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"In Situ Didactics" - creating moments of universal and existential quality and beauty

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“In Situ Didactics” - creating moments of universal and existential quality and beauty.

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Some perspectives and consequences on society and personality

Il existe certes un moment où l’une s’ouvre à l’autre – et c’est cette situation que nous appellerons enseignement, Lévinas, E. (2009)¹

Inspired by paradox experiences working with learning processes in different educational environments and cultural settings we are anxious to investigate and open up a new dialogue of didactics. We live in a context of paradigm change where politically governed educational systems are vigorously being implemented around the world. New systems are developed to support specific educational dogmas and it is our belief, that these dogmas are both culturally inherited and unconsciously preventing actual change in how we organize schools and work with learning processes. This new direction contains more recognition of the importance of relational values and knowledge as part of learning processes to be active educationally.

At the same time MOOC’s (massive open online courses) have flooded the educational landscapes allowing students and others to do courses in cyberspace. The Mooc’s among others have liberalized education and created a market for exchanging, exporting and buying credentials thus challenging learning and education in more traditional understandings and institutional frameworks. We see this development as crucial because education becomes a question of economy and marketing rather than a matter of learning, and thus the educational market is forcing organizers of education to enter a highly commercial and global scene to attract students, to make money and to be attractive. We seem to have begun shopping our way through education.

Students in higher education programs in Western Europe appears to carry a modern consumer awareness with them into “how the preconceive studying” and they have become “consumer students”². Deep learning, specialized learning, parrot learning, shallow learning, learning by demand, learning to learn, learning to socialize, learning by numbers, relational learning, peer to peer learning, LED-learning, learning by doing are all slogans in this new market etc. What does this mean in terms of discussing or discovering new understandings of didactics? Is there a kind of evolutionary didactic tool we can develop in order to meet the challenge of designing schools to prepare our children and youths for surviving, living, thriving and developing in tomorrowland? What perspectives have we identified important enough and at the same time necessary enough to create actual new working and learning experiences in education and in working with learning processes?

Addressing human education and development is taking on a lot, and at the same time it appears to us that we need to open a discussion now and on multiple levels: Cultural knowledge and societal priorities as well as community traditions are being challenged by “global awareness” and what we actually know from research about human development and learning. Everybody and/or anyone who ever attended school knows from own experience what that “felt” like. The experiences of this encounter or from just going to school become a reality.

² Zygmunt Bauman talks about this development/state of society in much of his research.
In spite of new understandings of how learning processes are functioning, this new knowledge often remains hidden without implementation.

PART I

Another way of seeing the educational field
This article will investigate this new situation and suggest new ways of being present and new ways of creating relations by questioning our understanding of didactics. Our presentation partly follows a traditional, academic pattern for articles. However we want to display as much transparency in our didactic process as possible.

You therefore will find this article as a part I and a part II, and part II contains documentation and notes from the realization of the concept of “In situ didactics”. However this second part also can work as a kind of inspirational and independent sample collection of “in situ didactics”. Finally we will discuss our findings and some outlines from our work.

This article will investigate the new situation mentioned above and suggest new ways of solutions. This could involve an approach to ‘the moment’ that Lévinas states as essential. Lévinas has great faith in education as contributing to a society with solidarity, freedom and democracy (Lévinas 2009). For him freedom is related to a Greek interpretation of freedom, meaning “not to receive anything”.

For us these arguments mean that education is something else than being teachers and students in a traditional understanding of the words. We are employed as lecturers or teachers, and yet we experience a need for bringing new reflections into the field and invest ourselves as human beings in the process.

Regarding the field and some of its history and traditions we see others bringing inspiration into another way of seeing the educational field. It is not merely a place where you can plan learning processes and outcome through different defined didactic tools in a predestined framework, but a space of human interest.

Retrospectively we see different tracks: a pedagogical track and a more philosophical track including the aesthetic dimension, and of course the tracks are interrelated. We will present some of these inspirations to show that our ideas are not totally new. We think both ideas and actions need to be adjusted and reintroduced to mirror present age and we think a revival and reactivation of our knowledge are needed to obtain impact on education.

A pedagogical track in our inspiration
In the following part we are going to show that our reflections are not new at all, but inspired by a chronological and geographic universal presence of coherent theories.
In a Danish context we already in the middle of the 19th century see Christen Kold (1816 – 1870) stressing that learning should be for life and that we have to include fantasy and feelings and not just address our cognition. The process of learning cannot be foreseen and controlled, and it is very important to build on the students' inner motivation. He and N.F.S. Grundtvig created an alternative school tradition including the Danish Folk High Schools, focusing on the spoken word, storytelling and inner motivation. Some of the first students were farm workers getting education during winter and here they realized their embedded potentials for lifelong learning and thus a starting point for emancipation.

