



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET

Enheten för pedagogisk utveckling och interaktivt lärande

Didactic Reasoning in Academic Teacher Development

**Towards a New Understanding of
Teacher Training for Academics**

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Examensarbete: 15 hp
Program och/eller kurs: HPE501 Examensarbete i högskolepedagogik
Nivå: Avancerad nivå
Termin/år: Ht/2012
Handledare: Jan Bengtsson & Ola Sigurdson
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Abstract

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Nyckelord: högskolepedagogik, högskolepedagogisk undervisning, teologi

English: Academic teacher development is an educational meeting place for academics already practising the art of teaching. Yet, it is in courses for this development that academics are supposed to be taught how to teach and how to improve their teaching skills. In my article I propose a new conceptual methodological framework for teaching teachers how to teach – Didactic Reasoning. Its foundation can be traced to pragmatist philosophy and interfaith dialogue in theology. The key aspect of Didactic Reasoning is to make university teachers better teachers by the development of a didactic voice and the courage to try this voice in teaching activities. This is done through intersubjective meetings between academics to develop a respect for the ‘teaching-other’ in their colleagues and through the use of practice-focused themed conversations led by teacher educators.

Svenska: Högskolepedagogisk utbildning är en fortbildande mötesplats för universitetslärare vilka redan praktiserar konsten att undervisa. Trots detta syftar utbildningen till att lära universitetslärare hur de ska lära ut och hur de kan förbättra sina undervisningsfärdigheter. I min artikel föreslår jag ett nytt konceptuellt metodologiskt ramverk för undervisning av universitetslärare i undervisning – didaktiskt resonerande. Grunden till denna hämtas från pragmatisk filosofi och teologisk inter-religiös dialog. Det centrala i didaktiskt resonerande är att göra universitetslärare till bättre lärare genom att utveckla en didaktisk röst och ge mod till att träna denna röst i själva undervisningen. Detta kan uppnås genom intersubjektiva möten mellan universitetslärare där en respekt utvecklas för den undervisande andre i kollegorna samt genom att ha praktisknära samtal utifrån didaktiska teman ledda av högskolepedagogiska lärare.

Förord

Jag vill passa på att tacka Enheten för pedagogisk utveckling och interaktivt lärande (PIL) och Bengt Petersson för att de stöttat och inspirerat mig till att våga gå längre in i den högskolepedagogiska världen än jag tidigare trott varit möjligt för mig. Tack vare denna utbildning har jag fått chansen att utveckla en egen högskolepedagogisk identitet utifrån min vetenskapliga hemvist – teologin. Detta har i viss utsträckning skett inom ramen för min tjänst på enheten. Jag vill även passa på att tacka mina härliga kollegor som stått ut med mina högskolepedagogiska grubblerier, då särskilt Margaretha Milsta som mer än någon annan varit min medvandrare i undervisningen av lärare i högskolepedagogik. Mina två handledare vid Göteborgs universitet, professorerna Jan Bengtsson, utbildningsfilosofi (Institutionen för didaktik och pedagogisk profession) samt Ola Sigurdson, systematisk teologi (Centrum för kultur och hälsa), vill jag även rikta ett stort tack till. Slutligen vill jag naturligtvis tacka min kära fru, Emilia, och min son Efraim för allt stöd genom denna min förhoppningsvis sista examen (jag vet att jag sade så redan om doktorsexamen men...).

Viktor Aldrin

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Innehållsförteckning

Förord	ii
Kappa till examensarbete i högskolepedagogik	4
Artikel: Didactic Reasoning in Academic Teacher Development: Towards a New Understanding of Teacher Training for Academics	8
Introduction.....	8
Teacher Training for Academics in Sweden	9
Principles for Didactic Reasoning	10
Principle 1 – The improving of university teachers	12
Principle 2 – The training of a didactic voice.....	13
Principle 3 – The performance of didactic reasoning	16
Principle 4 – The rendering of experimentation and risk-taking in teaching	18
Conclusions and implications.....	18
Acknowledgements	19
Contact Details	20
Notes	20
References.....	21

