

The Significance of Bildung in Professional Education:

The possible role of the professional teacher educator

The special significance of formative aspects (*Bildung*) in teacher education will be discussed, in a society in transition from modernity to late modernity. It will be lined out why a study of this topic brings into focus a central educational dilemma. The pedagogical dilemma in question is how to unite the individual students' needs and rights for self-development with the educational systems demands for submission to predesigned programs and specified goals. It will be looked into different ways of solving this tension, what are their epistemological and didactical implications and how these could possibly be studied in teacher education. Special focus will be put on the possible role of the teacher educator in bringing about a formative education.

The matter of Bildung in professional education

In focus here is how formative education or *Bildung* can be stimulated in an educational setting. Professional education can open up for the formation of students as individuals as well as citizens. However this does not mean that *Bildung* is something that institutionally can be ensured just if the educational system does not oppress the autonomous student. An educational system can inspire *Bildung* but little will happen if the students do not actively choose to let their identity be formed through an educational process (Rorty 1989, 1990c). The teacher educators can here be important reminders. But if students keep on looking at the knowledge, skills and attitudes learned through an educational process only as external, instrumental tools for their occupational work, this means that *Bildung* has not taken place (Klafki 1959/1979/1996, 1995, 2001). *Bildung* requires that the students make this competence in it self into a competence for themselves - that is a part of their personal self-renewal and a foundation for their own critical-reflective engagement in society (Habermas 1974, 1984, 1987) and involvement in the occupational field. Formative education can in this way both be a matter of personal identity formation and a question of formation of individuals as citizens. Self-reflection, ideological and cultural critique through teaching and training are thus to be regarded as key words in an identity-formative professional education where *Bildung* is central.

Such an identity-formative professional qualification can be stimulated by the educational system in different ways. It can be seen as a process as well as an outcome. We can for instance study it as a process by analysing to what degree and in which ways students are inspired to reflect on their educational experiences and occupational practice, as part of a professional identity formation. Preoccupied with the process of *Bildung* it will also be interesting to find out how students in their learning process seek to confront their own ways of looking on educational matters with that of others as well as that raised by the educational system. *Bildung* can be studied as a outcome by focusing on whether the students after a learning process have got more critical and reflective in matters concerning their own identity as coming teachers. Preoccupied with the outcome of *Bildung* we may also seek answers to whether the students' competence in subject matters and pedagogy have made them more able to handle the multicultural reality they will meet as teachers. When students actively makes the knowledge of the educational system their own by confronting it with their individual questions, hypothesis and experiences, then the knowledge will be seen to have a personal

formative meaning as an aim in itself for the coming professionals - in their critical-reflective self-development, self-understanding and empowerment.

Focus here is on how teacher educators as professionals possibly can function as organizers and stimulators for students in such a formative education. That is in a system where teacher educators are expected both to comply with the students' requests for self-development *and* with the educational systems demands for submission to predesigned programs and specified goals. It will be lined out how this can be studied.

The significance of the professional as an organizer of an identity-formative educational process can be questioned. Professionalism in it self is no guarantee in this matter. The professional can by exercise of his expert power restrain the possibilities for *Bildung*. Even so it seems important for the development of a formative education that professionalism is acknowledged. The complex special competence of the professionals can make way for more manifold judgements than curriculum instructions and bureaucratic and standardized procedures alone can give. This means better possibilities to take care of the variations in the students' needs (Freidson 2001), and thus for the students development of *Bildung*.

However the teacher educators' qualified judgements can prove to be of more or less relevance for the students' identity-formative education, depending on the society and cultural context in question. Both the personal, occupational and social relevance of an identity-formative education must be seen in relation to the special forms of knowledge and qualifications that is required in society.

