CRITIQUING PRAXIS
PEDAGOGY, EDUCATION AND PRAXIS

Volume 2

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Scope

The Pedagogy, Education and Praxis Series will foster a conversation of traditions in which different European and Anglo-American perspectives on ‘pedagogy’, ‘education’ and ‘praxis’ are problematised and explored. By opening constructive dialogue between different theoretical and intellectual traditions, the Series aims, in part, at recovering and extending the resources of these distinctive traditions for education in contemporary times. The Series aims to contribute to (1) theoretical developments in the fields of pedagogy, education and praxis; (2) the development of praxis in the pedagogical professions; and (3) the development of strategies capable of resisting and countering contemporary tendencies towards the technologisation, standardisation, bureaucratisation, commodification and de-moralisation of education.
Critiquing Praxis
Conceptual and Empirical Trends in the Teaching Profession

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The Editors
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SERIES INTRODUCTION:

PEDAGOGY, EDUCATION AND PRAXIS

The ‘Pedagogy, Education and Praxis’ series arose from shared concerns among educational researchers from Australia, the Netherlands, the Nordic countries and the United Kingdom about the relationships between different traditions of education and educational research that inform our work. The meanings of terms like ‘pedagogy’ and ‘praxis’ are contested within European research traditions and Anglo-American traditions and even more confusingly contested across or between traditions. These words, shared across languages and intellectual traditions, inhabit different spaces in different languages, with different characteristic ways of behaving in each. What ‘pedagogy’, ‘education’ and ‘praxis’ mean in Dutch or English or Swedish – where variants of these words occur – cannot be translated precisely and without remainder into another language. The Series aims to encourage a ‘conversation of traditions’ in which the voices of different traditions can be heard, and different perspectives can come into view. In this way, readers may glimpse beyond the English in which the conversation is conducted to the rich intellectual traditions presented by contributors to the Series. We hope to use these key ideas – pedagogy, education and praxis – as windows through which we may see, even if darkly, into the rooms of other languages and traditions, and to learn what we can about those other traditions. The international collaborative project ‘Pedagogy, Education and Praxis’, of which this Series is an expression has three kinds of aims:

1. theoretical aims concerning the exploration and critical development of key concepts and associated understandings, from different educational and research traditions, of pedagogy, educational science and educational studies, and social and educational praxis and practice;
2. practical aims concerning the quality and transformation of educational praxis in settings including education, teacher education and the continuing professional development of teachers, in relation to a variety of contemporary educational problems and issues, as they emerge in a variety of educational contexts at different levels of education and in different national contexts; and
3. strategic aims of
   a. encouraging the dialogue between different traditions of theory, research and practice in education;
   b. enhancing awareness about the origins and formation of our own (and others’) presumptions and understandings as participants in such dialogues; and
   c. fostering collaboration and the development of networks between scholars interested in these problems and issues across traditions.

The volumes in the series are intended as contributions to this dialogue. Some aim to foster this dialogue by opening and exploring contemporary educational contexts, problems and issues within one country or tradition to readers from other countries and traditions. Other volumes aim to foster dialogue by bringing together, to address a common topic, authors and contributions from different countries and traditions. We believe that this effort will renew and revitalise some old conceptual resources, and make some, old or transformed, accessible as new resources for educational theory and practice in the international conversations, conferences and collaborations which constitute the globalised educational research communities of today.

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STEPHEN KEMMIS

FOREWORD

Critiquing Praxis opens a window into the contemporary world of education and the teaching profession in the Netherlands, identifying and characterising a trend towards the adoption of Anglo-American presuppositions about curriculum, pedagogy and teachers’ work. Dutch educational policy-makers may make the conditions for contemporary Dutch educational developments, but they do so under increasingly globalised conditions, influenced by internationally changing currents of thought about education and about educational and public administration. These globalizing trends are affecting schools and education systems around the world.

The volume presents the findings of new research into the changing conditions of teaching professionalism in the Netherlands. Studies reported in some chapters put the present situation of teaching professionalism in historical context by showing changes in the preoccupations of governments, national reports on education or articles in journals for education professionals. Others explore the content and forms of teachers’ work and the work of educational leaders within and beyond schools. And others present analyses of contemporary developments in the initial and continuing professional education of teachers.

The volume does not present a single unified view of problems or issues in teacher professionalism in the Netherlands today, nor does it employ a single theoretical framework. Yet the voices of the different authors come together to send a powerful message about contemporary Dutch society, public administration and education. Education in the Netherlands – and in much of the post-industrial world – is at a historical turning point. The forms into which education was shaped two centuries ago are under stress. Modern schooling, as an invention of and for the industrial age and the age of emerging democratic nation-states in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, may not meet the needs of a post-industrial age and a globalised world. In the Netherlands, as elsewhere in the West, student populations are now more varied; there is a greater variety of types of schools; the state and its civil society are more internally diverse socially and culturally; in the economy, the nature and conditions of work and production are more varied; more diverse forms of knowledge and more diverse literacies are needed for ‘knowledge economies’ and information-rich societies. Schools, teachers, school administrators and education systems struggle to meet the needs created by these different dimensions of diversity.

My reading of some of the studies in this volume suggests that, like their counterparts elsewhere, Dutch education planners and policy-makers have a nostalgia for simpler times, when assuring the quality of schooling could be
achieved by making clearer, simpler statements of national objectives for education; by supporting schools with clear syllabi specifying the content of a national curriculum; by preparing a teaching force through effective national programs of teacher education; by establishing strong mechanisms for managing schools and teachers; by instituting national programs of national assessment and examination; and by implementing national programs of accreditation, inspection and evaluation to provide planners and policy makers with information that would allow them to steer whole systems of educational institutions and organizations.

There is evidence that, despite increasing diversity, Dutch planners, policy-makers and politicians have recently been making proposals for educational change of just these reductive kinds.

The analyses presented in this volume suggest that such reductive proposals are not, and are unlikely to be, successful in meeting the demands of contemporary times. Authors in this volume suggest that teachers need to be able to work with students of more diverse kinds, and to work with them in more diverse ways, with greater freedom to improvise, not greater standardisation of educational technique. Teachers for the changed historical, social, cultural and political conditions of contemporary education in the Netherlands will need to value and foster diversity and the development of individuals to be workers and citizens doing diverse tasks in more internally diverse economies and under more internally diverse cultural and political conditions. Teachers will need ways to develop their professionalism through seeking diverse kinds of continuing professional education – not be held to the kinds of national ‘scripts’ for educational ‘production’ which emerged after the Second World War, in the high modern, industrial age. Arguably, teachers will need to be more, not less, guided by the traditions of pedagogiek and didactiek that give overarching meaning, substance and coherence to the work of education even in conditions of diversity. Similarly, educational leaders and managers will need skills and capacities to improvise more in the management of diverse types of educational institutions, with diverse student populations and diverse staff, in more diverse social, economic and cultural circumstances and conditions, and to manage the resources with which to innovate, using their professional discretion – of course in accountable ways. Arguably, too, planners and policy makers will also need to draw on the theoretical resources provided by the traditions of pedagogiek and didactiek to give coherence to their work – to orchestrate difference to achieve diversity of outcomes in a contemporary Dutch society held together not by some essentialised imagined social and cultural identity but by the shared social, political and cultural life of a contemporary constitutional democracy.

Critiquing Praxis is a stimulus and a resource for new thinking about education in the Netherlands and in the West. It suggests that the boundary conditions of education and schooling have shifted, and that new ways of thinking about educational provision might therefore be needed. The book offers a diagnosis, but not a cure. Its contribution is in indicating ways in which shifts might be needed in thinking – nationally and internationally – about curriculum, pedagogiek, educational leadership, educational administration and policy making, and initial and continuing teacher education. It suggests that everyone involved in education
will need to pay more attention to difference and diversity, and be able to
improvise professionally to meet the needs of particular students and communities
– and have the right and the resources to do so.

The influence of the Anglo-American ‘Curriculum tradition’

In relation to questions of curriculum and pedagogy, in Chapter 2, Piet-Hein Van
de Ven and Helma Oolbekkink, discuss findings of their analysis of the discourse
of articles in volumes of the Dutch Journal of Teacher Education in the thirteen
years from 1993. Crucial for the concerns of this Sense Publishers Pedagogy,
Education and Praxis Series, they identify and document an increasingly pragmatic
tendency in teacher education in the Netherlands, which they regard as
characteristic of the American ‘Curriculum’ tradition which appears to be
challenging and perhaps supplanting the longstanding European Bildung tradition
in pedagogiek and didaktiek. The Bildung tradition informed and oriented the
development of education up to and into the high modernism of the nineteen-fifties
to ’seventies, but began to be displaced in the nineteen-eighties and ’nineties – a
trend that has continued into the twenty-first century. Van de Ven and Oolbekkink
identify ways in which the teacher education literature, as exemplified in this
particular Dutch journal for the education profession, has become less specific
about the substance and value of education-as-upbringing as it has adopted a more
universalised and abstracted view of education, learning, learners, teachers and
learning contexts – as might be expected with the increasing influence of the
Curriculum tradition. Echoing Korthagen, whom they cite, they call for a vision of
teacher education – like education – as ‘conscience development’. This theme
resonates strongly with a view of educational praxis as morally-committed action
oriented by traditions in a field (Kemmis and Smith, 2007).

A trend towards more pragmatic policy and administration

Critiquing Praxis also identifies and characterises a second global trend, coming
from the OECD and other international organizations, towards pragmatic,
noliberal policies and approaches to the administration and management of
education.

In Chapter 3, in relation to teachers’ work and what states regard as desirable
characteristics for teachers, Mineke van Essen and Greetje Timmerman survey the
history of the education of primary school teachers in the Netherlands over the last
150 years. Their analysis suggests that contemporary concerns in primary teacher
education – like the concern with the personal attributes of prospective teachers –
are more similar to concerns in Europe 150 years ago than to concerns at other key
historical reference moments in the reform of primary teacher education – 1920
and 1952 for example. They examine not only the history of Dutch primary teacher
education but also compare this unfolding story with the situation in other
European countries, notably England, France and Germany.
In Chapter 4, Jan Ax, Ronald Elte and Petra Ponte show that national education policies of the last twenty-five years have created conditions that constrain the teaching profession within the boundaries of school management and decision making as a form of ‘routine’ professionalism exercised in a ‘local’ way – within particular school organizations. They report the results of their analysis of a range of government, advisory and pressure group reports of the last twenty-five years that have recommended changes needed in teaching and the teaching profession to meet the needs of changed historical circumstances in schooling, especially the expected shortages of teachers, and particularly in secondary schools. They explore how these reports conceptualise the teacher and the teaching profession, particularly using ideal types based on two dimensions: ‘routine’ versus ‘improvising’ kinds of professions and professionals, and ‘local professionals’ (who exercise their professionalism within the boundaries defined by the organization in which they work) versus ‘cosmo-professionals’ (who exercise their professionalism in ways oriented by professional bodies, standards and understandings of their work as defined beyond a local employing organization). They conclude that most of the reports, to the extent that they explore the professional qualities and professional development of teachers at all, appear to view teachers and the teaching profession as composed of routine rather than improvising professionals, and as local-professionals rather than cosmo-professionals. Ax, Elte and Ponte argue that, as a by-product of centralisation of national educational policy making and regulation in the Netherlands, together with decentralisation of administration (more decisions being made about the conduct of education within schools as employing and administrative organizations), national education policy has created conditions that constrain the teaching profession within the boundaries of school management and decision making. This situation has the consequence that there is less room in education in the Netherlands for the development of the kinds of reflective practitioners that many educational theorists and researchers believe are needed for the changed historical, cultural, technological conditions of contemporary society, culture and economy. Dutch educational praxis might need reflective practitioners in its schools and classrooms, but the conditions governments have constructed for the profession and for schools are not conditions conducive for attracting, developing and retaining education professionals committed to reflective practice and oriented by pedagogische insights into the changed forms required for upbringing in the Netherlands in the twenty-first century.

In Chapter 5, Klaas van Veen analyses the conditions for the teaching professions in high schools in the Netherlands. He explores the notions of ‘profession’ and ‘professional’, arguing that there is sense in retaining these notions in relation to education and teaching, even though the education profession does not have attributes related to some other, old professions like medicine. Compellingly, he analyses the actual working conditions of teachers in the Netherlands, and argues that these conditions are inimical to attracting and retaining highly educated and experienced teachers. Lack of autonomy and influence in the construction and conduct of their work are among the chief reasons
teachers leave teaching. Van Veen concludes his analysis with suggestions about how his analysis might be used to improve the conditions of teaching to attract and retain well-educated teachers for high schools in the Netherlands, including suggestions about improving the autonomy of teachers and making more time available for teachers’ continuing learning and professional development.