Kappa till examensarbete i högskolepedagogik

Detta är det första examensarbetet i ämnet högskolepedagogik som skrivs vid Göteborgs universitet. Utformningen av en text till examination för magisterexamen i högskolepedagogik har inte varit enkel – något som avspeglas i den för ett examensarbete något udda formen vetenskaplig artikel med en kappa. Den vetenskapliga artikeln, som utgör själva kärnan i examensarbetet, *Didactic Reasoning in Academic Teacher Development: Towards a New Perspective of Teacher Training for Academics*, har skickats in för publicering till en internationell tidskrift. Eftersom området är en nödvändig utbildning och fortbildning i den ädla konsten att bli universitetslärare i högskolepedagogik och som de flesta kommer i kontakt med under doktorandutbildning eller efter disputation, har de allra flesta som läser denna utbildning redan passerat magisternivån. Detta gäller även mig som disputerat i teologi 2010 (Göteborgs universitet). En magisterexamen i högskolepedagogik blir för mig därmed inte ett steg mot en doktorexamen utan en slags yrkesexamen i mitt värv som universitetslärare – en kvalitetsmarkör som visar att jag har tillägnat mig en längre utbildning i konsten att undervisa på universitetsnivå och utvecklat vetenskapliga kunskaper, färdigheter och förmågor i detta.

Min artikel behandlar undervisning i högskolepedagogik och hur denna kan fördjupas och förändras till att ytterligare bidra till att utveckla duktiga universitetslärare. Orsaken till detta ämnesval står att finna i min egen undervisning av universitetslärare i högskolepedagogik vid Göteborgs universitet. Således står inte den vanlige studenten i centrum i min artikel och hur denne ska utbildas utan studentens lärare och dennes utbildning till lärare. Eftersom en vetenskaplig artikel måste hållas strikt avgränsad och utformad utifrån de krav som dels disciplinen och dels tidskriften ställer kan det vara behövligt att i denna kappa gå något utanför detta ramverk och bidra med några aspekter som det inte fanns möjlighet att behandla i själva artikeln.

Huvudsyftet med min artikel *Didactic Reasoning in Academic Teacher Development: Towards a New Perspective of Teacher Training for Academics* har varit att utveckla och fördjupa undervisningen av universitetslärare i högskolepedagogik. Under den tid jag själv dels läst högskolepedagogik och dels senare undervisat i ämnet har jag ofta slagits av tanken att ämnet många gånger setts som en del av den

administrativa fortbildningen av universitetslärare och som något helt inom ämnet pedagogik med dess vanligen förekommande inriktning mot psykologiska och sociologiska förklaringsmodeller. I mitt perspektiv är högskolepedagogik en lärarutbildning för universitetslärare – långt bort från administrativa utbildningsmoduler – och måste som sådan därmed ledas av personer som även själva deltar i undervisning på universitetet. Som doktor i teologi har jag ofta känt mig intresserad av att föra in humanistiska och teologiska perspektiv på att konsten att undervisa – inte bara på universitetet i allmänhet utan även i högskolepedagogik i synnerhet. Tanken att föra in teologiska perspektiv på högskolepedagogik är något helt nytt, men har stora likheter med de filosofiska perspektiv som lagts på utbildning sedan lång tid tillbaka.

I min egen teologiska undervisningskontext har jag många gånger kommit i kontakt med fenomenet religionsdialog, eller ekumenik som det även kallas, där olika religiösa grupper vill föra samtal med varandra om allt mellan praktiska göromål såsom gemensamma aktioner mot våld i samhället till gemensamma gudstjänster och tillfällen till religiös utövning. En av de mer kända metoderna för interreligiös dialog som kommit att växa fram under senare tid är det engelska Scriptural Reasoning vilket är en metod för att låta religiösa utövare inom en utbildningsmiljö träffas och läsa varandras religiösa texter och föra samtal kring hur dessa texter tolkas olika och lika mellan framför allt de abrahamitiska religionerna (det vill säga Judendom, Kristendom och Islam). Den kanske mest namnkunnige personen som förknippas med Scriptural Reasoning är professor David F. Ford på Interfaith Centre vid Cambridge University. Inspirerad av Scriptural Reasoning har jag valt att ta in delar av denna metod in i högskolepedagogisk undervisning i min konceptuella artikel och har konstruerat metoden didaktiskt resonerande (i artikeln benämner jag metoden Didactic Reasoning) i syfte att kunna dels överbrygga skilda undervisningspraktiker inom de olika vetenskapliga disciplinerna på universitetsnivå och dels söka styrka och inspiration i dessa olika praktiker. Scriptural Reasoning strävar inte mot att skapa en enhetlig förståelse och utövning av religion utan en acceptans av mångfald och på samma sätt strävar inte didaktiskt resonerande mot en enda sammanfogad undervisningspraktik utan mot erkännandet av de många kompetenser och styrkor som finns i samspelet mellan alla dessa undervisningspraktiker.

