Pedagogical professionalisation through Higher Education

Theoretical perspectives on (reflective) student learning
What it is about…

- Adult learning in Higher Education
- Higher Education as a medium of professionalisation
- Pedagogical professionalisation
Agenda

1. Context: The research project
2. Higher Education and professionalisation
3. Professionalism: knowledge-based concepts
4. Adult learning in Higher Education: Reflective learning in focus
5. Conclusion an desiderates
6. References

Inspiration by informing about German discourses
reflecting on learning theories in context of HE
discussing learning objectives in HE
revealing black spots in my research perspective
1. Context: The research project

- **B. A. Studies** „Bildungswissenschaft“
  - at FernUniversität in Hagen
  - (no explicit focus on prior professional experience)

- **students with practical pedagogical experience**
  - ... who want to foster their professionalisation

Given the practical pedagogical experience:

- **What do we actually learn when studying educational science?**

**Qualitative Research**

- problem-centered interviews with students by the end of their studies
2. Higher Education and Professionalisation

Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

First cycle - Bachelor's level

“Qualifications that signify completion of the first cycle […] are awarded to students who:

- […] can apply their knowledge and understanding in a manner that indicates a **professional approach to their work or vocation**, and have competences typically demonstrated through devising and sustaining arguments and solving problems within their field of study;
- have the ability to **gather and interpret relevant data** (usually within their field of study) to inform judgements that include **reflection on relevant social, scientific or ethical issues**;
- […] have **developed those learning skills** that are necessary for them to continue to undertake further study with a **high degree of autonomy**.”

(ECA, 2014; highlights: E. G.)
2. Higher Education and Professionalisation

Framework for Higher Qualifications in Germany

“The HQR focuses on an ‘academic self-image’, which is defined as the ‘academic professionalism’ of graduates.” (KMK, 2017, p. 4; translation E.G.)

“Scientific self-image / professionalism
Graduates

- develop a professional self-image that is oriented towards goals and standards of professional action in fields of occupation that are predominantly outside of science;
- justify their professional actions with theoretical and methodological knowledge;
- are able to assess their own abilities, reflect autonomously on relevant freedoms of choice and use these under guidance;
- recognise the framing conditions of professional action appropriate to the situation and justify their decisions responsibly;
- critically reflect on their professional actions in relation to social expectations and consequences.” (KMK, 2017, p. 7; highlights and translation E.G.)
3. Professionalism: knowledge-based concepts

Professional knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>practical knowledge</th>
<th>professional knowledge</th>
<th>systematic scientific knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>permanent pressure to make decisions</td>
<td>increased pressure to justify</td>
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Pedagogical knowledge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>everyday pedagogical knowledge</th>
<th>professional pedagogical knowledge</th>
<th>scientific knowledge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pedagogical practice(s)</td>
<td>pedagogy(s)</td>
<td>educational theories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pedagogical knowledge</td>
<td>educational science knowledge</td>
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(source: own visualization and translation following Dewe, Ferchhoff & Radtke, 1992, p. 81)
3. Pedagogic Professionalism: knowledge-based concepts

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Pedagogical professional knowledge

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<tr>
<th>Reconstructive diagnostic knowledge</th>
<th>Critical reflective knowledge</th>
<th>scientifically based justificatory knowledge</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Development of a reflective, epistemic-critical attitude</td>
<td></td>
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(source: own visualization and translation following Helsper, 2021, p. 136-138)
3. Professionalism: knowledge-based concepts

What is knowledge? And how can we get it?
4. Adult learning in Higher Education

Levels of reflection in the reception of theoretical knowledge

Competence model for reflective learning with six levels (Reis, 2009):

- **Level 1**: intuitive, unfounded reflection
- **Level 2**: differentiating qualities of reflection
- **Level 3**: awareness that reflections on intuitions succeed to varying degrees
- **Level 4**: differentiating the quality of theoretical reconstructions
- **Level 5**: comprehension of different theoretical reconstructions
- **Level 6**: measuring the quality of theoretical reconstruction against performance

(source: own visualization and translation following Reis, 2009, p. 114-115)
4. Adult learning in Higher Education

A curriculum for critical being (Barnett, 2015)

Table 3.1 Levels, domains, and forms of critical being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of criticality</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Self</th>
<th>World</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. Transformative critique</td>
<td>Knowledge critique</td>
<td>Reconstruction of self</td>
<td>Critique-in-action (collective reconstruction of world)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Refashioning of traditions</td>
<td>Critical thought (malleable traditions of thought)</td>
<td>Development of self within traditions</td>
<td>Mutual understanding and development of traditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Reflexivity</td>
<td>Critical thinking (reflection on one’s understanding)</td>
<td>Self-reflection (reflection on one’s own projects)</td>
<td>Reflective practice (“Metacompetence,” “adaptability,” “flexibility”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Critical skills</td>
<td>Discipline-specific critical thinking skills</td>
<td>Self-monitoring to given standards and norms</td>
<td>Problem-solving (means-end instrumentalism)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forms of criticality</td>
<td>Critical reason</td>
<td>Critical self-reflection</td>
<td>Critical action</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(source: Barnett, 2015, p. 64)
4. Adult learning in Higher Education

A model for reflective learning (Cendon, 2016)

**type of reflection**
- daily reflection as common sense reflection
- critical reflection

**foci of reflection**
- Content or subject matter
- learning strategies
- personal development as meta-reflection

**level of reflection**
- Common sense thinking
- Reflection on incidents
- Reflection on personal experience and the experience of others
- Reflection on the nature of knowledge

Source: own visualisation following Cendon, 2016, p. 312-216)
5. Conclusion an desiderata

Reflection and reflective learning need to be integrated further into concepts of professionalisation.

The role of knowledge and curricular contents need to be reconsidered in the context of professionalisation.

The modes of reflective learning in HE benefit from further empirical foundation.

The distinctive features of HE and its role for professionalisation deserve further exploration.

Professionalisation

Reflective learning

linkage of theoretical concepts

empirical evidence & insights
Thank you very much for your attention!
6. References


Image sources

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