In Chapter 6, Peter Karstanje also explores the tensions resulting from the apparent (rhetorical) deregulation and decentralisation of schools at a time when there is also increasingly centralised national policy about the content of school curricula and assessment. In this chapter, the focus is on teacher professionalism and the management of schools. Karstanje argues that new ideas about education in the Netherlands require two kinds of changes in educational leadership: from ‘administrative leadership’ to ‘educational leadership’, and from ‘transactional leadership’ to ‘transformational leadership’. He cites research supporting the proposition that transformational educational leaders can produce changed conditions for educational innovation in schools in ways that lead to improved educational outcomes for students. There is doubt, however, whether these shifts are in fact being produced through current modes of professional preparation and continuing development of educational leaders in the Netherlands.

Changing conditions for teaching professionalism: multiculturalism and inclusive education

New forms of teacher professionalism might also be needed in response to changes in the ways difference and diversity are understood and handled in education and schooling in the Netherlands. The increasingly diverse social and cultural composition of Dutch society poses one set of problems and issues to be addressed; changing ways of regarding the education of students with special needs – indeed, all students regarded as ‘different’ – pose another set of challenges.

In Chapter 7, Theo Wubbels, Perry den Brok, Ietje Veldman and Jan van Tartwijk address needed changes in teaching professionalism in the Netherlands from the perspective of a major social change under way in Dutch society – the increasingly multicultural character of student populations in schools. The authors see teacher professionalism as encompassing ‘teaching strategies, knowledge, beliefs and teacher professional identity’. Findings of their empirical study indicate that teachers believed to be especially good in teaching multicultural classes use a range of strategies that are familiar in supporting the learning of all students, but perhaps they use these strategies more consciously or extensively than teachers in less multicultural classes. Commenting on different conceptions of teaching they characterise as ‘rule-based’ (relying on and monitoring students’ behaviour in accordance with classroom rules), ‘authority-based’ (relying on teacher power over students) and ‘nurturance-based’ (relying on friendliness and openness with students), they comment that ‘in some situations, rules are important, whereas in others, nurturance should prevail. It is probably exactly the appropriate balancing of these conceptions that makes up teacher professionalism.’ Readers of this chapter might conclude that the changing, more multicultural, character of Dutch
society calls for new forms of this professionalism. These new forms of professionalism might not call for entirely new strategies, knowledge, beliefs and attitudes, however; it might call, rather, for changes of balance in teachers’ conceptions of how they need to work with more multicultural classes. Perhaps here, too, there is an implication that teachers for new times need to be oriented by overarching pedagogische theories in which they can articulate and explore what kinds of balancing might be appropriate in any particular case, place or time.

In Chapter 8, Douwe Van Houten describes different approaches to the education of students with special educational needs, arguing that special schools have persisted in the Netherlands because the Netherlands is a ‘constructed society’ in which policies and laws construct different circumstances and opportunities – including schooling – for different types of people. He argues that there is a need for the development, based on a bottom-up approach, of a different view of the composition of society in the Netherlands, one which Van Houten describes as a ‘varied society’, in which equality and diversity are equally valued. If teachers in the Netherlands understood their society as a varied society, he suggests, inclusive education could succeed as it appears to succeed in some other parts of the world.

Responses in initial and continuing teacher education

Producing a new teacher professionalism in the Netherlands – and elsewhere – requires creating new conditions for the formation and transformation of teachers as professionals, in the initial and continuing professional education of teachers.

In Chapter 9, Siebrich de Vries, Douwe Beijaard and Jaap Buitink describe a collaborative educational action research initiative in which student teachers work in schools with experienced teachers on development projects addressing themes identified by the experienced teachers. In many cases, these projects were regarded as successful by participants, although there were difficulties of time and support for some experienced teachers – and in some cases, projects could not be brought to completion. These educational action research projects were undertaken as part of the Teacher Education program of the University of Groningen, and represent a response to contemporary interest in the Netherlands in the development of student teachers in school settings through school-based teacher education programs. The project drew a number of conclusions about how the process could be further refined and developed in practice – recommendations that will be implemented in future iterations of the program in the University of Groningen Teacher Education program. The project put student teachers into important roles managing research and development projects related to the improvement of their own, and experienced teachers’, subject teaching – and their own praxis as teachers in the various fields of study in which they were preparing to teach.

In Chapter 10, Petra Ponte similarly presents a case of innovation in teacher development, this time with teachers in a post-graduate professional development course. This highly innovative case constructs the task of professional development as one of working with teachers researching their own teaching, supported by
university facilitators. This ‘research-led’ program arranges resources and support for working teachers in ways that meet their needs, rather than arranging things to meet the university’s and the university teachers’ needs. The chapter shows that it can be done, and by turning the usual arrangement on its head, demonstrates a possible new path for the development of continuing professional education programs for teachers.

Conclusion

As stated at the outset, Critiquing Praxis is a resource for thinking about change in schools and schooling, and for re-thinking education, teacher education and the administration of schools and schooling. It identifies trends in schooling in the Netherlands that resonate strongly with trends elsewhere in the world. Readers from outside the Netherlands will learn much about the situation of the Netherlands, but will also gather new insights into the situation of the education profession in their own countries.

Critiquing Praxis offers more than an opportunity to learn about how education might need re-thinking for contemporary times, in the Netherlands and elsewhere, however. In Chapters 1 and 12, it also presents powerful conceptual resources to assist with this task of re-thinking. In these chapters, the editors draw on the resources of European intellectual traditions in pedagogy, education and praxis to structure and shape their critique. And the critique itself suggests ways forward for doing education differently and for thinking education differently.

To think education differently – to re-make the traditions of educational thought, of pedagogiek and didaktiek, is a significant task for our times. Critiquing Praxis may not have completed the task for our times and our generation, but it helps us to conceptualise it. Educationalists in the twenty-first century need the courage and the resources to undertake this work, as educationalists before us have done, at worst despite, and at best with the assistance of, the educational planners and policy-makers who have the job of governing and directing the development of new kinds of schools and schooling for new times. As Ax and Ponte show, we have the Bildung tradition to draw upon; the challenge for educational research, for pedagogiek and for didaktiek, is to think Bildung differently for our times and for the future.

NOTES

1 See Chapter 1 of this volume. The Dutch terms pedagogiek or pedagogisch and didaktiek or didactisch cannot be literally translated as ‘pedagogy’ or ‘pedagogic’ and ‘didactics’ or ‘didactic’. Pedagogiek or pedagogisch refers to the science of the child’s upbringing. Didactisch refers to pedagogy as a theory of teaching.
REFERENCES


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1. PRAXIS: ANALYSIS OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we describe the theoretical framework that is used for the critical analysis of the case descriptions in the chapters that follow. First, we examine the term ‘praxis’ in relation to the continental European concepts of pedagogiek, didactiek and bildung. Then we present a ‘model for critique’, which is used in the Epilogue to discuss the substance of certain developments in the teaching profession in Dutch educational praxis.

We asked the authors to describe and analyse a number of developments in the Netherlands which are also discernible in an international context. We did not aspire to provide a fixed outline or division of topics but gave the authors an opportunity to provide their own analyses on various topics.

The aim was to trace a number of salient developments, rather than to provide a full empirical description. Taken together, the different chapters should meet three basic criteria. First, the developments should be distributed over the different levels of the education system (meaning that teacher education, policy and actual school practice should all be addressed). Second, each level of the system should be connected to a theme which is sufficiently broad to at least represent the ongoing discussion in the field to some extent. Third, our aim was to produce a book which (1) links in to continental European pedagogische and didaktische traditions; (2) links theoretical issues and empirical evidence; and (3) links the past, present and future.

This book is the product of all our joint efforts, including the reflections of our colleagues from Australia, Sweden, Norway and England, who participate in the international ‘Praxis, Education and Pedagogy’ project, which was mentioned in the Foreword.

PRAXIS

The concept of ‘praxis’ originates from Aristotle who tried to answer the questions: What is wisdom? What is knowledge? What makes a person who has the capacity to act? He defined praxis as ‘action’, referring in a general sense to all intentional activities, by which people can reach a particular ‘goal’ through their own efforts. More specifically, the term referred to rational action based on a conscious choice and ‘action’ was defined as the product of observation, desires, and intellect or reason.
Praxis has remained an important concept down the centuries, that has taken on different forms of significance in different theoretical frameworks. In this chapter, we have taken the concept of ‘praxis’ from Riedel’s (1977) model of Allgemeine Didaktik und unterrichtliche Praxis as our starting point, and we have developed his model in the framework of pedagogy as a branch of educational science. We are referring here not to ‘pedagogy as method’ which has been dominant in the Anglo-American literature, but to Pedagogiek, which we term ‘pedagogy as human science’, or more precisely, the science of the child’s upbringing. This science seeks answers to questions about what kind of human beings children should become and how they can be raised toward becoming such human beings, taking into account the social and political context in which this process of upbringing takes place. Frameworks are used in which knowledge from different disciplines (psychological, sociological, philosophical, economics, law) is integrated. Pedagogy as human science was more dominant in the Netherlands, Germany and other continental European countries until recently, but this dominance is increasingly being replaced by a stronger emphasis on Anglo-American ‘pedagogic as method’ with its psychological focus on the individual learner (see Van Manen, 1994; Westburry, 2000). Pedagogy as human science is therefore a science about and for human beings; a science which is particularly ‘human’ in its humane concern for the young (though also at times for adult learners) who may be regarded as vulnerable (for example to untoward influences) or impressionable; and a science which is ‘human’ in the sense of being ‘human, all too human’, that is, a fallible and interpretive project of cultural, social and self-understanding. It is, moreover, a science that draws both upon the older hermeneutic and idealistic traditions of European philosophies and more recent traditions in European pedagogiek that address observed empirical realities relevant to pedagogisch work.

First, we briefly examine Riedel’s concept of praxis, before going on to analyse developments towards managerialism in the teaching profession in Dutch educational praxis. Next we discuss the theoretical traditions in which Riedel’s model is embedded and, in the final section, we analyse the Dutch situation as a particular example of a much more general phenomenon that is also found in other countries. In addition to Riedel, our analysis was also partly based on ideas from the work of Weber, Mannheim and Habermas. This analysis produced a model for critique, which as mentioned above, will be used in the Epilogue.

**PRAXIS AS A NATURAL CONDITION OF HUMAN BEINGS**

Riedel (1977) defines knowledge that is developed through praxis as the knowledge of human beings who act with a purpose and take responsibility for their actions. This knowledge can be distinguished from general knowledge based on theory (modelled predictions of educational reality) and techne (potential skills, techniques and strategies). Educational literature rarely distinguishes between theory and techne. Riedel maintains that this is because both are forms of systematic knowledge, that is knowledge about regularities. Theory is concerned with knowledge about how phenomena are related in certain situations. Techne is
concerned with knowledge about what could be done in certain situations. It is important for education that both knowledge based on techne and praxis are intended to exert an influence on practice. Techne, however, is concerned with general knowledge about the exercise of influence without the need to be responsible for, or to reflect on, the moral objective behind it, whereas this need is the key to praxis. Praxis, therefore, is concerned with moral goals that human beings are responsible for, since praxis arises through purposeful intervention in the reality of others. Theory and techne can be used when making these interventions but their use in itself does not constitute praxis.

The real existing practice of upbringing is necessarily praxis, and praxis is a natural condition of human beings. The process of upbringing is always praxis, regardless of its quality or its implications. Indoctrination, for instance, is highly undesirable, but it is still a form of upbringing; because it is undertaken with a moral and social intention by the one doing the indoctrination, it is nevertheless, on this view, praxis. Every case of upbringing, every praxis therefore, implies and responds to a social environment. Children become adults in and through the social environment and morality is the essence of this. After all, every pedagogische relationship has mores and they are culturally, socially and materially determined. In other words, pedagogische praxis is a socially and culturally embedded situation in which the upbringer purposefully tries to help the child to become an adult. Because of their social-cultural roots, aims and methods of upbringing, and of pedagogische praxis, are strongly connected and to a greater or lesser degree historically determined.