Undervisning i högskolepedagogik har i Sverige många gånger kommit att utvecklas till en interdisciplinär och universitetsgemensam utbildning. Olika undervisningspraktiker möts i de olika kursdeltagarna och bryts mot varandra. Det är i dessa möten som didaktiskt resonerande kan vara en framkomlig och berikande väg att gå för att både utbilda universitetslärarna och träna dem i att bli bättre lärare genom att i dialog med andra lärare formulera sina egna perspektiv på undervisning. Min artikel handlar enbart om den högskolepedagogiska utbildningen för att avgränsa och sätta fokus på denna del i universitetslärarutbildningen, men denna utbildning är naturligtvis bara en del av undervisningen – utan studentutbildning blir det ingen universitetsutbildning alls. Genom hela artikeln betonar jag vikten av att agera utifrån det teoretiska resonerandet. Att resonera didaktiskt är värdelöst om det inte åtföljs av handling i den vanliga undervisningen. En av grunderna i didaktiskt resonerande är etablerandet av intersubjektiva möten och rum där deltagarna kan känna sig respekterade av de andra deltagarna och accepterade som kompetenta lärare – den undervisande andre. Genom att känna sig sedda och accepterade är det lättare att framföra konstruktiv kritik och bidra till en bättre utbildning som universitetslärare. Min förhoppning är, även om den faller utanför själva artikelns mål och syfte, att detta förhållningssätt även används av universitetslärare gentemot sina studenter – förmågan att skapa intersubjektiva möten och rum i undervisningen där studenterna kan känna sig respekterade – som den andre i ett möte mellan ett du och ett jag – även om skillnader vad gäller kompetensnivå och hierarki mellan lärare och student inte ska suddas ut. En student som möts av en lärare som ser studenten som den andre och möter denne andre med respekt som människa kommer få fantastiska möjligheter till god undervisning. Konsten att se den andre som ett subjekt är svårt och att tränas i detta i högskolepedagogisk utbildning vore ett viktigt steg i denna riktning – den andre är naturligtvis inte bara undervisande kollegor utan även studenter i utbildning.

Inom universitetsvärldens olika vetenskapsdiscipliner finns en uppsjö av undervisningspraktiker – somliga gamla (mitt eget ämne teologi har funnits med sedan universitetens start på 1000-talet) och somliga nya (högskolepedagogik, å andra sidan, är ett av de nyaste ämnena). Vad som räknas som god undervisning inom en praktik räknas inte alltid som sådan inom en annan praktik. Detta beror både på traditioner och på de olika vetenskapsdisciplinernas konstitutioner och undervisningsbehov.

Denna praktikdiversitet ligger i fokus i didaktiskt resonerande där det interdisciplinära mötet skapar möjligheter till att reflektera kring de egna praktikernas styrkor och svagheter samt inspireras till att pröva nya grepp genom utbyte av erfarenheter.

Ett hypotetiskt scenario för didaktiskt resonerande skulle kunna vara de mer allmänna introducerande kurserna i högskolepedagogik där denna metod lämpar sig väl. På dessa kurser möter universitetslärare – ofta för första gången – praktiserande lärare från andra vetenskapsdiscipliner och samtalar kring sina egna undervisningspraktiker. Även om det inte alltid är tanken att detta ska utgöra grunden tycks det som omöjligt – och ytterst positivt – att kopplingar görs mellan det som undervisas om och den egna undervisningserfarenheten och de andra kursdeltagarnas liknande erfarenheter. Didaktiskt resonerande blir därmed ett sätt att ta tag i dessa självreflektioner och föra in dessa i ett mer didaktiskt reflekterande kring undervisning. Vid Göteborgs universitet har vi medvetet skapat basgrupper i dessa introducerande kurser med utgångspunkt i diversitet och mångfald i vetenskaplig hemvist och undervisningspraktik – något som ofta beskrivits som positivt. Den undervisande andre blir synliggjord i dessa samtal och skapar ett intresse för att veta mer och pröva nya idéer i den egna undervisningen efter dessa samtal.