Bildung and qualification in late modernity

Here there are some typical features in late modern societies that need to be taken into consideration in a study of *Bildung* in teacher education. The multiplicity of such societies implies that traditions often are questioned, especially that any one tradition should have a superior significance (Mead 1971). From different perspectives Jürgen Habermas (1974, 1984, 1987), Thomas Ziehe & Herbert Stubenrauch (1983, 1989) and Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens & Scott Lash (1994) describe how new possibilities for freedom comes into being in late modernity in departure from traditional world views. The individual is given more possibilities that ever to personally decide what is valid. Social and cultural variations among people make way for more disagreement about collective goals. To be understood it will often prove insufficient to support one's arguments only by referring to a tradition. Unlike in traditional societies one cannot presuppose a common comprehension of concepts like independence, qualification, formative education and democracy. The individuals' well-founded points of view have as a result of this become more important that ever (Habermas 1996). It contributes to the consolidation of the person's status as a free and equal human citizen.

A teacher education will in such a society have lost his indisputable dominant role as a mediator of knowledge. To be relevant teacher training must give room for personal opinions. A great variation of world views and beliefs among people steadily make way for confrontations between ones own and others points of view. This again opens up new possibilities for reflection and critique (Beck, Giddens og Lash 1994), also within the educational system. The constant diffusion of alternative regimes concerning knowledge, truth and ways of living (Toffler 1984, Mantovani 1996) open up for a renewal of ideological

and cultural critical discussions. Students in late modernity therefore more than before need to learn how to make choices under conditions that are not predictable. And they need to learn about how to compose their cultural understanding and professional identity in the breaking between different traditions (Foucault 1973, Rorty 1989), both in education and occupation. The latter implies knowledge about how to de- and reconstruct the various traditions in question (Derrida 1976, 1981, Rorty 1989). The teacher educators can in these matters be models for their students by showing them how professional expert knowledge can be handled in the tension between tradition and renewal. These conditions need to be taken into consideration in a study of *Bildung* in teacher education.

The professional teacher educator - supervisor for the system and defender of the students' Bildung

A lot of dilemmas are however important to bear in mind when studying how teacher educators practice their role as defenders of the students' *Bildung*.

An official education will always set up certain regulations when it comes to what the students should learn. Qua professionals however teacher educators are expected to have some freedom so that they can organize learning situations according to the students' special needs. Accordingly William J. Chambliss (1977) claims that a professional relation can be described as a social relation where the performer agrees to set his strongly specialized skills at somebody's disposal - in exchange for the right to regulate his own special activities. Thus professionalism implicates a right for the professionals to decide - even when there are others who have jurisdiction. More precisely the professionals' self-determination are connected to: 1) their possession of a subject and pedagogical knowledge that students need to be familiar with, 2) that part of this knowledge is so specialized that it is not immediately accessible for those who lack the same qualification and experience, and 3) that this knowledge is so complex that it can not simply be transformed into standardized procedures and bureaucratic or layman solutions (Freidson 2001). Thus professionalism becomes an important factor when the matter is to explaining how teacher educators possibly can act as organizers of identity-formative learning processes in teacher education. In Norway as in many other Western countries such processes are supposed to take place in an education that is largely based on management by objectives. Other conditions however also need to be taken into consideration.

Julia Evettes (2003) claims that the reality of professionalism often implies that professional values are replaced with organizational, which means management by bureaucratic and hierarchical procedures rather than by professional relations. She maintains that professionalism has become an effective mechanism for social control at micro- and meso- as well as on macro level. Teacher educators make no exception. The possibilities of having free, open and critical-reflective discussions with students are restricted by system regulations. Consequently it is difficult for teacher educators to be models for the students in their formative professional qualification. It seems that state authorities in Norway as well as in other Western countries are engaged in trying to redefine professionalism so as to make it more commercially aware, budget-focused and managerial. Accountability and performance indicators have to an increasing degree become a central aspect for the professions. Achievement targets are used to justify their receipt of public expenditure and they are measured and compared. The professionals need to demonstrate the achievement of externally and often politically targets in bureaucratic and managerial places of work that have become