In line with the usage of Habermas, ‘praxis’ in this book is not seen as something that the individual can or cannot do: upbringing is always praxis and that praxis can be evaluated as good or bad. Rather, it is a concept that enables human beings to criticise existing ways of seeing, doing and structuring social life. Here we cite Kemmis and Smith (2007) in Enabling Praxis, the first book in the Sense series ‘Pedagogy, Education and Praxis’:

It offers a vantage point a little similar to the old episteme in the sense that it aims for a kind of contemplation on how things came to be (given ways of seeing, doing and structuring social life), but the critical approach is also different in a significant way. Instead of contemplation on the mystery and marvels of a divine creation, the critical perspective provokes contemplation on the possibility that existing ways of understanding things might be irrational (in the dimension of discourse or thought), that they might lead to injustice or human suffering (in the social dimension), or that they might be unproductive or destructive (in the dimension of the conservation of the earth’s resources). The critical approach thus emphasises not just how things are, but how they might be otherwise – not in the positive sense, pursuing some ideal form of rationality, justice or well-being, but in the negative (critical) sense of overcoming observed irrationality, injustice, suffering, unproductiveness and unsustainability. (p. 23)
In Dutch educational praxis, some current trends can be described as fragmentation or decomposition of the teaching profession. Fragmentation and decomposition refer to the trend toward breaking up the teaching profession into different elements, for which different staff in the school or bodies outside the school are responsible. Larger schools, for instance, have resulted in more and more administrators, managers and co-ordinators, who reduce the range of tasks that teachers do and curtail their scope for action. Instructional formats are designed for the whole school or even for groups of schools, for instance, and teachers are scarcely able to exercise any influence on them. Decentralisation and reduced government involvement was supposed to encourage competition between schools and therefore to improve quality, but in fact it has led to a situation whereby the school board and the school management team have taken the place of the government as rule-makers and are increasingly specifying the work that teachers and pupils have to do on a daily basis. A large school board in the south of the Netherlands, for instance, recently launched the idea of setting up its own in-service institute for all the personnel of the 45 schools for secondary education that it is in charge of. Their argument in favour of this idea was: ‘We want to have overall control over what is good for our people’. Two members of the committee of the pressure group The Association for Better Education in the Netherlands, responded to this with the observation that:

It is precisely this kind of paternalism that has alienated many teachers from their profession in recent years. Far from giving teachers a free rein and responsibility, including over their own education and training, the strings seem to be being pulled tighter years. (Paul Bezembinder, Presley Bergen & Ad Verbruggen in De Volkskrant, 2007, translation by the authors)

The idea that a school board should set up its own in-service institute, as this board proposed to do, and that this would be in keeping with the ‘reform agenda of the sector’ led these authors to fear that:

Specific educational ideologies will once again be imposed from above, when it is precisely the ill-thought-out and over hasty introduction of all kinds of reforms that has caused a significant share of the problems in education over the past 20 years. (Paul Bezembinder, Presley Bergen & Ad Verbruggen in De Volkskrant, 2007, translation by the authors)

Several of the contributions to this volume demonstrate that the unity of educational practice is in danger of being lost because of this trend and that teachers are losing control over their own teaching. The fragmentation and decomposition of the teaching profession is not only a current topic of public debate, it is also being discussed in the professional literature. What stands out from this literature is that what is understood to be good teaching is changing and is becoming more diverse. Over the past twenty years, these ideas seem to have been coloured by the general neo-liberal social climate and to a lesser extent by...
developments in, and current thinking about, the teaching profession and teacher professionalism. With regard to the content of the discussions, metaphors from domains of practice other than education are often used. A striking example of this is the language used in connection with issues of total quality management (TQM): tailor-made teaching; client-oriented services; closed chains of information exchange; achievement-based reward; and so forth. All of these notions have been developed in the world of industrial manufacturing and, more specifically, the domain of predictable technologies and closed production processes, and are now being adopted in education. Schools produce products and have to compete with each other; governors and managers are the ‘directors’ and are required to demonstrate ‘entrepreneurship’; teachers are the ‘workers on the shopfloor’; and pupils and parents are the ‘customers’. Whereas in the ‘sixties and ‘seventies, practitioners often paid little or no attention to models or concepts for instruction and curriculum development from educational theory, as they were seen as too ‘theoretical’, and teaching was seen as a ‘personal-intuitive’ enterprise, nowadays many practitioners seem to be brimming with enthusiasm about management models and the establishment of function protocols.

The current dominance of this managerial thinking is remarkable, because management models and protocols are even further away from the actual educational practice of teachers and students than the teaching theories and educational concepts that were used before TQM models were introduced. They are not only further away in terms of the degree of abstraction from the daily practice of students and teachers, but they are also further away from the substance of the educational and moral debate about the kind of education that should be offered to children in our schools and in our society. A tendency to perceive the teaching profession in terms of a combination of technological prediction, client orientation, efficiency and manageability can clearly be detected. The question can be raised as to whether these managerial perceptions are, in and of themselves, suitable for educational practice, and whether they can be combined into a coherent and desirable image of the teaching profession and teachers’ professionalism. It is obvious from some chapters in this volume that teacher education also plays a role and may be both part of the problem and part of the solution.

We see also that developments in society often lead directly to new tasks for teaching personnel. At this point in time, for example, social cohesion and integration is an important educational objective and so this adds a new element to teaching. The question is, however, whether this aspect of teaching should simply be added as something extra to the existing professional image or should we re-examine this image more fundamentally? Based on the studies reported in this volume, we can tentatively conclude that such a systematic reflection on the image of the teaching profession is often absent from the professional literature, policy reports and ongoing public debates. Moreover, too many direct connections seem to be drawn between pressing societal problems, as seen from the perspective of a neo-liberal ideology, and educational practice. These trends in Dutch education also seem to mirror trends in other countries (Kemmis & Smith, 2007).
DEVELOPMENTS IN THEORETICAL BACKGROUNDS

It will become clear at various points in this book that the Dutch terms pedagogiek or pedagogisch and didactiek or didactisch cannot be literally translated as ‘pedagogy’ or ‘pedagogic’ and ‘didactics’ or ‘didactic’. The Dutch pedagogiek or German Pädagogik are often translated as ‘education’ but the Dutch equivalent of education is onderwijs, in German Unterricht. The Dutch term pedagogiek is partly covered by ‘education’ or ‘teaching methods’, except that pedagogiek takes in the methods as well as the goals of the total emotional, intellectual, physical and moral growth of the child for which parents, teachers and other professionals are jointly responsible (see also Van Manen, 1994, p. 138). In this volume we have used the term ‘pedagogy as human science’ or not to translate the terms when they are used with the continental European meaning. The theoretical and historical backgrounds to these terms are briefly explained below.

Pedagogy as human science

Pedagogy as human science seeks to understand the development of children towards adulthood as well as to contribute to the practice of those who are responsible for helping the children in this process, like parents and teachers (as well as professionals in health, social care, law, and other fields). This process is referred to as pedagogische praxis. The word ‘pedagogiek’ comes from the Latin words ‘paidos’ which means ‘child’ and ‘agogos’ which means ‘bringer’ or ‘guide’ (see also Ponte, 2007).

The bases for pedagogy as human science were laid down as long ago as the 17th and 18th centuries by Locke (1632-1704) and Rousseau (1712-1778). Locke saw the newborn human child as a sheet of blank paper (tabula rasa) on which things learned through the child’s upbringing and education would be written. Rousseau pleaded for the child, who he viewed as good by nature, to be given a ‘natural’ upbringing. His view was that the child’s development should be protected from harmful and stunting influences in the culture. Educationalists in the Locke tradition reduced the experience of being a child to ‘that which not yet is’, but that which through discipline and education must become as soon as possible, in accordance with the standards of the established ideology of the church or state. Educationalists in the Rousseau tradition felt that the child should develop as soon as possible into a human being who does not allow himself to be guided by any authority other than his own judgment; only in this way could education contribute to a better society. In both cases, being a child is understood from a perspective about ‘what the child is not yet but should become as quickly as possible’ (Miedema, 1997, p. 31). In the humanist pedagogy of the 20th century, however, being a child was seen as a development process that is always driven from two sides: the environment, especially the parents and teachers, and the drive coming from the child him- or herself to become someone. From this perspective, being a child is seen as a distinct form of human existence with specific qualities and characteristics which clearly distinguish this stage from other stages of life.
The idea that children have a right to a protected youth was described by Dasberg (1975) as ‘Grootbrengen door kleinhouden’ (‘Raising children by keeping them young’). She argued, however, that while the shielding from the adult world had indeed resulted in separate juvenile law, children’s literature and child-centred education, it had also isolated children from the adult world; so that children are not prepared for the adult world. In addition to the humanist movement, the other most influential movements in pedagogy have been: critical pedagogy based on the sociological work of the Frankfurt School and Habermas (Jay, 1973); cultural historical pedagogy and constructivism based on the work of Vygotsky (1971); and empirical pedagogy based on the work of Popper (1972) and Brezinka (1978). It is worth noting that pragmatism based on the work of the American, Dewey (1927/1984), is also seen as one of the movements within European pedagogy as human science.

There in a nutshell we have a number of important developments in pedagogy as human science. It will be clear that although there is general consensus about the need to raise children towards adulthood, to help them in the process of growing up and gradually growing into society, there is no consensus about what ‘raising children’ should be or lead to. There is no consensus because definitions of ‘raising into adulthood’ are based on anthropological assumptions. Conditions, methods and objectives all vary depending on the prevailing views about what it is to be a civilised human being and, moreover, how children can be helped to become such human beings (Thoomes, 2000).

Although the description of developments above originates in the perspective of pedagogy as human science, it should also be easy to reconcile with ideas in the Anglo-American literature on education as moral endeavour (see for instance Noddings, 2002; Hansen, 2001; Goodlad, Soder & Sirotnik, 1990). The important point here, however, is that these theories are not seen as pedagogy as human science and that in the English-language literature pedagogy is usually conceived in a narrow sense as method, addressing therefore the question of what instrumental resources are available with which to shape teaching. Pedagogy as method is, according to some scholars in the Anglo-American world itself, also dominated by means-ends (instrumental) thinking and often based on a naive child-centred ethos. This ethos proceeds from the assumption that the teacher can allow him- or herself to be guided by the children’s needs dissociated from anthropological views of mankind and educational objectives derived from them (1921/1964). Such pedagogy does not, according to these authors, offer a scientific basis for the theory and practice of education, because it does not challenge our views on how life is to be lived and in what direction we should be guiding children. Simon (1999), for example, claimed that:

For a combination of social, political and ideological reasons, pedagogy – a scientific basis to the theory and practice of education – has never taken root and flourished in Britain (…) Each [educational] ‘system’, largely self-contained, developed its own specific educational approach, each within its narrowly defined field, and each ‘appropriate’ to its specific social function. In these circumstances the conditions did not and could not exist for the
development of an all embracing, universalised, scientific theory of education relating to practice of teaching. (p. 38)

Simon pleads for a pedagogy which recognises both the power of education to affect human development and the need for the systematisation and structuring of the child’s experiences in the educational process. Simon (1999) concurs with Van Manen (1994) and Olson (2003) that instead of a pragmatic ‘child-centred’ ethos – starting from the standpoint of individual differences – a pedagogy is needed that starts from what children have in common as members of the human race and as members of a human society, to establish the general principles of teaching and, in the light of these, to determine what modifications of practice are necessary to meet specific individual needs. Olson (2003) adds to this criticism that contemporary educational theorists who simply put the child at the centre tend to overlook the fact that the church, the nation, science and the economy all have legitimate claims in the development of the child towards mature adulthood in addition to those of parents or the children themselves. Pedagogy has the job of setting out the dimensions on which such debates play out – dimensions that include the entitlements and obligations of states, civil society, school systems, individual schools and teachers as well as students – rather than settling on the best methods for achieving specific goals. Pedagogy, according to Olson, (2003) should:

not offer methodology; rather it should offer a scientific basis for timely, informed decisions by professionals about balancing the welfare of the individual with the demands of society. (p. 210)

‘Didaktiek’ as theory of teaching

Pedagogy as human science covers all aspects of knowledge about children, including philosophical, ideological, moral and cultural notions about what is appropriate or inappropriate, good or bad, right or wrong, suitable or less suitable for children’s growth toward mature adulthood. Benner (1973) declares:

Pedagogy as human science corresponds to a need that is both practical and theoretical, for it supports, for one thing, the gradual problematisation of educational practice (…) The problematisation of informal educational experience proceeds each time from a situation where the norms and conventions of human co-existence considered by society to be correct become questionable. (p. 11,12, translation by the author)

With specific reference to education, Benner is pointing to the problematisation of the pedagogische praxis, that is, the triangular set of relationships between child, school and society as the object of pedagogy as human science.

Pedagogy as a theory of teaching is what the German term Didaktik and the Dutch term Didaktiek refer to. Its roots go back to the 17th century, when Comenius treated Didaktik as a specific pedagogisch problem (Blankertz, 1969;
Westbury, 2000), that is, a problem for those who are professionally involved in the learning process of children (pedagogues, including teachers) in an institutionalised context (schools). After Comenius, didaktik or didaktiek continued to develop until well into the 20th century as a discipline that studied the relationship between child, school and society and – closely associated with this – the relationship between child, teachers, and educational content (what is taught). Typical of Didaktiek, according to Westbury (2000), is the idea that the content of the curriculum should be conceived as:

an authoritative selection from cultural traditions that can only become educative as it is interpreted and given life by teachers, who are seen, in their turn as normatively directed by the concept of Bildung or formation. (p. 24)

Bildung stems originally from a neo-humanist portrayal of mankind best translated as ‘formation’, implying both the forming of the personality into a unity as well as the product of this formation, the particular ‘formedness’ that is represented by the person.