Med min artikel *Didactic Reasoning in Academic Teacher Development: Towards a New Perspective of Teacher Training for Academics* har jag strävat efter att tillföra det högskolepedagogiska fältet nya perspektiv vad gäller både möjligheterna att låta högskolepedagogik korsbefruktas av andra vetenskapliga discipliner – i detta fall teologi – och gå bortom ett tekniskt/mechaniskt sätt att se på lärarutbildning för universitetslärare som ett hur man undervisar med hjälp av teorier kring lärande (långt bortom dessa teoriers egentliga syften). På detta sätt blir verkligen högskolepedagogik det som ofta sägs i teorin – en diskurs med många dialekter. Min artikel är en början till att formulera en teologisk dialekt.

Artikel:

Didactic Reasoning in Academic Teacher Development: Towards a New Understanding of Teacher Training for Academics

Introduction

Teacher training for academics is a curious and difficult phenomenon. In other teacher training programmes students learn how to teach before they can practise their skills and need an undergraduate level of knowledge in the subjects for teaching, while in academic teaching development it is most often the opposite case. Although participants in academic teacher training are already lecturing in their fields and have the highest levels of education in their subjects, pedagogy and didactics on a theoretical and methodological level are for most of them something new – at least as a subject of its own. All of these course participants bring their own practices, theories and experiences and share these in thematic strands of pedagogical and didactical issues. They are not new to teaching and cutting-edge knowledge in their fields, and the ambition of teacher training is to enhance these skills and introduce a theoretical and methodological level of reflection on how and why education can be achieved for undergraduate and postgraduate students in their own fields.

In my conceptual article I intend to construct a didactic framework for the education of university teachers in academic teaching development. In focus is the training of academics as teachers and not the teaching of students. It is, in my opinion, necessary to see university lecturers as competent pedagogical subjects that need further development in their teaching skills and reasoning in didactic matters – not to start from scratch in spite of their existing teaching practices. This framework for establishing a new kind of academic training development could be understood as ‘Didactic Reasoning’ and its roots stem from pragmatic philosophy, and from the

theological interfaith dialogue method of Scriptural Reasoning. Didactic Reasoning should, however, not be understood as ‘the’ new way to train university teachers, but as an important method in the training of academics to become better university teachers. The construction of didactic reasoning will be made through the establishing of four principles for the training of academics in the art of teaching.

Teacher Training for Academics in Sweden

Before any remarks can be made regarding the construction of didactic reasoning, it is necessary to describe how teacher training for academics is practised in Sweden. The outcome of my article is, however, significant beyond the Swedish educational system.

Since the 1960s academics have been trained as teachers in Sweden (Roxå and Mårtensson 2008; Lindberg-Sand and Sonesson 2008; Åkesson and Falk Nilsson 2010), but only at the beginning of the twenty-first century did it become a requirement for all academics, and the courses in teacher training have formed the educational institution in Swedish Higher Education that we see today. The required training consists of courses in Higher Education Teaching and Learning (HETL, in Swedish *Högskolepedagogik*) for either 7.5 Higher Education Credits or 15 HEC,¹ while optional courses are sometimes also available for specific issues such as postgraduate supervision. The courses are organised and examined by each university as academic teaching development and must be re-evaluated by a university if a person moves from one Swedish university to another. Often, these courses are administered and managed by educational development units (EDU) – for example, at my own university, the University of Gothenburg, this is done by Unit of Educational Development and Interactive Learning (PIL). The educational principle for these courses is that of interdisciplinary teacher training, where PhD candidates, lecturers, senior lecturers, assistant professors and professors meet. Participants in these courses for teacher training thereby come from a broad variety of disciplines and teaching experiences, and this juxtaposition of disciplines and teaching experiences makes HETL a positive challenge not only for the participants, but also for the teacher educators working with these courses (Roxå and Mårtensson 2008).²

Principles for Didactic Reasoning

In order to provide a methodological and philosophical framework for academic teacher development I propose a new method of didactics – Didactic Reasoning (DR) – founded in pragmatist philosophy and the theological method of Scriptural Reasoning (SR) as an approach to interdisciplinary meetings with a shared material but different understandings and practices.

With the memory of devastating wars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, interfaith dialogue rose as a way to avoid further conflicts and cause people of different religions to talk and engage with each other without mission and conversion in mind. It is in this perspective the method of SR must be understood (Ford 2006; Ochs 2006).

