cooperation and should encourage collaboration, negotiation between learners, as well as learner individual and group autonomy, initiative, leadership, joint responsibility for learning. In such classroom atmosphere learners influence own learning, and learners' participation is developed. Teaching also should stimulate multiple perspectives, interdisciplinarity and different approaches to problem-solving. Assessment should be focused on the team, as well as on individual participation in cooperative activities, and should be continuous, informal and cumulative. Standards and criteria should be results of agreement (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998; Radulović, 2017).

According to sociocultural approach teaching as “settings, and cultural artefacts in one's learning environment” (Bonk & Cunningham, 1998: 36) has a great impact on the individual learning and development. Teaching enables internalisation through the process of “taking new information that was experienced or

learned within a social context” (Bonk and Cunningham, 1998: 36). Teaching here is understood as a socially interactive relation, cognitive apprenticeship ... through observation, participation and exchange tools and signs”. Teaching should provide different kinds of incentive and give necessary level of support to learning; it provides learning through cooperative activities, dialogue, building intersubjectivity. From the perspective of this approach, the class should be organised as a learning community, with authentic participation in a constructive conversation.

As we could see from this brief overview, understandings of teaching/learning in these theories are to a large extent similar. They put more or less emphasis on the role of peers, emotions in learning, students participation, assessment; but all of them stress the importance of learner’s activity in the process of knowledge construction. For a teacher to organize learning process according to these contemporary understanding of teaching/learning, he/she should have knowledge of developmental stages (cognitive constructivism), individual differences among students and their motivation (cognitive constructivism and learner centred instruction), interactive approach to teaching, cooperative learning, student participation and authentic assessment (social constructivism and sociocultural approach). However, *knowledge about* is not sufficient, as we have discussed previously. It is necessary that teacher *know how* to: research individual differences among students, plan teaching/learning based on students’ previous knowledge, experience, interests; plan different learning tasks and different teaching methods, demonstrate and evaluate different approach to problem solving, create secure context and positive atmosphere in class, monitor students’ progress (learner centred instruction, cognitive and social constructivism, sociocultural approach); organize cooperative activities, facilitate students participation in decision making about teaching and assessment, understand students’ action in the social context, participate in the dialogue (social constructivism and sociocultural approach). To organize teaching in such manner, teacher needs to have more than skills – he/she needs to *accept certain values and beliefs*: importance of individual differences of students, students experience, relevance of the activities for students, different perspectives, trust in students competence to participate in the dialogue and share responsibility for teaching/learning process. Thus, teacher education should be organised in such a way to develop *teacher competence*.

According to some of the contemporary views on teaching, competence includes not only knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to organise teaching according to different theories of teaching/learning, but also understanding that good teaching is not the application of defined prescriptions, techniques and patterns in teaching. All teaching/learning situations are different, thus teacher education should develop teachers awareness of the contextual dependent nature of teaching, students’ present learning situation, diversity in the classroom (both

individual and cultural), students' perceptions of technologies used in teaching, and awareness of the need to continually evaluate and improve teaching (Prosser & Trigwell, 2001). Development of such awareness in teachers implies higher tasks for teacher education. It needs to capacitate teachers to research/evaluate the context, to adjust his teaching to the context, and to change context to facilitate learning and expand students' and own autonomy. Teacher education develops competence understood in such a way is the education that leads to transformation and capacitates a person for a continuous transformation (Pavlović Breneselović & Krnjaja, 2012).

What Can We Learn – Suggestions for Teacher Education

- Starting from the insights on the current state of teacher education and professional development in Serbia, teaching in our schools, and contemporary understandings of teaching/learning, we can derive implications for teacher education on two levels – systemic and curricular. As the most critical *system measures* to be taken we point out:
- Finishing the establishment of the initial teacher education systems. Although the analysis of legislation shows that the system of initial teacher education is established and that certain professional psychological–pedagogical and methodical education of teachers is ensured, the review of the sub–legal acts and practice lead to a different conclusion. Foremost, the process of establishing quality initial education for subject teachers in Serbia is an incomplete process. It is urgent to ensure the recognition of the competence of subject teachers who have completed master programs for teacher education. Also, it is necessary to ensure the minimum quality of initial teacher education programs, which could be reflected in their appropriate structure, the relevance of university teachers and institutions that are implementing these programs, and pedagogical competence of the accreditation commissions for this kind of programs. To ensure that initial teacher education programs are adequately established and implemented in the upcoming period, we should persist in providing professional (psychological–pedagogical and methodical) teacher education. However, providing special support measures to institutions that implement initial teacher education is also needed, especially in areas in which this education is least developed (subject teacher education, teachers of professional subjects – VET). Bearing in mind the solutions in European countries, as well as the beforementioned results of the research in Serbia, it is necessary to provide in the long run the duration of this part of education for all teachers.
- *Support to the programs of teacher induction*, which should encompass elaboration of the induction program, program for mentors and novice

teachers, networking of mentors and novice teachers in the local environments, as well as the evaluation of the mentors' roles.