Didactiek as a branch of pedagogy as human science aspires to offer a framework for reasoning about teaching appropriate for an autonomous professional teacher; a framework which provides ways of considering the essential what, how and why questions around teaching of students in schools. Pedagogical reasoning in this sense does not, however, begin by asking how students learn or how they can be led towards a body of knowledge (as in the pragmatic approach of pedagogy as method), but by asking what the formative value of teaching and learning is or should be: the formative value of what is learned in cognitive, social, moral and emotional senses, and the formative value of how pupils are taught and how they learn. Here we see a link with the curriculum as a process that teachers put into practice in the classroom or school. Westbury (2000) stated that:

It [didactiek] celebrates the individuality of each teacher as an active, reflective curriculum maker and theorist rather than seeing the teacher as an agent of a workplace manual of best practices. (p. 27)

The process-oriented view of the curriculum as education put into practice is, according to Westbury (2000), at odds with the dominant product-oriented views of the curriculum in the Anglo-American literature, where the emphasis is on the curriculum as a planning document that schools have to implement.

It is important here to note that the Bildung concept is often used without any connection with its historical context. It was first formulated by Humboldt for the Gymnasium (academically-oriented grammar schools) attended by children of the well-off bourgeoisie of the 17th and 18th centuries. Besides this elite orientation, it was also a philosophical-ideological concept that did not fit into a practically oriented discipline such as modern pedagogy aspired to be in the 20th and 21st centuries. Modern Didactiek arose with the growth of education for the masses in the 20th century and it criticised both the elite character and the abstract philosophical nature of the traditional concept of Bildung. Two schools of thought
developed out of this criticism at first. The first was embedded in the positivist pedagogiek as empirical discipline that strives for objective knowledge about pedagogische issues and the operation of pedagogische strategies. Positivist pedagogiek regards moral statements about the purpose of upbringing and education as unscientific. The second school of thought was embedded Geisteswissenschaftliche pedagogy as human science, which takes precisely these kind of moral questions as points of reference.

Riedel’s praxis concept stems from a third school – namely the didaktiek that developed within the perspective of critical pedagogy as human science based on the philosophy of the Frankfurt School and Habermas mentioned earlier. This school developed firstly in response to humanist pedagogiek, where concepts such as independence, freedom and self-determination were conceived as relating solely to the relationship between teacher/child raiser and the child being taught or raised, with no regard for the social context of that relationship. Secondly, it developed in response to empirical pedagogiek, which saw no place for normative concepts like independence, freedom and self-determination in a neutral and objective science – a science which should be geared solely to controlling the physical or social reality through knowledge and application of general laws regarding the education process. Critical pedagogy as human science aspires to connect the moral and the empirical into a practice-oriented science and, in so doing, to build a bridge between the social theories of Habermas and others of like mind, theories of human development, and available empirical knowledge about the upbringing process.

PRAXIS: A MODEL FOR CRITIQUE

In this volume, we have examined the fragmentation and decomposition of the teaching profession in Dutch educational praxis. We concluded that the dominance of current managerial thinking is remarkable, because management models and protocols are even further away from the actual educational practice of teachers and students than the teaching theories and educational concepts that were used before TQM models were introduced. They are not only further away in terms of the degree of abstraction from the daily practice of students and teachers, but also from the substance – that is, moral discussion about the education that should be offered to children in our schools and in our society. In the last section of the book, we discuss how this debate was until recently embedded in pedagogy as human science in the Netherlands. In this section, we will argue that the managerial trends are to be seen as a differentiation of a much more general phenomenon that is also found in other countries, and which should be understood to be a consequence of a biased, if not fundamentalist, approach to education. We hope to modify this fundamentalism with a praxis model that takes most of its inspiration from Riedel, but also incorporating ideas from the work of Weber and Habermas.
From Weber (1946, first published in 1902-24) we have borrowed the distinction between goal rationality \((\text{Zweckrationalität})\) and values rationality \((\text{Wertrationalität})\). Goal rationality is concerned with the actions needed to reach a specific goal; of greatest concern in this rationality is the functional usefulness of the possible actions. Are the measures taken effective and efficient? Values rationality, by contrast, is concerned with the desirability of the actions and of the goals to be reached through those actions. Have we achieved something that is genuinely worthwhile? In addition to, or rather above, the functional usefulness of the actions, is what we call the ‘substantial value’. Mannheim (1940), with reference to Weber, used the term ‘functional rationality’ (rather than goal rationality) and ‘substantial rationality’ (rather than values rationality). Below we have adopted these terms, because Weber’s terms are open to misinterpretation.

The rational bureaucracy, according to Weber, is a perfected body of official tasks, rules and positions, in which relationships are not personal but strictly businesslike. The bureaucracy is rationally perfected in the sense of functional rationality. It is for the administrative or political leadership to make the substantial-rational judgments that orient the direction of the work of the bureaucracy. Substantial-rational judgments are therefore judgments of a higher order than judgments about functional matters. We have observed a tendency in schools in the Netherlands to accentuate the distinction between those who lay down policy and set rules (substantial rationalities) and those who implement the policy and have to be managed (functional rationalities). This tendency can be understood according to Weber’s way of thinking, in which he designed a system to prevent citizens from being treated unfairly and arbitrarily by officials: once rules have been laid down, they have to be implemented without respect to persons.

Weber argued that functional rationality concerns the arguments underpinning the way in which specific goals can be reached. This rationality determines the choice of means to be used to realise the desired goals. If they are based on a scientific-technological view of reality, rationality ideally comes into being through logical deduction and knowledge of causality. Ideally means here that in the ideal case there is 100 % guarantee of success. The full research agendas of researchers in the educational field illustrate, however, that the discipline is not able to provide such guarantees. It cannot prescribe how to act in everyday practice, because it does not take account of choices that have to be made in local and situational circumstances.

Substantial rationality concerns the arguments that provide legitimacy for an action or the purpose of an action. It is concerned with questions such as: What values am I creating with my action? What does this mean? Why are these values important? According to Weber, the goals of public services, public bureaucracies in other words, are ideally determined through a democratically organised, political, decision-making process. Ideally means here that in the ideal case there is respect for the greatest possible measure of agreement
between and justice for the parties involved. The bureaucrats themselves, of course, do not belong to these ‘parties’.

Determining objectives in schools and on teacher education courses turns out to be far more complicated, however, than Weber’s substantial rationality suggests. Establishing educational objectives cannot therefore be only a matter of political and public decision-making via a majority of votes, but it also involves decision-making by parties who design and develop the concrete aspects of educational practice. Pupils, teachers, teacher educators, academics and others also have reasonable expectations about what they want to achieve through education and how they want to achieve these expectations. These stakeholders include those who have a legitimate right to have their expectations met. Making decisions about objectives in education is, therefore, far more complex than in Weber’s theory on bureaucracy and consequently is surrounded by uncertainties, opposing tendencies and dilemmas.

In Weber’s view on the way the public domain is organised there is strict separation between authorities that take substantial decisions and bureaucrats who have to implement the policy by following set protocols; that is, the analytical distinction between substantial and functional rationality is made real in a technical and social division of labour between people and groups with different responsibilities. Another characteristic of Weber’s perfect bureaucracy is the assumption that perfect management of the work is possible. The organisation, in other words, is an obedient instrument in the hands of the legitimate authority. The idea of a completely manageable and controllable organization has its attractions, of course, but there are also dangers attached to it and Weber explicitly pointed these out.

In the context of the present volume, we can say that Weber’s distinction between two types of rationality offers a useful representation of reality, while at the same time making clear that schools are not rational bureaucracies. The professional decisions and actions that teachers have to take and those that are taken by the people in authority over them do not lend themselves to being exclusively and exhaustively divided into the two categories. It cannot be denied that there is now a climate in education in which high value is attached to manageability and controllability. Control by market forces is a maxim that has not passed schools by, and the same can be said of the virus of control in the form of quality management systems. The question we are left with is how the teaching profession and teachers’ professionalism is connected with this managerialism. Quality management theory and practice seems not to recognise the fact that education is characterised by a complex configuration of diverse stakeholders; that education always has a moral import which infuses all everyday decisions about the conduct of education and teaching; and that it is impossible in practice to act entirely on the basis of logical deduction and causality as if education could be conducted solely via the routine application of principles elaborated in an achieved empirical science of education. We therefore conclude that the divide between political policy-making and administrative decision-making on one side, and the
day-to-day practice of school teachers and teacher educators on the other side, cannot be drawn strictly along the dividing line of Weber’s theory. This conclusion brings us to an important theme, namely the scope of the professionals’ say. From the argument above, we can conclude that teachers and teacher educators must have the necessary degree of say, because it is they who ultimately have to reconcile in a professional manner the diverse values of the different stakeholders in education, all of which may be legitimate in themselves (Bull, 1988). We could call this essential power to take decisions the substantial rational scope of the teacher and the teacher educator. However, substantial scope is not enough. Professionals also need instrumental scope to be able to realise those interests in a practical sense, as the scientific-technological world view does not provide a valid or comprehensive representation of the reality of education. The point here is that there are inflated expectations of the validity of functional rationality and too many policy-makers believe that this rationality can be imposed from outside. Functionalism and centralisation, together with the market orientation, pose serious – one might say fundamental – threats to educational praxis today.

Habermas

This conclusion is in keeping with Habermas’s analysis (Habermas 1981; see also Pröpper, 1993) of some of the most pressing crises of modernity. He distinguished between two domains or dimensions of social life in late modern societies, namely society as life world and as system. The present configuration of the relationship between the two is the product of historical development. In the age of the tribal society, the social world was one in which people lived according to their own norms and they experienced the world from the inside looking out. Purposeful action came about through social integration based on shared agreements, norms and knowledge. In modern society, which is highly complex, developments and events can no longer be traced back to individual purposeful actions. Society as system is the world conceived organizationally, as a self-regulating system in which anonymous integrating mechanisms operate, and on which individual actions have no influence. According to Habermas, money and legitimate power, that is, the economic subsystem and the subsystem of the law and administration, drive the system dynamics. Everything that is economically feasible and not against the law dictates what happens in fact, so it is very easy to evade individual responsibility. Many employer, hospital director and school principal have at some time said: ‘I would like things to be different, but with my job and the conditions I have to operate under, I can’t do anything differently. I can’t change the world’. Without doubt there are people who would like things to be different and regret that things are the way they are. Some may even try to frustrate the system so that they can operate better and take more responsibility. However, there are also people who are proud of their position in the system and want to defend it vigorously. The same can be said of the employee, the junior doctor and the teacher.
According to Habermas, the system dimension of modern societies, made concrete in the form of organizations, is becoming increasingly uncoupled from its anchorings in the life world (anchoring that secures shared meaning, establishes legitimate social relations and solidarities, and secures personal identities and the narrative unity of personal histories). The life world, one might say, is on the defensive. The life world is the domain in which people organize reality through their own actions, based on their own preferences, in dialogue with others who share the same life world. Members of the life world observe and understand what is going on. To the extent that the teaching profession is a life world, shaped by person-to-person relationships between professionals (as well as organizational and functional role relationships), then to this extent teachers are in a position to determine the substantial and functional rationality of their actions for themselves. This does not mean that individual teachers can simply do what is in their own interests, but that they see themselves as members of a life world community that makes decisions through communication. If, on the other hand, the teaching profession is seen principally in system terms, then people see their actions as resulting from system dynamics, as functions required by the rules of and their roles in the organization. There is no place in that view for an individual’s own authentic interpretation if it does not mesh with system requirements.

In reality the two dimensions of system and life world are always co-present. The problem is that people can and often do interpret the world one-sidedly, in terms of only one dimension at a time. Habermas’s theory of system and life world was proposed to ensure ‘stereoscopic’ vision that would overcome this one-eyedness, or one-sidedness. It belongs to the very heart of education that pupils learn to understand its own capacities, preferences and perspectives on future life; that they are part of an meaningful learning environment they understand and that they can act as authentic responsible persons. At the same time and thanks to these characteristic qualities, they learn to become part of the wider society as a social, cultural and economic system, which means they have to do and to learn things that are not part of their own direct experiences preferences, perspectives, etc. Teachers create in reality a bi-focal environment and they behave at the same time as skilled professionals and as social actors being part of the learning situation just as a person.

Back to Riedel

At the beginning of this chapter, we said that we based our concept of praxis on Riedel’s interpretation. Riedel sees praxis as a social situation, in a concrete practical context, limited in space and time, where human beings act with a purpose and take responsibility for their actions. In praxis, three of his key concepts come together (see also Ponte, 2002). These three concepts are morality, knowledge and skill. Each social and purposeful action is based on morality. We saw earlier that the corollary of this is that it also applies to pedagogische praxis, because in praxis the educator is intervening in the life of the child or young person. That intervention is justified on the basis of an idea about what kind of
person the child or young person should become. In the action of praxis, therefore, *morality* (ideology, as giving moral meaning to experience), *knowledge* (theory, as knowing how phenomena behave and are connected), and *skill* (techne as knowing how to act) merge. Techne is not conceived by Riedel as an instrumental algorithm, but as action based on scientific and ideological insights that is planned, evaluated and adapted in the reality of the school and teacher education courses. None of the three main concepts can be separated from praxis. Each case of praxis brings about something that has moral meaning, each case of praxis makes use of knowledge and insights and each case of praxis involves an act. The concepts are only distinguishable in an analytical sense. Let us give an example for the purpose of illustration: an object can be described in terms of substance, form, content and colour, but it is not possible to say that an object is purely and only form. In the same way any pedagogische or didaktische action in school or in the local environment of the school can be termed praxis but it is not possible to say that it is purely and only morality or knowledge or skill; it is always a combination of morality/ideology, skill/techne and knowledge/theory.