People from different faiths come together with the aim of making the world less filled with conflict. This conflict reduction is not due to a rejection of disparate truths and practices, but rather to the recognition of parallel ideas of religion and the idea that it is up to the individual believer in SR to discern the truth in a religion (Ford 2006). Therefore, differences are seen as something positive and the very foundation for Scriptural Reasoning. In fact, SR has even been described as a way to ‘encourage and nurture better and more interesting disagreements’ (Byassee and Goodson 2009) and ‘partnerships of difference’ (Ford 2011; cf. Adams 2006a:234–255; Adams 2006b). How then is this SR practised and what can be transferred into the world of academic teaching development?

The multitude of belief systems is similar to the many different understandings of what science is and how it is to be taught at the university. Religious dialogue in the shape of SR is in this term better suited as role model for didactic reasoning than pragmatist philosophy since it recognises different parallel truths rather than trying to find a reasonable path between them. Ford (2006) outlines eight maxims for SR that he considers to be the most vital, and these maxims focus both on the fundamentals of SR and its outcome. The first maxim speaks of the acknowledgement of the other’s beliefs and respect for what is important to him or her. The second maxim focuses on a non-exclusive final understanding of universal truths where further comments on issues can be given. The third maxim points to the fact that consensus is not the intended goal of SR but a recognition of ‘deep’ differences. The fourth maxim

emphasises the need for argumentation as a positive means to discuss and dispute. The fifth maxim speaks of the recognition of the value of different religious resources and that these differences can unite, since themes are occurring interreligiously. The sixth maxim points to the necessity for time in order to meet and engage in SR. The seventh maxim consists of the divine purpose of SR – to bring peace to the world. The final and eighth maxim focuses on the positive outcome of SR, arising from mutual hospitality which makes friends of people of different beliefs and confessions. Ford's maxims provide SR with a positive aim of recognition and plurality where friendship can be developed.

The ways in which the participants in SR are to respect each other through the shared discovery of differences and similarities could, in my opinion, provide a model for how similar reflections can be made in academic teaching development. Although SR, unlike academic teaching development, is developed for a particular religious setting and with a specific aim beyond the aims of university teaching, the methodology of finding a common place for group readings of different texts with a pluralistic approach to understanding and interpretation has something to offer (Ochs 2006). Here, Charles Sander Peirce's pragmatist philosophy³ stands as a foundation for SR with its aim to improve the world through the re-reading and reinterpretation of texts and ontological propositions (Ochs 1998; Ochs 2006). Ford's outline of SR both points in the direction of acceptance of differences and places emphasis on the common goal of making the world more peaceful and less filled with conflicts between individuals, religious communities and societies. SR has, however, one major 'flaw', specifically the need for all participants to agree on a common set of rules or maxims. If common understanding is not established, SR will most probably not work as intended, and thus SR can only be practised by those interested in it and not by those unwilling to participate. This is perhaps acceptable in SR, but in academic teaching development, most participants are required to take part and the aspect of voluntariness is thereby not possible to achieve. This makes academic teaching development more diverse in attitudes towards intersubjectivity among the participants – in SR participants need to have the same goal – which in teacher training is neither required nor understood as an absolute necessity.

Didactic Reasoning (DR) is not ‘the’ solution to establishing ways for academics to become university teachers, but rather, is a method to enhance their development as teaching practitioners. This reasoning can be described as a ‘partnership of difference’ where various approaches and understandings cooperate to nurture the development and practising of didactic languages. This cooperation is not intended to lead to unity in thought and interpretation, but rather, in unity of aims and meeting forms. In SR, maxims and rules have been chiselled out to aid the common understanding among its participants of what SR is and how it can be practised (Ford 2006; Ford 2011; Kepnes 2006). This aim of understanding could even be understood as Jürgen Habermas’ striving for ideal speech situations where the speakers converse to reach a common understanding (Gosling 2000; Habermas 1982; Habermas 1984). This interpretation of the ability for human beings to come close to each other from different cultures has, however been challenged by Lovisa Bergdahl (2009), who argues that a true transmission meaning in a conversation cannot be undertaken – the cultural differences are too wide to be bridged (Bergdahl 2009). Nonetheless, one can argue for a hermeneutic approach where participants can come closer to the others in a conversation, although they may never fully understand the other (cf. Gosling 2003). For DR, a similar set of basic principles needs to be agreed upon by the participants in the terms of accepting a framework for approaching the other.⁴

Principle 1 – The improving of university teachers

The purpose of DR is to make university teachers better practitioners in their own fields of lecturing through the development of a didactic language to manifest, question and nurture their own teaching actions. The term in this context is better understood as the focus on the continuous development and change of the practice of teaching experienced by a university teacher during his or her career. The improving and activity-focused character of pragmatist philosophy – as put forward by Peirce and Dewey – is at the heart of this first principle (Peirce 1998[1905]; Dewey 1966[1916]; Dewey 1985[1933]; cf. Badley 2001). If no development can be made in the activity of teaching, then DR is of no use.