steadily more managerial and bureaucratic, according to Evettes. Teaching and training in teacher education are supposed to be in line with the objects and targets that are written down in the national curriculum. The outcomes of education are supposed to be evaluated according to how they meet the claims and assignments of the curriculum. This put further constraint on the teacher educators who want to take care of their own qualified professional decisions. Formulations in the curriculum that prescribe the content of teaching contribute furthermore to limit and not encourage teacher educators' own decisions. A standardization of tests and examinations implicate that focus is to be put on a limited assortment of the possible subjects that an education may want to choose. This may even more limit the teacher educators' possibilities to unfold their didactical competence and to stimulate critical thinking among their students (Pink 1990, Raaen 2002). Such circumstances invite professionals to reformulate their understanding of themselves as autonomous, self-motivated and self-controlling according to what their place of work defines as appropriate - in turn for the right to be rewarded with career promotion and progress. In Norway one find these new expectations which professionals face extensively described in a national reform in higher education named The Quality Reform. This reform includes new systems for evaluation, study quality and quality control and a new national body for quality control (NOKUT) that shall control, accredit and take care of quality in higher education.

Michel Foucault shows how the professionals in society have been closely intervened in the process of defining what is normal and abnormal, true and false, right and wrong for the citizen subject. Thereby they have become a crucial part in the reproduction of legitimate power in society. According to Foucault (1980, 1984, 1994) normalization also includes the reproduction of professionals' expert authority. Foucault shows how the acceptance of the authority of the professional experts have been part of the consolidation of the state authority and how the acceptance of government authority in turn have been supported by the professionals in the making of a normalization process of the individuals as citizens. Legitimate political power rests according to Foucault on the submission and obedience of the subjects. Explicit and direct compulsion has according to Foucault (1988) over time been replaced by a normalization process where an external and reactive discipline of the subject has developed into an internalized and proactive self-discipline from the subject. Thus professionalism has come to be seen as a disciplinary mechanism - and accordingly as a disciplinary logic - which inscribes autonomous professional practice within a chain of accountability and validity, and thereby governs professional behaviour in a minute way. Thus professionalism can be seen to undermine the conditions for a personal identity-formative professional qualification in teacher education (Raaen 2002). These perspectives also need to be taken into consideration in an analysis of *Bildung* in teacher education.

Nevertheless within frames given by law, curriculum and formal regulations there can be different ways for a teacher educator to take care of pedagogical matters and subjects, and thereby involve the students in the premises of their own learning conditions, qualification and identity formation. The above-mentioned conditions put strong regulations on the professionals' possibilities for free reflection, discussion and critique and may correspondingly make it hard for teacher educators to stimulate the students' critical reflexivity and empowerment. However that does not mean that the teacher educators are entirely deprived of their professional ownership to their expert knowledge, their power to define the nature of their own subject matters and to control the access to possible solutions. Owing to their professional skills the teacher educators still can be able to function as models for the students in their learning and identity-formative professional qualification. The professional with an analytical comprehension and specialist knowledge will make a

difference when there is doubt or uncertainty about how to understand and interpret concrete matters. This is also the case when rules and regulations need to be interpreted or when the task is to come up with a well-founded and adequate objective. According to Talcott Parsons (1951) the professionals' trust and status are precisely related to the responsibility they have in these matters. This responsibility stems from their theoretical expert knowledge. It is a knowledge that society needs. In complicated matters where clear rules do not exist the professionals with expert knowledge (unlike the laymen) are considered to need autonomy to be able to make good qualified judgements.

For the professionals to retain their expert legitimacy in society and their right for autonomy depend on their abilities to act confidence-inspiring. In educational matters where *Bildung* is in question this is related to how the teacher educators qua professionals use their autonomy to make qualified judgements, and to what extent this contributes to the development of a well-founded identity-formative professional qualification. In quite many Western countries this has to take place in a pedagogical setting where the teacher educators must be able to make way for a unity of the individuals' needs and rights for self-development and self-determination and the educational systems' demands for submission to predesigned programs and specified goals. A main question is considered to be how teacher educators under such circumstances possibly can function as organizers and stimulators for students in their identity-formative learning process and education, and again how this can be analysed.