- *Changes in the system of teachers' professional development*, which should go in two directions. The first one is related to systemic monitoring of teachers' needs, establishing of professional development on these needs and their changes, as well as to research of the professional development system and critical review of the existing system of accreditation of professional development programs (seminars). The other direction should go into strengthening of other forms of teachers' professional development, such as establishing system of recognition and incentives for teacher research, participation of schools and teachers in different projects; better links between self-evaluation and professional development and broader autonomy of schools and teachers in the process of self-evaluation (de-bureaucratization of these processes).
- *Care for the status of teacher profession*. Teacher position, which is based on the degree of autonomy he has in the educational system, his participation in the decision making about various aspects of the school system, and also on other characteristics of his social position, will surely influence the selection of student-teachers and teachers to be employed in schools and their work satisfaction. As studies suggested, this satisfaction is also linked with teachers' participation in professional development programs, thus care for the members of teacher profession is a crucial systemic influence to teacher education and professional development, and it has a greater role than bureaucratic conditioning of teachers to attend seminars. As it is emphasized in the theoretical views on the teacher profession in the postmodern era – it is not enough to reduce teacher professional learning to the fulfilment of standards, it is necessary to ensure support for their learning and community in which they will learn (Hargreaves, 2003).

Even though in establishing and implementing this kind of systemic measures different actors of the educational system have an important role, the greatest responsibility is on policymakers. When it comes to the meaning of the insights discussed in this paper for those who plan and implement teacher education, we could single out the following suggestions for the *curriculum development and methodical aspects of teacher education*:

- *Focusing the curriculum on the development of teacher competence*. Many publications and policy documents on teacher education today, both on the national and international scope, emphasise the importance of developing teacher competencies as a specific kind of professional knowledge which includes knowledge, skills and attitudes. The analysis of knowledge that teacher needs in order to organise teaching in accordance with

contemporary didactic understandings confirms that the competencies are necessary, which includes teachers awareness on important phenomenon of the educational process and school life, critical examination of values which are in the base of certain behaviours and accepting values which are grounded in particular theories of teaching/learning. Many authors that developed their ideas under the umbrella of postmodern and critical paradigm emphasise that development of such competence requires more than formal education and programs of professional development. They call this approach to teacher education as an “old paradigm” and confront it with the conception of the new paradigm (Darling–Hammond & Richardson, 2009). That new paradigm encompasses the approach to education as permanent transformation, understanding teacher as a reflective practitioner and researcher, activities within the school which build partner relations and learning community (Pavlović Breneselović & Krnjaja, 2012). Thus, the context in which teacher is learning and working is important for his/her development of competence. The appropriate context (learning community) cannot be developed by itself. Development of such context is a part of learning process/transformation and its consequence. From this perspective, the development of competence requires empowerment of teachers to be agents of change and building a professional identity of a leader.

- *Dialogic methods and reflection.* Orientation to such kind of competence requires appropriate teaching for (future) teachers. In short, we could say that teacher education should be organised with respect for their knowledge and perspectives, with opportunities to gain experience (practical part of education) and with organised reflection on that experience. Similar ideas were stated by many authors whose field of expertise is in teacher education (Hargreaves, 2001; Schon, 1987; Radulović, 2011, 2016). Practice by itself is not sufficient. Only with the analysis of experience through exchange with colleagues and opportunities to reflect on it by examining different perspectives of the event (school teachers’, students’, university teachers’) what teacher experienced in practice become the experience through which he/she learns. As specific forms of learning, which could be used in initial teacher education and in their professional development, we could single out: discussions among the colleagues, collaborative problem solving, peer class observations and analysis of experience with critical friends, collaborative counselling and planning of teaching, evaluation of work, analysis of students’ work products, collaborative research.
- *Interdisciplinarity and teamwork.* For understanding practical problems and theoretical dilemmas, it is necessary to confront knowledge from different perspectives, thus also perspectives of different scientific dis-

ciplines. For that reason, it is important to organise teacher education through collaboration and teamwork of university teachers that come from different scientific fields (psychology, pedagogy, subject didactics, philosophy, sociology of education). This is also implied by the sole complexity of educational issues but gets more on importance if we bear in mind that methodical knowledge and education of teachers of subject didactics for many fields are not developed enough.

- *Context in which (future) teachers learn.* For reflective questioning of own practice and implicit and explicit standpoints, it is necessary that teachers feel safe, without fear of consequences for sharing own thoughts and that they are learning in the atmosphere of mutual respect. It takes time to build such atmosphere and work in small groups is advised. Furthermore, it is necessary that those who learn have a subject position in that process, which implies that programs of professional development cannot be short-termed and out of context.

The premise of creating program for teacher education (both for initial education or professional development during work) is that those who develop such programs share and critically reflect on values and understanding on which they intend to do so, thus to build clear conception of the study program, being aware of the theoretical and value standpoints. Moreover, it is important that they continue to develop the program in the process of its' implementation, thus not only to inform the participants of the program aims and standpoints but also to make them active participants in the discussion about the program and its' further development.

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