This first principle is central to DR since, without action in teaching, the need for DR and reflexivity is just a theoretical conception without implications in practice. It is

not a way to establish consensus of the best methods and theories of university teaching, but rather, a common understanding and respect of different teaching practices. As well, it is not intended as a simple scale from bad to good, but is seen in terms of an ongoing interest in the improvement of teaching to meet the different students through disparate and alternating societal contexts. The teachers are, in DR, understood as practitioners and it is in each teacher's practices that nourishment for DR is retrieved. The focus on different practices makes DR pluralistic in terms of what constitutes the different fields of education, and it is not up to participants from other fields to discern what the fields are.

The development of a didactic language is central to DR, and can be understood as a discourse of how to think and express teaching on a meta-level, which in turn needs to be put into practice through the activity of teaching. This didactic language can be seen as a common discourse for participants with differing disciplinary dialects (cf. Nixon *et al* 2001), and can manifest itself through implicit and explicit reflections by the teacher, in relation to both the student and to other teaching colleagues, responding to the fundamental didactic questions of how, why and what. The didactic language can also be facilitated to question one's own, students' and teaching colleagues' conceptions of education in order to enhance the quality of education through a reasoning and reflexive teaching. Moreover, this language can be used to nurture teaching in the sense of providing a language to express and think in terms of education and teaching skills.

DR does not, however, automatically lead to reflexive action. The development of a didactic language as university teacher and the providing of a methodological platform for such development does not in itself make university teachers into better teachers. Reflection must lead to action, and the experimentation as a consequence of the reflection in education has the implications to lead to the development of a better education for students (Rodgers 2002; Dewey 1985[1933]).

Principle 2 – The training of a didactic voice

The establishment of a didactic voice through the acknowledgement of the 'teaching-other'. Education is a meeting between subjects that leads to the coming into presence through the development of an independent voice (Biesta 2006). Without this

intersubjectivity no such development can be accomplished. This understanding could be described as three layers that need to be taken into consideration in order to establish a foundation for intersubjectivity between university teachers. The first layer is the realisation of meetings between subjects as a core element of education. Realising that education cannot be done on an individual basis and without the encounter of the other is necessary for education – something which is particularly important in academic teaching development (cf. Biesta 2006). Human beings are fundamentally relational beings and therefore, we become who we are in relation to other human beings. This realisation implies the need for the other in order to come into presence (Biesta 2006). A realisation of this understanding does not necessarily, however, imply the realisation of one universal understanding of education. A self needs the other in order to become an individual, thus putting an emphasis on both the self and the other. When university teachers meet in didactic conversations, such as in academic teaching development, the other comes into presence as well as oneself through these meetings, which can be very different in attitude and both negative and positive for the individual, since social roles become established there. The meetings can also be hierarchical and horizontal, making intersubjective meetings something disparate and heterogenous. In academic teaching development practising university teachers come together to develop their own didactical voices through these intersubjective meetings, and the onus is on both participants and mentors to establish a healthy atmosphere where all participants can feel accepted as both the other and the self. This realisation of an intersubjective meeting is the core element of education, since it impacts on the attitudes towards the other – creating and establishing a reflective and respectful intersubjective space (Biesta 2006). This intersubjective atmosphere of respect for the fellow human beings participating is essential for effective academic teaching development (cf. Giesinger 2012⁵). This does not, however, imply that everyone should agree on all arguments and that no critique can be presented. Instead, this environment creates the opportunity to debate and give critique – knowing that it is both oneself and the other who come into presence in this dialogue.