Immanuel Kant gives a point of departure for an analysis of this. Kant (1788/2004) claims that autonomy is a moral right that only holds for a human being as long as it is based on reason. Because reason gives a human being freedom to investigate and makes it possible to establish what is right or wrong. A person relying primarily on his or her inclinations is not capable of that. According to Kant's view this also includes to be willing to accompany one's actions by the morally given principle that one shall make the maxim of one's actions into a general law. According to the same principle of reason Kant claims that only when we appeal to the reason of our fellow human beings we behave morally, and thus demonstrate true autonomy. For only then this human being is treated as an end in himself and not only as a mean. Quite the contrary would be to try to influence the other to do what I want without taking into consideration that person's own rationality. In that case, according to Kant, one does not pay moral respect to the human being as a rational being and as an end in itself, that is with his own right to make reasonable autonomous, moral decisions for himself.

Thus autonomy and qualified judgement as such are no guarantee for a formative professional qualification. Only if the human being that needs help is regarded as an end in itself and not only treated as a mean. This also needs to be taken into consideration when studying how teacher educators arrange for *Bildung*. In the light of these principles it is possible to raise further questions as to how one in various ways can make qualified judgements and use professional autonomy so that *Bildung* might take place. Here this will be connected with teaching, training and education, and the possibilities of involving the students in their own formative qualification and identity formation. Thus professional autonomy can as for Kant imply that the individual (here: teacher educator) alone *by himself* - as a result of his own well-founded reason and willingness to act universally - is capable of telling how other persons' interests (e.g. self-development) can be taken care of. The premise for the autonomy is here a monological one. Or it can as for Habermas mean that each person in their own reason (as an outcome of arguments and deliberations) continually will be able to come to a better explanation of how things can be done. The basis is then a dialogical, deliberative autonomy. Others again (e.g. Richard Rorty) claim that deducing from universal moral

principles like Kant and Habermas do, will not make way for more personal autonomy and self-development, especially not in a pluralistic society. According to Rorty these rational principles can at best be considered as an inspiration to extend and include others in our constantly ongoing wondering conversations. Thus following Rorty the typical autonomous professional will be one who constantly challenges one's own conceptions about autonomy, professionalism and identity formation by re-describing them, constantly seeking answers to what is *not* made possible by the prevailing ways of seeing things.

These different approaches to professional autonomy and qualified judgements can be used as a theoretical point of departure for a more thorough analysis of *Bildung* in professional education, related to students' identity-formative qualification in teacher education. Here however only a contextual analysis will do.

As long as the educational challenge do not imply anything more than getting well-founded answers to complex but well known and agreed upon matters, it may be adequate for professional teacher educators to act monologically and instrumentally only using their expert knowledge to make up conclusions. The case may however be different if there in a multicultural society are conflicts and collisions between various interests, values and world-views. Therefore not any single autonomy is enough to bring about a qualified judgement that will stimulate the development of an identity-formative qualification. Accordingly the possibilities for self-development and identity formation may not necessarily be undermined by the systems demand for submission to predesigned programs and specified subjects. The problem only arises if the teacher educators continue to approach their students in this way and thus not give them an opportunity to question the authoritative solutions.

Richard Rorty shows why it is so. According to Rorty (1990b) *Bildung* precisely presupposes the above-mentioned interplay between "socialization" and "individuation". Socialization is to be regarded as a precondition and individuation a pedagogical attempt, to recreate one self with reference to the insights gained through socialization. In this way individuation gives way for discussions about one's own culture and background. The latter is according to Rorty what *Bildung* - "the edification" – is about.