If we now combine Weber’s distinction between substantial and functional rationality on one dimension, and Habermas’s distinction between system and life world on another, a teacher’s educational reality can be represented as shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>System</th>
<th>Life world</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substantial rationality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functional rationality</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From a ‘fundamentalist’ or one-sided perspective, education belongs to the system. Educational practice is precipitated as determined by rules, regulations and laws. In such a vision there is a strict distinction between cells 1 and 2, both in the nature of the arguments and the actors. Cell 1 is dominated by decision-makers with authority to issue laws and regulations (government, inspectorate) who reason from the perspective of society’s need for education. They are often, therefore, concerned about the demands of the labour market in a global economy. In this cell we see differences in the extent to which national, regional and/or cultural and religious groups get their voices heard in educational objectives, education budgets, and so on. Cell 2 contains the actors who have to keep the system laid down by the government on track. That means the teachers, but it also means especially those with formal authority in the school (the management). Manageability and professional efficiency play a principal role here. There is, of course, another kind of fundamentalism, in which all of education is declared to belong to the life world. An example of this is when parents home educate their children in line with their own religious or other ideological convictions. Both cells 3 and 4 are then mainly populated by participants who are equal partners. Cell 3 is dominant.
Clearly, reasoning that slavishly follows this scheme could soon produce caricatures and educational practice in the real world is a hybrid form, of course. That does not alter the fact that those holding the more fundamentalist views will try to keep the cells as distinct as possible, not only as analytical categories, but also as realities.

We can now argue that educational reality is first and foremost a space for praxis, in which the cells do not represent separate realities. System world and life world are not strictly partitioned. Individual responsibility exists irrespective of the system requirements. Nor can substantial and functional rationality be separated. Strict causal relationships between means and ends are very rare and every didactische and pedagogische action has to be justified, not only from a functional perspective, but also from a substantial perspective.

If we examine the professionalism of the teaching profession in this way, it becomes clear that teachers' scope for taking decisions and their scope for action is not amenable to being pinned down in advance, and that the ultimate guiding principle for pedagogische and didactische decisions cannot be defined and laid down in simple terms. It is about achieving a balance which fosters the wellbeing of individual pupils, the group they belong to and the society in which they function. Very diverse opinions on this are possible, but at the same time every system lays down collectively determined values, to which everyone is bound, for example: examination requirements, compulsory subjects and the amount of compulsory educational provision. The question now is what role teachers should and can fulfil within the scope for praxis thus created. The direct answer to this question in everyday practice is usually perfectly clear to all the people involved; teachers do know, for instance, what is and is not their responsibility in the school. We have tried, however, to indicate how desirable, indeed necessary, it is to constantly reflect on this.

FINAL REMARKS

In the Foreword to Enabling Praxis of Kemmis and Smith (2007), we wrote that the praxis, as further developed over the centuries, offers an alternative to the dominant metaphors in present-day teaching which have been derived from domains of practice other than education. Clearly there is a world of difference between the language of praxis and the language of manageability. The framework outlined in this chapter aims to help us to communicate on the substance of certain developments in the teaching profession, while maintaining a certain abstraction from concrete contexts. We expect that the interpretation both of the case studies described in this book and of the reflections of the international contributors will help to clarify this concept.

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TRENDS IN CURRICULUM THINKING IN TEACHER EDUCATION
2. PRAGMATIC AND POLITICALLY NEUTRAL

The image of the academic secondary school teacher in the discourse of teacher education

INTRODUCTION

Teacher education in the Netherlands is undergoing drastic changes. Extensive in-service education is now provided in addition to the more traditional pre-service education. Contracted education programmes have been created to meet the needs of those entering the field of teaching from another field (e.g. business). In addition, the ‘say’ of the school itself in the education of teachers has grown considerably as the school is increasingly viewed as a business to be run and thus as the consumer of educational services. One can speak of developments which are best reflected by such terms as demand-oriented, flexibility and customization, aiming at prevention of the impending teacher shortage.

In connection with the development of new teacher education pathways, major substantive changes have also occurred. Dutch literature shows scores of more or less new concepts to have emerged during the past 10 or 15 years: learning to learn, new learning, constructive learning, reflective learning, exploratory learning, learning by inquiry and workplace learning. Many of the concepts entail the acquisition of underlying skills as opposed to subject-specific knowledge on the part of both pupils and teachers, greater professionalisation of teaching and the increased use of information and communication technologies for teaching purposes. Teacher education programmes are being allocated new functions which may include: support of schools during educational reforms, the conduct of research and/or mediation between actual practice and educational research (Dutch Education Council, 2003).

All of these developments can be placed against the broader background of deregulation, school autonomy and such educational innovations as ‘learning to learn.’ However, the image of what constitutes a good teacher has faded considerably against this background and our perception of the core tasks of teacher education has also blurred. The objective of the present contribution is therefore to analyze ongoing developments in order to attain a clear image of the teacher today and insight into those factors, concerns and theories which have given rise to this image. The following research questions were specifically formulated for this purpose.

1. What image of the teacher today and, in this connection, teacher education today do educators construct in their discourse on teacher education?
2. Which social, scientific and political factors contribute to the image of the teacher today?

Following a brief introduction to the general theoretical framework, the relevant research methods, results, conclusion and discussion will be presented.

GENERAL THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A number of theoretical frameworks were used to connect the micro level of the teacher to the macro level of various background variables and to examine teacher education literature. The following frameworks were selected for this purpose:
- the discourse concept
- the curriculum and Bildung traditions
- the theory of human interests.

Discourse

Central to the present research are journal articles (i.e. text). This is in keeping with the growth in scholarly interest in the interpretation and deconstruction of texts and a ‘profound linguistic turn in social theory’ (Hamilton & McWilliams, 1998, p. 34). Every text has not only a linguistic repertoire, but also a social repertoire. Every text presents a certain perspective on humankind and world. Moreover, every text constitutes a discourse. Different definitions of the concept of ‘discourse’ exist. On the one hand, ‘discourse’ can be seen as a form of concrete language use, a concrete text. On the other hand, discourse can be seen as a specific, group-negotiated definition of reality (Ongstad, 1997). One can speak of ‘discourse’ with a lowercase ‘d’ or ‘Discourse’ with an uppercase ‘D’ and thereby view a discourse as the concrete realization of a Discourse: A discourse is a way of talking, thinking and reasoning constructed by a particular group of people (a Discourse community). A tacit agreement usually exists within the community about what counts as valid knowledge, a valid argument, a valid perspective, a valid example and so forth (Kress, 1985). A discourse thus represents a Discourse and thereby a Discourse community or group which shares a particular perspective on reality. Obviously different Discourse communities can have different viewpoints on reality and, in a similar vein, different research traditions can be construed as different Discourses. According to Van Langenhove and Harré (1999), the social sciences can be distinguished from the physical sciences in terms of not only the object of study but also their discursivity:

It is within conversations that the social world is created, just as causality-linked things according to their properties constitute the natural world. Within conversations, social acts and societal icons are generated and reproduced. (p. 15)
This viewpoint further fits into an interpretive research tradition in which it is assumed that alternative forms of knowing can exist and thus alternative discourses.

*Discourse in education*

Different viewpoints on education clearly exist and, within the literature on these different viewpoints, traces of at least two distinct discourses can be detected. The first discourse involves the Anglo-American curriculum tradition. The second discourse involves the European *Bildung* tradition (for both traditions see Westbury, 2000; Kansanen & Pepin, 2002; Buchberger, 2004).

The curriculum tradition is very pragmatic and strongly connected to the field of American educational psychology where immense attention has been paid to pupil learning, development, motivation and intelligence independent of the content of the learning and the context in which the learning occurs. Attention is thus paid to the learning needs of the individual pupil and the aims of education as formulated by society in general. Westbury (2000) characterizes the curriculum tradition as highly organizational with a focus on the building of systems of schools which have – as an important part of their overall organizational framework – the curriculum-as-manual or what can be construed as templates for coverage and methods to guide, direct and control the day-to-day activities of a school. As an extension of this, considerable attention is also paid to instruction, the development of test batteries and curriculum evaluation. According to Westbury, the teacher is directed by the system.

In contrast to the above, the *Bildung* tradition is scholarly and clearly places the teacher at the centre of the education. The teacher determines just what, how and why certain things will be taught on the basis of the national-cultural tradition. The teacher decides how to help pupils and best promote their personal growth. The *Bildung* tradition further emphasizes the importance of the academic disciplines for the personal, educational and moral development of the pupil. Vollmer (2006):

*Bildung* means to develop and bring out the full potential of a human being, based on his/her nature, but stimulated and structured by education (nurture). This dynamic concept encompasses the product or relative state reached by a human being as well as the process of becoming educated/becoming one’s own self. During this process the mental, cultural and practical capacities as much as the personal and social competencies are being developed and continuously widened in a holistic way. (p. 7)

Neither the Bildung, nor the Curriculum tradition is undisputed. There are alternative traditions. Nevertheless, Bildung and Curriculum traditions appear rather dominant in the context of humanities and educational sciences.
The theory of human interests

It should be clear by now that different discourses can reflect different scientific traditions, different perspectives on knowledge and different educational traditions. Different discourses can also reflect different ethical choices, different human interests, and the work of Habermas (1972) provides a framework for understanding these. According to Habermas, three fundamental knowledge or human interests can be distinguished: namely, the instrumental, interpretive and emancipatory. Ponte (2000), drawing on Habermas (1981) and Grundy (1987), characterizes the different interests as follows.

– The instrumental interest is based upon a fundamental need to survive. The interest focuses on instrumental action that is geared to controlling the environment through rule-based behaviour, based on empirically founded laws.

– The interpretive interest is based upon a fundamental human need to attribute meaning. Human beings are assumed to act deliberately. The essence of this is understanding the environment through shared interpretation and sense-making, and trying to achieve a consensus about the best way to act under particular circumstances.

– The emancipatory interest concerns a fundamental need for empowerment. Human action is assumed to be autonomous, and the essence of the emancipatory interest is to understand the social construction of reality, that which can inhibit the thoughts and actions of individuals and thereby hinder empowerment.

As will be seen, ongoing discussions of teacher education and education in general appear to reflect very different human interests at times.

RESEARCH METHODS

Data collection

Teacher educators in the Netherlands have become a well-publicised professional group. Despite the fact that only a minority of teacher educators in the Netherlands is represented in the Dutch Association of Teacher Educators, the association is increasingly voicing its members’ interests. This association is clearly visible in its annual conferences, has its own registry of teacher educators and publishes its own journal. The Dutch Journal of Teacher Educators may even constitute a more important forum for teacher educators in the Netherlands. It appears four times a year, and a total of 27 volumes have appeared to date. Each issue contains an average of four to five articles on topics broadly related to the education of teachers, book reviews, and announcements of events, conference reports, and so forth.

In the present contribution, we will attempt to answer the research questions posed above by analyzing the articles in the Journal of Teacher Educators. This means that the rhetoric of teacher education and not the actual practice of teacher education.
education, or what Goodlad (1979) calls the ideological curriculum, will be studied. This is a point to which we will return.

Two criteria were applied for data collection purposes. First, we considered only those articles primarily concerned with the university-based education programme in the Netherlands as these articles provide information on the images constructed with regard to the academically trained teacher, which is our own domain. Furthermore, our contribution is to a book on academic teacher education.

Second, we started examining all of the issues of the *Journal of Teacher Educators* from 1993. We chose 1993 as a starting point, because in 1992 and 1993, three important policy documents were published: the *Committee Future of Teacherhood Report* (1993), a policy note entitled *Vital Teaching* (Dutch Ministry of Education, 1993) and a report from the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (1992) entitled *The Future of University Teaching Education*. In all three of these documents, the interests of the teacher and teacher education programmes were voiced, the prerequisites and criteria for teacher quality were mentioned and alternative education routes were considered with an eye to an impending teacher shortage. The policy documents further expressed the concerns of teachers with regard to the following: working in isolation, diminished social status, few career prospects and little job satisfaction. With regard to teacher education programmes, the ‘closed’ nature of current education programmes was rejected in favour of a more open system, and the importance of a more uniform curriculum, clearer qualification standards and greater co-operation between the different programmes was emphasized. It was also argued that competency should be given priority over certification for the influx of personnel from the field of business into teaching. In the period between 1991 and 1994, numerous policy notes also appeared with regard to the revision of the upper levels of secondary education which is exactly the domain of the university-trained teacher.