The second layer is the admitting of the existence and eligibility of the other. Having realised the first step to the teaching-other, further steps need to be taken. At the

second step, admittance is essential – here the individual must not only accept the intersubjective meeting, but also respect the other and admit the value of him or her. Admitting, in this sense, means to put the other on the same level as oneself and accept the other as relevant and necessary for the development of an individual didactical language. If one were to look down on the teaching-other in terms of educational development, the other's voice would become less important in the intersubjective meeting, thus causing the dialogue to falter and thereby hindering the development of oneself as a university teacher. The other must be accepted to exist in the presence of oneself, an acceptance of existence which is mutual and requires a state of mind that is necessary for academic teaching development. Similar to this acceptance is the acceptance of the eligibility of the other. The selection of eligible persons for teaching at the university is not made by the same people participating in academic teaching development, and thus the decision of the other's eligibility must be accepted by those participating in such teacher training. This situation could be complicated if someone has an impression of a colleague as being a 'bad teacher', yet in academic teaching development is forced to surrender this impression in favour of a more accepting attitude towards the other. Still, it is only in a respectful intersubjective space that the ability to develop a didactical language can be trained. It is necessary, therefore, to put aside such negative considerations. In academic teaching development it is not the research qualifications that are being developed but the teaching abilities.

The third layer is the acknowledgement of the other as a competent university teaching practitioner, that is, as the teaching-other. This acknowledgement goes even further than realisation and admittance, since it ascribes a positive value to the other – the self needs to acknowledge the other in order to come into presence, as the other in similar terms has to acknowledge you as well. This mutual understanding shapes the dialogue of academic teaching development. The acknowledgement of competence of the other is not an easy task to begin in a community of critique and takes time to develop.⁶ Such time must therefore be provided in intersubjective spaces of academic teaching development. Giving the other the ability to have competence is not only conferring respect, but is also the granting of an opportunity to speak and develop a didactic language. It is not only oneself that has ideas of how to teach, but the other as well, through his or her competence as a teacher. In terms of academic teaching

development, this does not mean that all teachers are the best of teachers, but that they are practising university teachers and thereby have competence in teaching their own subjects. This emphasis on practitioners is important, since it is in these practices that the university teachers nurture their teaching abilities and also bring experiences of these practices into the dialogue of academic teaching development (Nixon *et al* 2001). Teacher training in academic teaching development through DR is thereby rooted in the practices of teaching and is not something which must be learned first in order to be used. The strong focus on teaching practices makes it necessary to develop further the term ‘other’, and to attach a ‘teaching’ to it, similar to the term ‘significant-other’. It is in the practising of teaching and the didactic reasoning of this teaching that the other becomes the teaching-other – the colleague who also teaches at the university and with whom you develop as teacher in an intersubjective meeting. Unless the person who is to undertake academic teaching development through teacher training accepts that, in order to learn, one has to come into contact with the other, no development can be made. This, however, does not imply the acceptance of one universal understanding of this meeting, but rather an acceptance of difference (cf. Gosling 2000; Bergdahl 2009).

Principle 3 – The performance of didactic reasoning

The interdisciplinary and intersubjective meeting as a source of different teaching experiences and practices. Through different disciplinary practices the foundations for a didactic reflection can be met. Each discipline has its own methods of education and practices that are best understood by those from that particular discipline. This does not, however, indicate that these practices cannot be reflected upon by participants from other disciplines, as it is in the intersubjective meeting between practising participants from various disciplines that the didactic voice can be developed. In this perspective, Higher Education academic teaching development is hard to achieve without interdisciplinary and intersubjective meetings, with the source of discussion and reflection being the different practices as presented by the participants. This approach makes the role of the teacher trainer more of a mentor than a teacher for teachers, since his or her purpose is to aid the participants in finding their own individual didactic voices through these interdisciplinary and intersubjective meetings.

In SR, dialogue meetings consist of the reading and reasoning of sacred texts (Kepnes 2006; Ford 2011). The sacredness of these texts is not shared, but is respected by the participants, while the believers of the specific religion to whom the text is sacred hold the primacy of interpretation. Nonetheless, these sacred texts can be read together and reasoned upon (Kepnes 2006).

In teacher training for academics, the foundation for DR ought to be the disciplinary and individual practices of university teaching in which participants of DR could reflect both on the role of the teaching-other and on the similarities and differences to one's own teaching practices (cf. Haigh 2005). The role of teacher education would then be to organise these DR meetings and to bring theoretical and methodological perspectives from the field of teacher training to these reasoning meetings. Through the introduction of themes of education theory and method, the reasoning could be both vitalised and provided with a foundation in educational research – providing teacher training for academics with a methodological platform. Still, the very organisation of these meetings should vary in different times and places due to the disparate teaching practices.