Same demographic group were students when we follow Paolo Freire (1921 – 97). When peasants and illiterate groups in general learned to read they had more possibilities to influence even poor conditions. Education was combined with community work, and core values are solidarity, empowerment and hope.

Also theorists as Dewey (1859 – 1952), Bruner (1915 - ) and Klafki (1927 - ) are often mentioned when discussing pedagogics, didactics and core values as democracy, action competencies and the German term ‘Bildung’, sometimes translated as ‘culture’. For all of them it can be hard to draw a distinction between pedagogy and philosophy. Their focus is not on the material or the topic, but on the attitude of the participants. Learning something is not just driven by intentionality. Your open attitude to life and knowing is the main focus and knowledge will follow automatically.

Focusing on the attitude of the learner, i.e. the student, we find terms as “existential absence of distance”, reading Dewey, and of course his well-known term “learning by doing”, meaning that you are involving more than mere cognitive aspects of your life when learning. You are involving your whole “being” and existence. Dewey’s interest in learning has to do with democracy and citizenship on one hand, and on the other hand his focus on the interaction seems to prioritize the very moment, the situation (Dewey1933, 1938; Dwight and Eyler: 1994). Dewey's definition of reflective thinking is:

Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends ... (Italics original, 1933, p. 9) Inquiry, as the scientific method, involved problematization of experience, or creating an uncertainty of belief or knowing that "perplexes and challenges the mind" (1933, p. 13 ). Once experience was problematized, then the process of inquiry could occur. Not surprisingly, Dewey perceived the role of a teacher ... to provide the materials and the conditions by which organic curiosity will be directed into investigations that have an aim and that produce results in the way of increase of knowledge, and by which social inquisitiveness will be converted into ability to find out things known to others, an ability to ask questions...”

http://www.danishfolkhighschools.com/about

3 Dewey uses a term “existential absence of distance” and the Danish philosopher Mogens Pahuus has a similar term using “openness to the world”.

4
The theoretical and pedagogical thinker Jerome K. Bruner has a great impact on our way of thinking. As to many of the already mentioned sources of inspiration, to Bruner, important outcomes of learning include not just concepts, categories, and problem-solving procedures invented by the culture and in the school tradition beforehand, but also the ability to work out these things for oneself as part of a learning process. Bruner grew more and more critical to the cognitive dimensions of curriculum development in the Western world. **Timing** understood as waiting for the right motivation, and readiness to accept learning outcomes as partly an intuitive, partly an analytical process became essential to Bruner.

Our human development and growth involve interaction between basic human capabilities and different technologies and resources supporting our human capabilities. Technology is not to be understood literally. Our way of teaching, communicating and integrating environmental inspiration with individual response and reflection is important. Here we also see similarities’ with e.g. Vygotsky.

Following the German pedagogical thinker Klafki, Klafki also shows us something about the role as a teacher. You might say that his approach is a combination of critical thinking and phenomenology. Questions are more important than answers and the teacher must be ready to follow the learning process of the students and at the same time be ready to take the responsibility to be in charge of structuring the way of putting questions into play. The questions can be a way to open new categories according to Klafki. This leads to the core of our interest. **How can you as a teacher didactically support this dimension in a learning process?** We will exemplify this later.

However it is essential to see that learning and didactics in Klafki’s work is much more than a cognitive process. It is at the same time a question of politics, personal freedom and empowerment combined with solidarity and citizenship – not only for the learner, but as competencies to develop for everybody (Klafki: 2002).

Another interesting figure in this mapping of inspiration is the German professor of pedagogy Thomas Ziehe (1947 - ), combining pedagogics, sociology and psychology. He has undergone big changes during his work from the 70ties until now. As very young he stressed experience as motivation for learning and he wrote a kind of apologia for unusual ways of learning. Eventually he now focuses on the teacher. The role of a teacher must be seen in perspective of sociological changes. A teacher has a responsibility to protect and explain the settings, to be ready to motivate the students in different ways and the teacher himself must be ready to act as a kind of guide or pathfinder in new worlds of meaning: actual, social and personal. In many ways you can compare Klafki’s and Ziehe’s ways of thinking.

This part of our inspiration will now be reflected in a more philosophical inspiration before we are going to transform the inspiration into practical didactics inspired from our own experiences.