**Analytic procedure**

The volumes of the *Journal of Teacher Educators* were divided between the two authors of this contribution. The authors then determined which of the articles met the criterion of being primarily about a university-based teacher education programme. This was then checked by giving a number of articles to the other author for inspection and vice versa. For the volumes from 1993 through to 2005, this produced a total of about 100 relevant articles, which was 40% of the total number of articles.

A brief summary of each article was next formulated and made available to the other author. Each summary was constructed on a strict format, consisting of: the image of the secondary school teacher; the social, scientific and political background; an inventory of dominant concepts used by the author(s); and an interpretation in terms of knowledge interests.

In the beginning, the authors of this chapter checked each other’s summaries in order to establish a common approach. In doing this, we quickly discovered a number of core concepts which were frequently used to indicate the desired
changes, starting assumptions or principles mentioned in the relevant articles. On the basis of this information, each author then wrote a brief description of the observed pattern of concepts. The tentative descriptions formulated by the two authors were then compared and found to be identical which meant that they could be collapsed for future use.

The next step in the analyses addressed the need for additional data reduction. For each of the core concepts, such as ‘competency’ or ‘reflection’, two or three representative pieces of text were selected for more detailed analysis. That is, texts containing an introduction, description, discussion or justification of the concept. The selected texts were then analyzed in depth and, on the basis of this information, the patterns of concepts characterizing the image of the teacher and teacher education programmes could be identified.

The treatment of the selected texts as a discourse means that a particular text is taken to represent just the tip of the iceberg, the social repertoire; those layers hidden under the surface of the language repertoire must also be explored. Stated differently, various conceptions of reality or – in this case – knowledge and learning, teacher and pupil, research and training, education and society can be discerned underneath surface language use (cf. Herrlitz, 2007; Nystrand, 1997).

The present analyses thus concern an understanding of the relevant texts but also an ‘overstanding’ of the texts which Culler (1992) describes as follows:

Understanding is asking questions and finding the answers that the text insists on. ‘Once upon a time there were three little pigs’ demands that we ask ‘So what happened?’ and not ‘Why three?’ or ‘What is the concrete historical context?’ (…). Overstanding consists of pursuing questions that the text does not pose to its model reader. (…) Many of the most interesting forms of modern criticism ask not what the work has in mind but what it forgets, not what it says but what it takes for granted. (pp. 114-115)

Text analysis is searching for the obvious, for patterns and for the underlying theme of a text by reading and re-reading to identify what connects or possibly disconnects the texts. Text analysis is searching for the Discourse in a discourse.

RESULTS

Frequent concepts and themes

In the articles we analyzed, a number of frequently used concepts could be discerned. In the following, the concepts are presented using the terms employed in the articles themselves. Among the most prominent concepts were: constructivism, reflective learning, inquiry based learning, competency-based learning, practice-based learning, workplace learning, the pedagogische task, professionalisation, and policy. Among the less prominent concepts were: cultural diversity, free market operation, increased flexibility competition, and internationalization. Taken together, the relevant concepts provide us with a broad mix of topics with a high
profile within the university-based teacher education programmes in the Netherlands across the past 13 years.

Our main question now remains to be answered: What image of the teacher is constructed and what does the background to this image look like? In order to answer this question, the core patterns for the most high profile concepts were examined and found to present an image of the teacher and background to this image which can best be characterized in terms of the following four conceptual patterns:

– from knowledge transfer to knowledge development;
– back to the ‘pedagogische’ task;
– from training institute to school; and
– towards the competent professional.

From knowledge transfer to knowledge development

A very dominant pattern among the high profile concepts which we identified revolves around the concept of ‘constructivism’. Within the context of teacher education (Buitink, 1994), constructivism involves an approach to learning in which it is assumed that people always construct knowledge on the basis of their experiences and that their attribution of meaning or significance is always determined by the subjectively perceived characteristics of the situation and the context (see also Korthagen, 2000). This constructivist pattern of concepts clearly rejects transfer of knowledge and culture as the foundation for education and teacher education because the constructivist pattern of concepts is based upon the assumptions that knowledge can become outdated or even obsolete (Korthagen, 2000; Klarus, 2004), that education must keep up with the rapid development of knowledge and technological innovations (Veugelers & Valstar, 1998) and that the capacity to filter and select information, problem-solving skills, flexibility and communicative skills are more important than factual knowledge (Snoek & Verheggen, 1996).

The consequences of this step in the direction of knowledge development can be seen to be as follows.

– A plea for lifelong learning as professional development (Kwakman & Van den Berg, 2004).
– Knowledge development within the context of actual practice in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Teachers are, after all, the motor behind educational innovations; they are the ones who must search for new forms of education and develop their own knowledge. With the conduct of systematic research in actual practice, moreover, the teacher can also play an important role in the development of educational science and knowledge (Aelterman, Van den Berg & Snoek, 2004).
– Greater attention to ‘reflective learning’ as a prerequisite for self-guided individual learning, lifelong learning and the acquisition of meta-cognitive skills (Buitink, 1994).
Increased attention to problem-guided learning (Klarus, 2004) and the customization of learning. These involve learning from experience and the development of the meta-cognitive skills needed for self-monitoring (Buitink, 1994).

The image of the teacher which appears is that of a knowledge developer who has received training which reflects changes in the direction of learning-to-learn (see also Van Hout-Wolters, 1994). Secondary school teaching no longer concerns the transfer of knowledge but, rather, teaching aimed at the learning process (Snoek & Verheggen, 1996). The teacher must also therefore reflect upon his or her own practices in order to continue to improve his or her actual practice.

The discourse on the shift from knowledge transfer to knowledge development involves extended discussion. A few of the most relevant discussion points are presented below.

To start with, Korthagen and Wubbels (1998) argue that reflective learning is certainly needed but virtually impossible without an overarching, comprehensive vision of education. Stated differently, a reference point is needed for reflection. Korthagen and Wubbels further argue that reflection is of importance for the development of a critical investigative attitude and cite the moral, ethical, political and instrumental functions of teaching as some of the most important objects for such reflection. Pupils must, after all, be raised to be responsible and critical citizens. At the same time, Korthagen and Wubbels observe that reflection is nevertheless a super ordinate concept, which means that differences of opinion can exist on both the object of reflection and the perspective adopted for reflection. Korthagen and Wubbels therefore advocate reflection at the deeper levels of personality. Other contributions argue for reflection upon one’s behaviour in the classroom from methodological, substantive and morally and ethically critical reference points, and continue this discussion on the most important object of reflection, calling for different topics to be covered in teacher education: subject-specific teaching, subject knowledge, general teaching skills, multiculturalism, instructional methods, developmental or educational psychology curriculum design and development, testing and evaluation, research methodology, pedagogiek, educational science, organizational science, sociology, and communication technologies.

Korthagen (2002), in particular, raises the question of just how knowledge from the knowledge base he refers to can be imparted to student teachers. Straightforward transfer of such knowledge is in conflict with situation-specific learning principles. Discipline-specific theories must be connected to the pre-concepts and practice-based concerns of student teachers, but then in such a manner that the theories really do come to function in actual practice. Just how this should be done is not as yet clear, but we cannot avoid the impression that the current lack of clarity can be attributed to the uncertain role of the teacher trainer as an expert whose expertise can also become outdated.
Back to the ‘pedagogische’ task

Particularly in the volumes appearing in the 1990s, attention was called to the pedagogische task of the secondary school teacher. The individual, the pupil, must more than ever construct a world for him/herself by taking a stance within a plurality of opinions, values and behavioural alternatives (Klaassen, 1998). And the teacher can help the pupil do this, which boils down to teaching being riddled with moral-ethical issues and questions about the meaning of life, communication, responsibility and identity in an increasingly multicultural society (Willems, 1998).

In this connection, Klaassen (1998) further notes that both the instillation of values, norms and life meaning are often part of the hidden curriculum. He pleads for greater attention to personal development and the instillation of values and norms within the regular subject curricula but not as a separate component of the curricula.

One cannot speak of a new trend here but, rather, the revival of an old approach to the task of teaching and education in general. Education is all about the raising of children, although such thinking has been largely disqualified or ignored under the influence of no-nonsense, back-to-basics education policy during the past few decades (Klaassen, 1998). In fact, the educational paradigm of learning-to-learn appears to be more dominant today than the more general pedagogisch paradigm (Veugelers & Valstar, 1998). In addition to the assertion that education is still quite value-ridden, there are other arguments for a return to the general pedagogische task. Public unrest with regard to shifting morals and unacceptable behaviour on the part of youth today is one of these arguments, although Valstar and Veugelers state that this does not constitute a sufficient argument for a change of paradigm because a pedagogisch paradigm really concerns ‘the search for meaning and development of a personal identity’ (p. 5).

The image of the teacher which emerges from this discourse is one of a teacher who ‘educates for difference’ and thus gives pupils an eye for differences between boys and girls, different cultures and even different subcultures (Leeman, 2000). The teacher can contribute to the moral development of pupils (either consciously or unconsciously) but also experiences limits. Neither school nor teacher can, for example, abolish the confusion and heterogeneity already present in society (Klaassen, 1998).

In various other articles, the pedagogische task of the teacher is mentioned as one of the many tasks of the teacher. The exact values and norms to be addressed are rarely made concrete, however.

From training institute to school

One very strong trend is joint responsibility between the school and the teacher education institute for the preparation of the teacher. This trend suggests, in particular, that the school is evolving from a place where one can simply gain practical experience to a place where future teachers learn in a deliberate and systematic manner (Buitink, 1994). The forms of co-operation described by
Buitink and Wouda (2001) range from the school as simply a practice place, as in the past, to the school as an independent and fully certified institute for the education of teachers. Various articles propose a greater role for the school in the education of teachers, and it should be noted that refresher courses are already being more frequently allocated to the school than to the teacher education institute which also reflects a shift from supply- to demand-driven learning (Groothuis, Melief, & Tigchelaar, 1996). More generally, it can be concluded that a significant role of the school in the education of teachers tends to be associated with more innovative policies on the part of the school.

Klarus (2004) states that the perspectives of the individual teacher and the learning/working environment of the teacher may shape the learning of teachers to the greatest extent. A teacher education programme should be supportive, facilitative and evaluative. The education should be aimed at the individual development of the teacher within the framework of the objectives dictated by, among other things, the demands of the educational qualification structure. Training means combining the learning desires of the teacher and the learning desires and possibilities of the workplace with the demands of the teaching profession in terms of skills, knowledge, attitudes and personal characteristics. The school as the ‘owner’ of the educational process however, remains responsible for asking and answering the question of what can be done better or differently in actual practice.

Various arguments in favour of this trend towards shared responsibility for the education of teachers are put forth. Buitink (1994, 2001) mentions learning-theoretic arguments in particular. From a constructivist perspective, Buitink suggests that cognitions are connected to specific contexts and that the learning process should therefore occur within the context in which the cognitions are expected to function as well. The problem of transfer for theory to practice and teacher education institute to school is also tackled in such a manner that early school-based learning provides a buffer against the well-known practice shock. In the opinion of Snoek (2000), moreover, a joint education programme may also contribute considerably to the practice-oriented nature of a teacher education programme. And education in the school itself also means closer connections to the developments occurring in the schools themselves, which may include a greater orientation towards independent learning in secondary education, for example (Groothuis, Melief, & Tigchelaar, 1996).

Another, more pragmatic, argument in favour of shared responsibility for the education of teachers lies in the fact that schools currently have a shortage of teachers. Initially unqualified teachers may thus be appointed and expected to complete their education via in-service education (Den Ouden, Van de Wolk, & Zloch, 2001). This development of in-service education programmes is also defended from a free market perspective. That is, education programmes should meet the needs of schools both qualitatively and quantitatively (cf. Snoek, 2000; Klarus, 2004).
The trend towards the school as a site for teacher education has also raised numerous doubts. Korthagen (2000) points to the socializing influence of the established habits within a school and raises the question of whether the student teacher can actually gain the distance needed from daily school practice to develop a more comprehensive perspective on teaching and learning. Buitink (1994, 2001) also mentions the danger of ‘indiscriminate imitation’ and therefore the importance of highlighting hidden or underlying theories, principles and assumptions. At the same time and on the basis of his own research and education experiences, Buitink further notes that a predisposition towards imitative learning may depend more on the learning style of the particular student teacher than the workplace.

Another point of discussion concerns school guidance, which is not always in keeping with the requirements of a teacher education programme (Buitink & Wouda, 2001). The dilemma of having to opt for more subject-based or general guidance again presents itself here. It is frequently argued that the school can provide more general guidance and is less equipped to provide subject-specific instructional guidance. The trend towards the school as a teacher education site is also thus discussed from a qualitative perspective (Den Ouden, Van de Wolk & Zloch, 2001).