The development of a didactic voice takes time – albeit variable between the participants – and this aspect must be considered when planning DR. In academic teaching development, participation is not always voluntary, which means that willingness to practise DR is not necessarily shared among all participants and they should not be forced into doing so. Nonetheless, some kind of didactic understanding is required of all university teachers and this is one of the reasons why some of these academic teaching development courses are obligatory. Although it may not be done willingly, it is my understanding that everyone can learn at least a few ‘syllables’ in the didactic language through academic teaching development. Negative attitudes can possibly be overcome by respect and recognition of the teaching-other. The discovery and nurturing of a didactic language is a long journey throughout the whole career as university teacher, and it is therefore necessary for both participants and mentors to recognise the necessity of time.

Principle 4 – The rendering of experimentation and risk-taking in teaching

An openness to create bonds of friendship between participants that will not only enrich their continuous development of DR but also bring fresh ideas from these new interdisciplinary bonds of practising university teachers. The last principle is based in the positive perspective of academic teaching development in DR. Meeting other participants in a respectful and friendly space and time can be a hotbed for new friendships among university teachers. Academic teaching development provides an opportunity for interdisciplinary meetings beyond departmental and faculty space, and as such it must be nurtured in order to exist and to continue as a ground for establishing contacts at a university level, as well for the discovery of the teaching-other outside one's own field of practice. These friendships can create new ways of understanding education and teaching for the participants and for the field of academic teaching development – fresh didactic ideas not previously considered can be discovered in these friendly bonds between teachers of different disciplines. Kylie Budge and Angela Clarke (2012) argue that teacher development created in a respectful environment can motivate participants to be willing to take risks and try new ideas. Without this feeling of being accepted this experimentation is difficult to achieve – experimentation that is so important in the development of becoming a good university teacher.

Conclusions and implications

In my conceptual article I have argued for a didactic reasoning that includes professional university teachers in the development of their teaching skills. The basis for this reasoning is the shared reflection on disciplinary teaching practices and the development of a didactic voice. It is important that these reflections and this voice be put into teaching practice through the experimentation of new didactic and pedagogical approaches. Still, it must be recognised that this didactic reasoning is not a quick-fix solution to academic teacher development, but rather is a means for establishing methods for university teachers to develop as teachers through the introduction of educational theories and the recognition of the diversity of university teaching practices where the teachers become 'teaching-others'.

In order to set an intersubjective space for didactic reasoning, four principles need to be established and accepted by the participants in courses for academic teaching development. The first principle concerns the purpose of Didactic Reasoning, that is the improving of university teachers by making university teachers better practitioners in their own fields of lecturing through the development of a didactic language to manifest, question and nurture their own teaching actions. The second principle is the training of a didactic voice through the acknowledgement of the ‘teaching-other’. The third principle constructs the performance of didactic reasoning in its establishment of the interdisciplinary and intersubjective meeting as a source of different teaching experiences and practices. The fourth and final principle focuses on the rendering of experimentation and risk-taking in teaching as an openness to create bonds of friendship between participants that will not only enrich their continuous development of didactic reasoning, but also bring fresh ideas from these new interdisciplinary bonds of practising university teachers.

If didactic reasoning is being practised, it is no longer possible to consider academic teacher development as something that can be brought by non-professional staff to professional academics. Instead, an important foundation for making teacher education possible is its roots in interdisciplinary teaching practices. Through a respectful and positive view on teacher development it continues to be a curious and difficult phenomenon. But, out of these complexities and experiences of otherness, new perspectives on university teaching can be developed and university teachers may be willing to take risks to put these new ideas into practice in their own teaching.

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Notes

¹ 1 Swedish HEC equals 1 European ECTS.

² It is in my role as teacher educator the embryo for DR has emerged – through my dual disciplinary identity as Theologian (as lecturer in Religious Studies and Theology) and as Teacher Educator (through my post at the EDU at my university).

³ With 'pragmatist' I also include Peirce's later developments of the term and the more narrow term 'pragmaticism'.

⁴ Nonetheless, I am of the opinion there is no possibility for a complete understanding of the other.

⁵ Although Giesinger has done his study on children, I am of the opinion that the aspect of respect in education is a human condition regardless of the age of a human being.

⁶ This critique is necessary for establishing good research environments.

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