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5 Ziehe, (2004): Øer af intensitet i et hav af rutine, politisk revy
A philosophical track in our inspiration

Even if the philosophers Emmanuel Lévinas (1906 – 2005), Hannah Arendt (1906 – 75) and Bernhard Waldenfels (1934 - ) primarily are recognized for their ethics and phenomenological thinking we also see them as having great influence through their philosophical thinking in pedagogy, learning and teaching. Their philosophies, though representing very different fields, represent common features but also very specific and personal opinions concerning education and the teaching situation.

In general Lévinas focuses on the meeting or the encounter between people. His ethics has its origin here. Lévinas takes a great interest in teaching and he sees the educational situation as a special meeting. A teacher has the responsibility for the situation, seeing not only the specific person in front of him but in a symbolic way all learners. And yet the teacher has the responsibility to see that moment of opening in his student where the student is ready to learn. The Norwegian philosopher Jonas Holst (Holst 2011) discusses how radical you must see this situation when you compare Lévinas with the Socratic way of asking questions. Holst thinks that Socrates only reveals what was already there as almost present knowledge inside the student, while Lévinas represents an ethical interruption where something is revealed, that the student could not find himself. This kind of knowledge does not represent more of the same – it reveals otherness and strangeness. The educational situation builds on the interaction – face-to-face, and the term face is very important to Lévinas. The face and the meeting implicate very personal and ethical dimensions.

These personal and ethical dimensions address and contain creativity and courage. In order to be able to work with the opening and the otherness you must yourself be open and be able to see the new also in everyday and repetitive situations and routines (Muhr 2010). This also includes realizing and accepting the human body as an active sensory participant. Lévinas sees the bodily part of the encounter as extremely important. An ‘Intertwinement’ takes place. Later in using this term Waldenfels (1934 - ) has similarities with Lévinas. Other similarities between the two of them can be found. Our awareness and attentiveness imply that all our senses are involved. And we must learn how to develop attentiveness. Waldenfels says that especially the sense of hearing must be maintained and developed in a time where we are influenced mainly through the eyes6. We see it as essential to develop our awareness to decode and interpret even the smallest fragments of occurrences in any situation.

The importance of this attentiveness has to do with the fact that the answer we are giving as professionals, e.g. teachers, are already part of the appeal or the question from the person who meets us. We are not totally able to choose the answers ourselves. Waldenfels calls this responsiveness, and of course it has to do with responsibility. Lévinas stresses the responsibility, but stipulates that the “Other”, as the other person, is more important than the person answering.

Building on this inspiration we see possibilities in a new way of considering how we perceive repetition in a learning context. In a time where innovation and creativity often are related with new tools and new ideas, we think that the value of everyday situations and even tiny variations should

6 An ability to decipher signals in the interaction and self-awareness must be trained
not be underestimated or even dismissed. We see the idea of creativity and courage also in reading other philosophers as e.g. the Danish K.E.Løgstrup and the philosopher Martin Buber.

Hannah Arendt (1906 – 75) adds new and interesting aspects to the above mentioned reflections. She underlines the responsibility of the adult when she talks about pedagogy and upbringing. It takes courage to act as the authoritative adult in ‘taking a position’ and where you must show students how to cope with the world. She says that there is nothing new under the sun, but it is necessary with ‘natality’. Using this term she stresses that every new situation can be seen as new beginning, as part of a ontic “new birth”. This also implies that we are the same, but different and never perfect. For the adult or the teacher it means that we must be ready to work with difference and otherness. In accepting this she finds the essential competence to be ‘somebody’. This ability is one of the main ingredients in being a responsible adult, parent or teacher (Kahl: 2006)

Turning to Waldenfels again he stresses our ability to listen, and in general we see the importance of being attentive and present in a way that exceeds a traditional way of thinking of a teacher and of didactics.

However we see all these capacities as being under pressure in a modern society influenced by consumerism and accelerating speed in educational contexts. In developing new ways of supporting learning and creating didactic possibilities and environments we see different programs, real and virtual, and we see a tendency to prioritize ways of learning where you easily can measure and monitor the learning outcome. We are concerned that this development prevents us from implementing the knowledge that we already have about learning, stipulating the complexity and importance in the meeting as a unique situation in human life and human development.

**Aesthetics and mimesis**

Close to the phenomenological inspiration above we see the aesthetic way of thinking and exploring. You might also say it is close to a hermeneutic approach.

Using an approach to didactics and learning building on phenomenology, hermeneutic and aesthetic, thinking means that you have to be open-minded and be ready to stay in a process for some time. You do not know the result beforehand. It also means that the normal way of observing, register and treat an object or subject matter vanish. Part of the process is a change of your subjectivity position.