Klarus (2004) points to the discrepancy between the student teachers’ teaching and learning. Learning requires time to reflect, while teaching requires immediate action. The school must, thus, make room for learning.

Towards the competent professional

The image of the teacher which appears in the aforementioned discussions is that of a teacher whose professionality consists of a conglomeration of competencies with the term ‘competency’ used considerably more than prior to 2000. The teacher is substantively, instructionally, organizationally, pedagogisch and reflectively competent (Klaassen, 1998). The teacher has scholarly and instructional knowledge of his or her discipline and is qualified to participate in research and development as well (Leune, 1996). The teacher is prepared for lifelong learning via reflection on his or her own teaching behaviour and also must be able to adopt and guide changes within a team context (Groothuis, Melief & Tigchelaar, 1996). A teacher must be able to look across subject boundaries particularly when it comes to the learning of the pupil. The teacher must have more than just knowledge of a school subject as he or she must also guide learning processes, effectively utilize learning situations and create learning situations (Snoek & Verheggen, 1996). In addition, the teacher must be able to critically and systematically follow educational developments (Van der Schee, 1998). In short, a teacher has teaching tasks, guidance tasks, organizational tasks, development tasks, research tasks and a critical view of education.

In the extensive profile of the teacher presented here, the aforementioned dilemma between a focus on primarily subject (i.e., instructional) knowledge versus a focus on more general educational knowledge can again be detected. The dilemma manifests itself particularly via lifelong learning and the very broad
professional profile formulated for the teacher, which is obviously too large to be covered during initial teacher education (Snoek & Verheggen, 1996).

New to the profile of the teacher are organizational tasks and the need to function within a team. These developments are a consequence of, on the one hand, developments calling for greater co-operation in secondary education (Snoek & Verheggen, 1996) and, on the other hand, the new view of the school as a learning organization (see Klarus, 2004, among others). School and team development are thus seen to provide the context and impetus for the further professional development of the individual teacher.

Research tasks are also now proposed for the teacher. On the one hand, an argument reflecting a constructivist perspective on knowledge development and the context-dependent nature of knowledge is used to justify this. On the other hand, the call of the Dutch Educational Council (2003) to bridge the gap between educational research and educational practice is taken to heart. Another argument for the involvement of the teacher in research stems from the need to increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession which currently offers too few career prospects (see, among others, Leune, 1996). Ponte (2000, 2002) draws upon a link between the research tasks of the teacher and a critical perspective on the field of education to argue that the conduct of action research on the basis of the problems encountered by teachers can contribute to not only the development of educational insights (i.e. knowledge) but also to actual improvements (i.e. practice). Educational innovation cannot, after all, occur without teacher learning and a moral, ethically responsible vision of education (Lunenberg, Ponte & Van de Ven, 2005).

We can thus speak of a competent professional. Drawing upon Hoyle and John (1995), Bergen and Van Veen (2004) characterize the professionality of teachers as:

The whole of opinions, knowledge, skills and values which they have and put to use to practice the profession of teaching in an expert manner. Professional development refers to the increased competence of the individual teacher with respect to the practice of the profession. (p. 30)

Bergen and Van Veen further point out that the notion of ‘new professionalism’ suggests a community of teachers working together on their professional development and the development of the school. New professionalism thus concerns the active involvement of teachers in their own learning process.

Via application of Bergen and Van Veen’s characterization of teacher professionalism (i.e. the whole of opinions, knowledge, skills, values and developments) to actual professional situations, we arrive at the concept of ‘competency’ as described by Dietze, Jansma and Riezebos (2002). This notion of ‘competency’ has served as the basis for the set of competencies utilized by the Dutch Foundation for the Professional Quality of Teachers and other teaching personnel. And, according to Snoek (2004), the teacher is:

competent when he or she can, on the basis of his or her knowledge, skills and attitudes, choose from his or her behavioural repertoire such that the
problems which present themselves in various professional contexts are adequately handled in keeping with the situation, the teacher’s role and the teacher’s responsibilities. This capacity should be visible in not only the behaviour of the teacher but also upon reflection on the behaviour of the teacher. (pp. 32-33)

This definition (the opinions, knowledge, skills, values, development and professional involvement of teachers) clearly overlaps with teacher’s professionalism. Nevertheless, the concept of ‘competency’ has given rise to considerable debate in the Netherlands while the concept of ‘professionality’ has not. It is certainly possible that the concept of ‘competency’ can help teacher educators develop a shared language to communicate with pupils about what constitutes good teaching (Uhlenbeck, 2003), but – up until now – the frequently used term appears to have little shared meaning. In the following, we will therefore consider three important contributions to the discussion.

Korthagen (2004a) is quite critical although he admits that competency-based teacher education has successfully reduced the tension between theory and practice. Korthagen also acknowledges the importance of practice relevance, which is connected to the concept of competency. At the same time, however, Korthagen points to the existence of numerous definitions and, an analysis of the definitions, leads him to the conclusion that genuinely new education perspectives are simply not provided. Korthagen is also afraid that thinking in terms of competencies may quickly lead to an overly narrow focus on only the behaviour of the teacher. Teacher competencies today are demonstrated in portfolios, but this may hide the very real danger of student teachers concentrating their efforts on the gathering of evidence and not on their learning. The question is also whether such a burden of proof may not simply screen for written language skills. Similarly, a focus on a set of competencies formulated by the teacher educators themselves may actually narrow the beginning and ongoing teacher education process. According to Korthagen, all of this can lead to deprofessionalisation and actually interfere with self-guided learning. Korthagen’s most important criticism is that the individual person of the teacher does not figure in any of the different sets of competencies. An orientation towards competency thus lacks an orientation towards vision, the development of a personal identity and inspiration. Korthagen emphasises the importance of someone’s personal mission in work or life, enthusiasm, passion, involvement, caring about children, liking one’s own academic discipline, sincerity, humour, courage and strength. In other words: Being a complete person. And in order to achieve this, the teacher must be educated from a holistic perspective while sets of competencies represent a purely analytic perspective. Competencies emphasize the capacity to evaluate teachers and are therefore analytic as opposed to holistic. Competencies also provide standards and levels without a clear empirical basis.

Klarus (2004) cites three developments which have led to the concept of competency today. The first is that competency-based education provides an answer to the problem of transfer from teacher education to practice. The second is increased recognition of the fact that competency cannot be reduced to a single
dimension. The demands of professional practice require the application of knowledge, behavioural and cognitive skills, personal capacities and ambition. The third development cited by Klarus is a growing orientation within the teaching profession towards both knowledge and personal development. For Klarus (2004, p. 21), teacher competencies are also connected to specific professional contexts. The competency concept and social constructivism ‘meet’ each other particularly when such aspects as the following are involved: authenticity, critical reflection, social and independent acting and learning. Klarus does not need a clearly delimited definition of ‘competency’ because, in his view, competency concerns a manner of thinking which is practice-based. Whereas Korthagen places the person of the teacher at the centre, Klarus places the work of the teacher at the centre.

Tillema (2004) welcomes Korthagen’s critical perspective but considers it contemplation of an already set course which can nevertheless raise such core questions as: What are competencies exactly? How do you formulate competencies? What function do competencies fulfil in teacher education? According to Tillema, moreover, the notion of ‘competency’ has been able to fly so high because it fulfils three core functions. For the government, the notion of ‘competency’ fulfils an inspection and qualification function. For school directorates (i.e., employers), the notion of ‘competency’ voices the demands of the profession (i.e., the free market) and thus it provides societal justification. For teacher education programmes, the notion of ‘competency’ encompasses the development aspects of teacher education. According to Tillema, competencies provide a language for these different actors to talk about who should have the greatest ‘say’ in, and access to, the teaching profession. Tillema thus sees a role for the notion of competency in the determination of professional standards. Tillema also detects two distinct discourses. On the one hand, there is an education-internal discourse about reflection, coaching of learning experiences, mentorship, support of professional development, identity development and self-evaluation. On the other hand, there is a competency-based discourse occurring mostly outside the teacher education programme while the core elements of competency-based education are, in the words of Tillema (2004):

self-regulation of the student; knowledge construction with each other and learning from each other; stimulation of development and talent (identity development within the profession); learning in authentic contexts (practice-relevance of the education); design of powerful learning environments. (p. 32)

CONCLUSION

The image of the teacher sketched in the preceding text can best be characterized using the term ‘competent professional.’ However, our analyses show this core qualification to be open to considerable debate, which did not come as much of a surprise. Very few of the texts which we examined reported or referred to the results of empirical research. Very few of the texts presented a comprehensive
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viewpoint with regard to the developments being considered. And most of the texts had a largely propositional structure, a predominantly persuasive function and thus concerned the ideological curriculum (i.e. the rhetoric of teaching as opposed to actual teaching practice). The relevant discussions contained many arguments but from widely differing perspectives. Furthermore, the thinking about the quality and autonomy of teacher education and the future teacher varied widely though often implicitly. The knowledge base was either coloured in a very subject-specific manner or very general cross-subject manner. A greater role for the school was either applauded or feared. The introduction of competencies was either warmly welcomed or viewed with distrust. In addition, the discussion was riddled with highly mutable container concepts. Almost every new concept appeared to have different meanings for different users. Such concepts as learning-to-learn, constructivism, reflection and competency were all subject to multiple interpretations. The concepts further appear to function as ideographs or concepts that articulate a solution to a widely recognized problem and, in such a manner, attain the status of a desired change. However, an actual analysis of the problem to be solved was usually lacking because everyone thinks it should be done differently. Multiple knowledge domains were also often visible or implicit in the concepts: learning-theoretic versus knowledge-theoretic attitudes, curriculum theories, education and/or organization theories, society and education, subject-specific versus general knowledge bases, and so forth. The different perspectives on teacher education also reflected very different interests – political, educational, education or science – and thus implied very different interpretations of reality. And a lot of important questions were hardly elucidated. ‘Overstanding’ (see the section on research methods in this chapter), for example the trend ‘from education institute to school’, we can see that a few core questions have been raised but not clearly answered. One question is why schools have been given little or no room to develop their own research and development policies or implement such policies. Another question is why teachers have been given virtually no time to learn up until now. The real question is whether a new image of the teacher and teacher education has really emerged or simply is political rhetoric aimed at shortages and the alleviation of deficiencies. More generally, the metaphor of free market operation and the concomitant questions of quality and output are hardly considered to be problematic. And we can see how questions of quality are transformed into questions of quantity.

Our ‘overstanding’ of the preceding discussion on competencies reveals a conflict involving a number of specific points. First, the discussion appears to be narrowed to authority over education. Who determines the professional standards? What are the qualification requirements for starting teachers? What is the exact nature of education in the field? Within this discussion and the observed trend towards more field-based teacher education, the question of whether the school is sufficiently qualified to promote – particularly innovative – learning on the part of teachers arises. And within this narrow discussion, a crucial question about the vision of education for teacher education in general presents itself: Should the
focus be upon the identity of the teacher or professional practice? The perspectives on this question clearly differ, which is a point to which we will return.

A second specific point is the ongoing conflict concerning the professionality of the teacher. On the one hand, we see attempts to elevate the status of the teaching profession (Leune, 1996) by using sets of competencies to make the complexity of the teaching profession and the qualities required more transparent. This is done with a particular eye to the emergence of contracted education programmes and the influx of personnel from the field of business. On the other hand, we see the transparency provided by sets of competencies to open up prospects for quality control and the development of instruments for such purposes (e.g. portfolios, assessments) while major doubts about the suitability of such often very narrow evaluation have been raised (see Korthagen, 2004, and discussion above).

A third specific point in the ongoing conflict concerns two discourses sketched by Tillema (2004): a training-internal discourse versus a training-external discourse. The existence of distinct discourses nevertheless reflects a shared innovation problem, namely the fact that new curriculum elements with their own new sub curricula are often adopted in addition to – and not instead of – the old curriculum elements (cf. Van de Ven, 1996; Imants, 2001). The question of whether old and new are compatible with each other is rarely posed. In any case, when the four conceptual patterns outlined above are considered as a whole, the issue of teacher competencies appears to elicit the most discussion.

In our analyses, we identified four dominant discussions. It is striking that the argumentation used in the four discussions overlaps considerably while the discussions themselves are more or less autonomous. We already referred to Tillema (2004) distinguishing the competency-development discourse from the training-internal discourse. Similarly, the need to ‘return to the pedagogische task’ presents itself as a separate discourse. Assertions about the importance of the pedagogische task are also made in various other articles, but serious explication of the pedagogische task and its importance rarely occurs within the scope of these articles. Similarly, the ethical dimension of subject content may be mentioned but is not further explicated. The ethical dimension of reflection is mentioned but only receives further consideration in the work of Luttenberg (2002). Workplace learning and practice-based learning are connected to knowledge development, but little attention is paid to which knowledge can or cannot be acquired in actual practice.

In our further interpretation of this complicated discourse on secondary teacher education, we will consider three general background factors: the perspective on knowledge, the focus on learning and the vision of education. In other words, we will be concerned with the what, how and why of education and teacher education.