Thus it might be necessary with a *technical* approach (Habermas 1974) - where problems and tasks are given - when the students are about to be initiated into an unknown subject or the culture and traditions of the profession (Peters 1992. See also Mollenhauer 1996). The case is different when the students have become more confident with the analytical concepts that are used in education and by the professionals. Then there may exist a knowledge basis for encouraging the students' critical reflection and it may be possible for teacher educators to invite to discussions about how problems, curriculum, subjects and working methods can be made better. Like Habermas one can here talk about a *practical* approach. Such an approach is to be distinguished from a *liberating* formative approach. The teacher educator here typically encourages the students to be critical about the ideological premises of teaching, training, education and profession, and shows how theses both can obstruct and stimulate their own learning processes (Habermas 1974. See also Carr & Kemmis 1986). With the last approach the different ways of solving educational matters do not remain obvious and unproblematic. They are assumed to be further developed in a critical reflection between teachers and students under conditions where the students also are allowed to get in a position where they can challenge the norms that tacitly are presupposed (Habermas 1987). Thereby professional qualification can become a dynamic and ever changing autobiographical process that the students in discussions and deliberations have to find their own personal ways of

running through (Schubert 1986. See also Kantor 1990). An *opening deconstructive* approach will show the students how professional expert knowledge can be de- and reconstructed in the tension between tradition and renewal (Derrida 1976, 1981, Rorty 1989).

Bildung-theoretical approaches to a study of identity formation through education

Whether teacher educators autonomy provide formative education and a critical-reflective identity formation in one way or the other is thus dependent upon the premises of their professional autonomy and the type of qualified judgements the educators make. It is further related to whether these judgements support the students' independent critical reflections and formative learning processes and identity formation. Such processes are supposed to take place in an educational system where it is possible to arrange for a unity between individual needs and rights for self-development and an educational system's demands for submission to predesigned programs and specified subjects. The point is to show a way these matters may be analysed.

A didactical operationalization

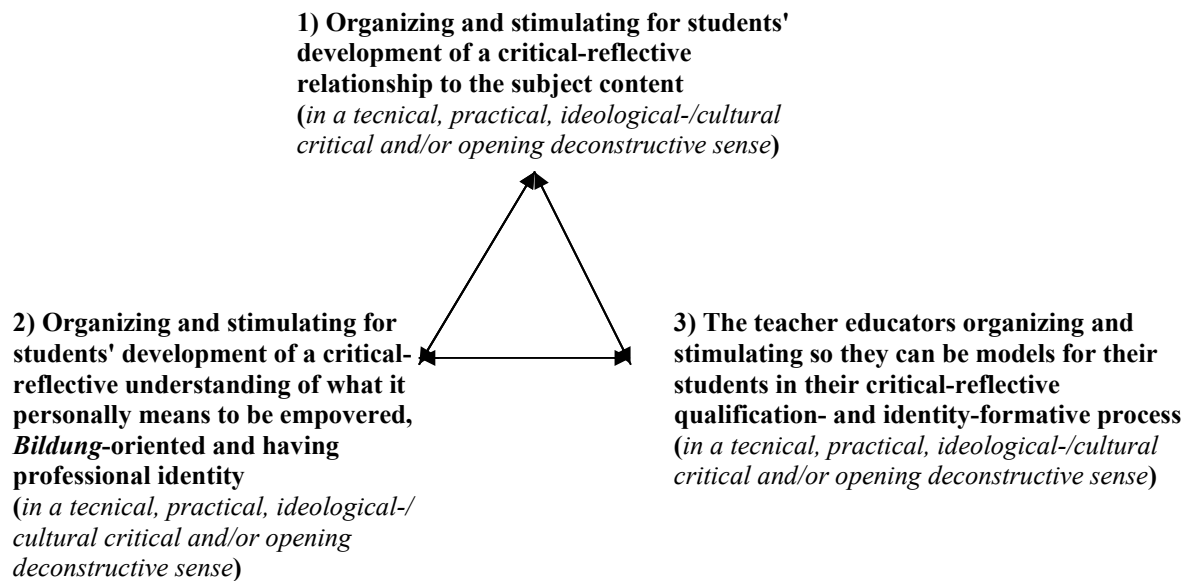
These questions can be studied using *Bildung*-theoretical, didactical model. The model presented makes it possible both to differentiate between various types of critical reflexivity and to combine these with relevant didactical approaches, by bringing into focus the well-known didactical relationship between *the content of education, teacher educators and students*.

Using such an approach makes it possible to examine:

How and under what kind of didactical conditions the teacher educators organize and stimulate so that:

- 1) students in their learning and professional qualification can be able to develop a personal critical-reflective relationship to the *subject content* of the education
- 2) *students* through their learning and professional qualification can develop a critical-reflective understanding of what it *personally* means to be empowered, *Bildung*-oriented and having a professional identity
- 3) *teacher educators* themselves as models can stimulate the students in their critical-reflective qualification and identity-formative process

The various types of critical reflexivity and the relationship between the mentioned didactical approaches can figuratively be described as follows:



The critical reflexivity in question always presupposes a background, worldview, *Vorhabe*, or tradition. It always works from within a historical/biographical horizon. The different aspects of critical reflexivity mentioned in the figure will therefore first attain meaning when it is viewed against the background in question. As shown in the figure this thematically varies for each of the three didactical points. All together however they concern the process of socialization and individuation, where *Bildung* might be an outcome. It is this *Bildung* that is supposed to come into being in a critical reflective didactical interplay between the students, the content of education and teacher educators. In accordance with what has been said earlier, it is in the figure made an analytical distinction between critical reflexivity: a) in a *technical sense*. This means acquiring an authoritative understanding of what critical reflexivity implies, b) in a *practical sense*. This implies to be able to draw on one's own experiences when formulating a critical reflection (that will not aim at challenging an existing order), c) as a *self-reflection* and *ideological-/cultural critique*. What matters then is to raise normative questions to a prevailing order, d) as an *opening deconstructive reflexivity*. The matter here is to be capable of inquiring both what is made possible and what is not made possible by a solution, including any ideological and critical solution that one is introduced to in education or in the occupational field.

Relating these aspects of critical reflexivity to the mentioned *Bildung*-theoretical, didactical model makes it possible both to differentiate and draw a line of communication between the following three didactical moments:

Ad. 1) How and under what kind of conditions the teacher educators organize and stimulate:
- so that the students in their professional qualification can be able to develop a personal critical-reflective relationship to the subject content of the education.

In accordance with what has been said this can be seen:

- in a technical sense: if teacher educators restrict themselves to let the authoritative aims, objects and instructions in official documents constitute "recipes" for how students can develop a personal critical-reflective understanding of the subject content (jf. Cherryholmes 1988)
- in a practical sense: if teacher educators in addition open up for the development of a critical-reflective understanding of the subject content - by taking the students'

experiences, questions and wonder as a starting point. The participants are however not aiming at challenging the prevailing conceptions

- in an ideological-/cultural critical sense: if teacher educators in addition organize for a historical reflective and ideological-/cultural critical analysis of subject matters - by confronting different perspectives and ways of understanding (Gadamer 1975, Habermas 1974, 1987). The aim is to develop the students' critical-reflective understanding, both concerning the relevance of educational subjects and professional, occupational matters
- in an opening deconstructive sense: if teacher educators in addition stimulate an analysis where the central question is: what is *not* made possible by any authoritative way of thinking about educational matters. The aim is to stimulate the students' general power to raise questions and be wondering (in focus then is this matter and not to acquire some "right" ideological- or cultural critical recipes - Rorty 1989, 1990a, Derrida 1976, 1981, 1984)
- here it is also relevant to include how different forms of evaluation and working methods are used to back up a certain critical-reflective understanding of a subject matter

Ad. 2) How and under what kind of conditions the teacher educators organize and stimulate: - so that the students in their professional qualification can be able to develop a critical-reflective understanding of what it personally means to be empowered, Bildung-oriented and having a professional identity

This can be seen:

- in a technical sense: if teacher educators in teaching and training restrict themselves to let the official authoritative aims, objects and instructions about self-activity, empowerment, self-decision constitute "recipes" for the students identity constructions. That is recipes that will tell the students how they can make themselves into objects for the development of a critical-reflective professional identity (Foucault 1973, 1980, 1986, 1988, 1994)
- in a practical sense: if teacher educators in addition stimulate the students to critically compare their own practical experiences with that of others and that presented in official plans (Habermas 1974). The participants are however not aiming at challenging the prevailing conceptions
- in an ideological-/cultural critical sense: if teacher educators in addition stimulate the students ideological and/or cultural critical reflection about what it means to be self-determined in matters concerning self-development and professional identity - by confronting them with different traditions and ways of understanding (Gadamer 1975, Habermas 1974, 1987)
- in an opening deconstructive sense: if teacher educators in addition in matters concerning self-understanding, self-decision and professional identity stimulate the students to be continuously suspicious and wondering (and not just look for any one "right" critical recipe), by steadily asking what is *not* made possible by the interpretations and solutions that are being chosen in education and the occupational field (Rorty 1989, 1990a, Derrida 1976, 1981, 1984)
- here it is also relevant to include how different forms of evaluation and working methods are used to back up a certain understanding of what critical reflexivity in these respects mean

Ad. 3) How and under what kind of conditions the teacher educators organize:

- so that they as professionals can stand forth as models for the students in their critical-reflective qualification and identity-formative process

This is related to how teacher educators interpret their role as autonomous professionals and practise their qualified judgement professionally as role models:

- in a technical sense: that is when their role only is unfolded in a self-referential and monological way as a professional individual autonomy (Lortie 1969, Berg & Wallin 1983). Here the students in their critical reflection will be followers of the teacher educators' ideas and solutions
- in a practical sense: that is when the professional role in addition is unfolded in a corporate dialogical way. Here the students are given opportunities to draw on their own experiences and to criticize the teacher role in a way that can lead to improvement of existing arrangements, however without challenging the role or arrangements as such
- in an ideological-/cultural critical sense: that is when the role in addition is unfolded in an ideological critical way. Here the students in their learning process are invited to discuss and criticise the premises of the teacher educators' autonomy and qualified judgements (a deliberative professional autonomy) (Habermas 1974, 1984, 1987, 1996, Rorty 1989, 1990a)
- in an opening deconstructive sense: that is when the role in addition is unfolded in a heterogenic way. The power to be able to raise questions and wonder is stimulated by the professionals' retention of the use of power. In this way the students unconditionally are meant to come through with their own genuine voices (an opening deconstructive autonomy) (Derrida 1976, 1981, 1984, 1989, Rorty 1989, 1990a)

Some concluding remarks

By comparing critical reflexivity within and across the mentioned didactical categories (1, 2 and 3) one can get a manifold picture of how professional teacher educators can use their autonomy and practice their qualified judgements, and thus create pedagogical conditions for an identity-formative professional qualification, and thus *Bildung*. This shows how it may be possible in a variety of ways to unite the individuals' needs and rights for self-development with the educational systems demands for submission to predesigned programs and specified subjects. A study of these topics may show that the teacher educators mainly are on the same level of reflection in different didactical matters. Or perhaps that a manifold critical reflection concerning the educational content goes together with a predominant technical, instrumental and controlling approach - when it comes to supporting the students in their personal critical-reflective qualification and identity formation. This may again makes way for different classifications of *Bildung*.

Here focus has been put on teacher educators as professionals and on their possible role as organizers and stimulators of the students' formative education and professional identity formation. Accordingly it could have been analysed and empirically studied how teachers relate to their pupils in primary and secondary school. Again this can be compared with what teacher education offers their students.

Drawing on the mentioned theoretical perspectives it will also be possible to value, evaluate and compare the balance between normative knowledge-based aspects and technical-instrumental control elements within different occupational groups, both historically and comparatively. In this way one might get an even broader picture of the conditions for *Bildung* among professionals in late modern societies.

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