**DISCUSSION**

In all four of the identified trends and discussions, constructivism constitutes an important argument. Knowledge is not transferred but personally constructed. Knowledge is also connected to context and to the actions which occur within a
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particular context. And all of this leads to an emphasis on competency-based education and can be seen to apply to knowledge of values and norms as well.

Our ‘overstanding’ of the various articles on this topic reveals a number of questions which go unposed, and therefore obviously unanswered, in the articles. The ‘constructivist basis’ for knowledge development is rarely perceived to be a problem, despite the fact that the notion of ‘constructivism’ is just as malleable as the notions of ‘reflection’ or ‘knowledge.’ The focus of the discourse appears to be on constructivist learning. The question of what knowledge is, is simply not asked. With regard to ‘learning,’ considerable attention is devoted to independent knowledge acquisition. The roles of the teacher educator and, mutatis mutandis, the school teacher, are then characterized using such terms as coaching and facilitation. That is, the role of knowledge in the process of knowledge acquisition and construction is only vague. Whereas, in keeping with the social-constructivist theory of Vygotsky, Bruner (1984, 2004) emphasises the importance of the dialogue between the expert and the novice. Learning is assumed to occur as part of the dialogue between teacher and pupil; the pupil literally learns to think on the basis of such a dialogue and explores various concepts and expert knowledge as part of such a dialogue.

In contributions by Lagerwerf and Korthagen (2003), the authors paint a picture of just how unconscious experiences can give rise to logically coherent wholes (i.e., knowledge). However, the authors do not define knowledge or the different types of knowledge while a knowledge-theoretic orientation clearly implies different definitions of knowledge and different forms of knowledge (Guba, 1990; Schwandt, 1994). Evidence for the frequent assertion that knowledge today goes quickly out of date is not presented, and the function of existing knowledge within the whole of knowledge development, reflection and the attribution of meaning is not discussed.

Is knowledge out of date? Our text analysis is based on the assumptions of classical rhetoric, and these assumptions have been around for more than 2500 years. The assumptions have been supplemented, modified, differentiated and adjusted but they are still around. The same holds for the grammar of a language or text genres. Knowledge of history or moral knowledge — do these become obsolete? It can certainly be asserted that knowledge in the domains of manufacturing, the physical sciences and medicine can make spectacular leaps and sometimes become obsolete. Similarly, teachers and pupils can be seen to have access to an immense amount of rapidly changing information today. But information is not the same as knowledge (Wolters, 1994). And we therefore postulate that instrumental knowledge can rapidly change while interpretive knowledge does not (e.g., rhetoric, history, ethics). In the discussions which we analyzed and also other discussions, ‘knowledge’ is equated to instrumental knowledge, practical knowledge and information.

It is obvious that future teachers should have practical knowledge. We can nevertheless imagine the doubts raised by Korthagen (2004) in his discussion of the strong tendency to construe competency-based thinking as mostly practice-based today. In this light, the functions which Tillema (2004) attributes to the
competency concept are also of interest: quality control (standardization), justification, and teacher development. Quality control and justification are aimed at the social and personal development of the teacher as a person. Quality control and justification require assessment and evaluation, and the predominance of an instrumental-knowledge perspective inevitably leads to issues of measurability and behaviour which is observable. However, the development of an individual’s identity as a teacher is difficult to measure because it concerns attitudes, opinions, and moral and ethical convictions.

In the discussion on competencies the importance of knowledge is more or less absent. We postulate that knowledge in the form of expert knowledge is indispensable for learning. Reflection on behaviour, opinions, attitudes and convictions; reflection on one’s discipline and subject-related methods of instruction; reflection on one’s own development — all of these require knowledge. Reflection should lead to discovery of the essential aspects of one’s behaviour as a teacher, but what are the essential aspects? For whom are these aspects essential? From which perspectives are the different aspects of one’s behaviour essential? Teaching is a complex profession which requires both a comprehensive knowledge base for purposes of reflection and further learning (Korthagen, 2004). Stated differently: He who knows nothing, sees nothing and cannot reflect.

The emphasis in teacher education is on the ‘how’ of education. Considerable attention has been paid to reflective learning, learning to learn, independent learning, exploratory learning and so forth. In conjunction with this, considerable attention has been paid to workplace learning, learning in the school practice. Attention has been devoted to new training paths, individual learning, educational fine-tuning, lifelong learning and structural changes within the world of education. In short, massive attention has been paid to the design aspects of teacher education but relatively little attention to the content of teacher education or to the aims of teaching. Not only the notion of ‘knowledge’ but also the content of education have gone largely unspecified. And very little attention has been specifically paid to educational convictions. Numerous articles emphasize the importance of fundamental pedagogische and instructional principles, and there are also separate articles devoted to the importance of norms and values. In our opinion, Korthagen and Wubbels (1998) correctly assert that reflection must be based on vision. And for these authors, the most important objects of reflection are the moral, ethical, political and instrumental aspects of education. What individual teachers and pupils need to think and how they need to behave in a critical and responsible manner has rarely been considered in the studied texts. Leune (1996) refers to the freedom of education which enables — well, actually requires — an institution-specific, as opposed to general, perspective on education. Similarly, Korthagen and Wubbels (1998) observe that schools and education programmes can design and formulate their own visions but that this freedom does not absolve them of responsibility for the further development and explication of these visions.

More than one of the articles we studied indicated that teachers are being educated for a multicultural and multimedia society in which both tolerance and intolerance, religion and secularization and no fixed patterns of values occur. The
basic knowledge which teachers need to function in such a context is often alluded to but not explicitly labelled with the exception of a few articles on the pedagogische task. Just what the point of reference for reflection along these lines should be is simply not considered. We can thus conclude that the Journal of Teacher Educators discourse has been politically correct. Neither a specific nor a general vision of education is prescribed...at least not explicitly. Nevertheless, in our opinion, an implicit vision is clearly present in the discourse.

One important development apparent in the attention devoted to knowledge development and competency-based education is a focus on actual practice. The school is the learning place, and the student teacher must discover what actual teaching requires and, as such, teacher education can be viewed as in-company business education for schools. While innumerable aspects of the relation or desired relation between education and practice are mentioned and defined, it is striking that a definition of ‘practice’ is not presented. In various articles, ‘practice’ is characterized in terms of ‘daily activities’ or ‘real life situations.’ And the notion of ‘practice’ is sometimes elevated from workplace to learning location which is parallel to the desired elevation of the teacher to a self-developing professional.

The development of a largely practice-based orientation towards education and teacher education certainly requires closer inspection of the notion of ‘practice.’ Grundy (1987) connected the theory on knowledge interests to particular visions of the practice of education, and the results can be summarized as follows.

For Grundy, an instrumental perspective on knowledge or ‘a fundamental interest in controlling the environment through rule-following action based upon empirically grounded laws’ can be seen to lead to curriculum as product or ‘an interest in controlling pupil learning so that, at the end of the teaching, the product will conform to the (…) intentions or ideas expressed in the original objectives’ (p. 12). An interpretive perspective on knowledge can lead to what is called curriculum as practice or an interest in the ‘process through which pupil and teacher interact in order to make sense of the world’ (pp. 14-15). An emancipatory perspective on knowledge can lead to curriculum as praxis or ‘a fundamental interest in emancipation and empowerment to engage in autonomous action arising out of authentic, critical insights into the social construction of human society’ (p. 19).

Our analysis of the Journal of Teacher Educators’ discourse showed knowledge to be implicitly viewed as instrumental. Drawing upon Grundy (1987), the instrumental perspective on knowledge can be connected to discussions of measurable knowledge, assessment based on behaviour or mostly behaviour and competency construed in terms of only discernible and therefore measurable skills. All of this highlights the pressure experienced by teacher education institutes to produce output in terms of competencies (Korthagen, 2004a, b). Considerable attention is paid to how to manage education; little attention is paid to substance or content; and little or no attention is paid to what the future teacher needs to know to ‘make sense of the world’ and develop authentic but critical insights into the social construction of the world. Despite the rhetoric of the self-developing...
professional, the prevailing practice orientation appears to focus on action in practice, and on behaviour. The daily practice of secondary education is taken for granted. There are no contributions to provide insight into those developments which influence teaching practice and certainly no contributions concerned with the development of one’s own position with regard to such. In the Dutch *Journal of Teacher Educators* discourse, there is also an absence of contributions to help student teachers and teacher educators understand the ongoing discourse in terms of the above. Education was ‘subjected in the 1980s to a process of instrumentalisation and rationalization which ‘managed away’ the attention paid to personal development and societal awareness in the preceding decennia’ (Veugelers & Valstar, 1998, p.4). Our assertion is therefore that the *Journal of Teacher Educators* discourse can also be qualified as doing this to an important extent. An explicit vision of education is hidden in the discourse, and we will consider this vision in greater detail below.

In an overview of developments in educational science, Elen, Verloop and Clarebout (2006) note a marked pragmatic turn with increased attention to empiricism and problems encountered in actual practice. The authors then ask if this pragmatic turn may be related to the parallel Anglicization of educational textbooks observed by them. In the *Journal of Teacher Educators* discourse, we see a practice orientation, justification towards society, individualization, the opening of traditional subject content to debate and an emphasis on learning independent of subject or content which all reflect the curriculum tradition and not the *Bildung* tradition. This also fits into a previously mentioned development, namely the fact that the *Bildung* tradition is being eroded away by the dominant position of educational science in the Netherlands (Van de Ven, 2002).

In closing, we would like to mention two points for further consideration. The first concerns the growth of the Anglo-American curriculum tradition. The second concerns the increasingly pragmatic approach to teacher education today. Much of the ongoing *Journal of Teacher Educators* discussion can be understood, in our opinion, in terms of a gradual shift towards the Anglo-American curriculum tradition. The curriculum tradition has a different vision of education and a different vision of the position of the teacher from the *Bildung* tradition. Following Westbury (2000), one can characterise the Curriculum tradition as a highly pragmatic perspective on the teacher and, in an extension of this, focussing to instruction, the development of test batteries and curriculum evaluation. Westbury sees the teacher to be ‘directed by the system.’ The dominant vision for education is to meet the needs and desires of society.

In the *Bildung* tradition, the teacher is autonomous and education dictates what is of relevance to society and the importance of various disciplines for the personal, scientific, moral and ethical development of the individual. The teacher education discourse is headed in the direction of the curriculum tradition but nevertheless concerns programmes with their institutional basis in the *Bildung* tradition, which means that the existing tension should not come as a surprise.
The second point which we would like to raise for further consideration concerns the pros and cons of the increasingly pragmatic orientation of teacher education today. Development in the direction of actual practice as part of an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice should be applauded. Clearly missing, however, is what we call ‘intellectual competency’ or the Bildung tradition anchored in classical humanism. According to Jenssen (1987), for example, the humanities focussed on the development of four competencies: critical distance, creativity, communicative capacity and historical awareness. These four competencies taken together can lead, moreover, to a fifth competency: The capacity to detect coherence, understand developments from a more comprehensive perspective and clarify the relations between micro- and macro-developments. In other words, the discovery or reading of a framework which allows the individual to ‘position him/herself within a greater whole (school, world or cosmos)’ is also a teaching-relevant competency (Korthagen, 2004). Such frameworks are clearly lacking in the ongoing teacher education discourse.

What we need, in our opinion, is a vision of knowledge, a vision of education, and this is only possible from a historical-sociological perspective. Knowledge is, from this perspective, never neutral and education is similarly always value-laden. A historical-sociological perspective can clarify how and why (and whose) ideas about education and society emerge and change – that is, just how our self-evident understanding of education and society changes. A historical-sociological perspective can also clarify the assumptions behind ongoing trends and thereby give teachers a better understanding of the subject, profession and teaching context. In the field of teacher education, this involves knowledge of both the curriculum and Bildung traditions, knowledge of the dominant forms of knowledge (Matthijssen, 1982) and knowledge of the dominant ‘meta-discourses’ (Englund, 1996). In other words, a coherent vision of education and teacher education should be stimulated (Vreugdenhil, 1996). And in doing this, the primary concern should be teachers who can follow developments critically and systematically (Van der Schee, 1998) because teacher education is, in the end, the development of a conscience.4

NOTES

1 See also Chapter 1 of this volume: Bildung in the context of Pedagogy as Human Science.
2 We say ‘primarily’ because many of the more general journal contributions also addressed the university teacher education programme; these articles were included in the present analyses.
3 See Chapter 1 of this volume. The Dutch terms pedagogiek or pedagogisch and didactiek or didactisch cannot be literally translated as ‘pedagogy’ or ‘pedagogic’ and ‘didactics’ or ‘didactic’. Pedagogiek or pedagogisch refers to the science of the child’s upbringing. Didactisch refers to pedagogy as a theory of teaching.
4 This motto was developed thanks to Korthagen (1998, p. 27) who cited Kohnstam (1929): ‘Child rearing is conscience development.’
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