Often you see aesthetics combined with art and analyzing different artistic expressions. This is also aesthetics, but originally aesthetic thinking is more than that! Dorthe Jørgensen (2015) refers to the aesthetic way of thinking as free, open and questioning reflection, and we see this as an explorative attitude (Jørgensen 2015: 291f). She is critical to the use of the term of aesthetics when we relate to

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7 Prof. Dorthe Jørgensen discusses this in her collection of essays and in her general academic work. E.g. Jørgensen (2015). Nærvær og eftertanke. Mit pædagogiske laboratorium.

very different areas as e.g. the market, turning aesthetics into yet another element in our consumerism. What we need is a kind of expanding and expanded thinking, and we need to see the value of this thinking in itself instead of always valuing thinking and things for its usefulness (ibid). In her opinion aesthetic experiences relate to our senses, to reason and to discernment – and not to a merely cognitive process.

Recognizing the value of this way of thinking and giving room and time for this in an educational context is important, she thinks, and many of her thoughts mirror our reflections. Through this approach we gain access to other aspects of meaning, knowledge and life in general.

Mimesis we see as closely related to aesthetic thinking. In the following we will show a way of integrating the term of mimesis as part of didactic thinking. Mimesis can be seen as being in opposition to a more instrumental way of thinking. Mimesis has been connected to the term role model, to imitation, to elements of apprenticeship. This inspiration can be seen as part of phenomenological pedagogy, and both the activity from a person and the impact on this person must be seen in many dimensions and not merely as cognitive actions and results. This means that a teacher in this situation must create an environment where you are able to realize aesthetic thinking.

Mimesis represents a kind of resistance against instrumentalization of nature and it reflects a balancing in the meeting or encounter not giving up your own identity. Habermas describes in *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns* mimesis as an aesthetic dimension rooted in nature containing a critical dimension supplementing instrumental and cognitive rationalities⁹.

Mimesis carries a special perspective with empathy and intuition. It is not possible to verbalize all dimensions of mimesis. This is why you cannot always tell when you have learned something, because an experience can involve the human being in both an active way and in a more passive way where the experience is happening to you (Habermas: 1986:85f).

The term mimesis can be related to more of the phenomenological philosophers mentioned earlier. They all place our body, our senses and the communication related to the body and senses as an essential part of the interaction in the meeting and in the educational context. Mimesis can be seen essential in your expression, your way of expressing yourself, being attentive to the ‘other’ and thus balancing your reactions. This balance is not merely cognitive and not merely affective and based on instincts. As part of this balance you also will find ethics and a critical sense (Jakobs: 1997).

These considerations are actualized because we see a tendency to stress the cognitive and rational dimensions in many types of meetings and encounters. In educational contexts it can be hard to legitimize a focus on mimesis.

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Reflections and practice
Our article up until this point … *follows a traditional, academic pattern for articles, but because we argue for a shift of paradigms* when engaging in and working with development’ and as such a shift in how we must think and work. The linearity of things (here: didactics) is no longer; neither is following logic learning paths (methods) or pursuing ‘the importance of silence’ as a condition for learning.

Development and learning processes are messy!
We observe different movements and initiatives, developing alternatives to this state of schools during centuries trying to control what and how we should teach.

We believe we must focus on how we can create condensed situations of emotional and influential character when working with learning, in the acquiring of new primary experiences and when establishing pre-learning frameworks:

Fundamental values and elements in the developmental process from a traditional point of view are based on *meaning, logic & learning = making sense* (but of what and for whom?)

When we introduce sensing, emotionality, and aesthetic learning in the developmental process it could seem as if we create a paradox. Often you meet these terms as contraproductive in the learning process, trying to eliminate the value of these terms, saying they will make non-sense. Not sensing or a non-sensing position becomes the explaining of logic and suggests an original understanding of matter, and what matters as something which is disconnected from what can be sensed is not comprehensible.

Language coding and referencing apparently is embedded in original emotional stipulations and experiences – whereas schools as we almost all know them are embedded in a seemingly absolute devaluation and dismissal of emotionality. Our senses are being ‘parked’ outside the classrooms in order to make sense of school. Teachers teach and as such neglects to acknowledge the presence of emotionality and sensing. The institutions within the institutions are different rooms for different activities … where relational and emotional life is being lived outside the classroom.

The differentiated life of scholars is a strong narrative as we have often seen it displayed in cinematic portraits and read about in literature. This narrative reflects a reality of institutionalized proportions which apparently many (global) cultural structures ‘feels’ obliged to maintain.

How come schools all over the world dismiss to integrate knowledge of human development and human emotionality in working with development and didactics? Even when we know how strongly emotionality is present in all relational contexts and social constructed surroundings influencing what we experience & ultimately what we comprehend! Recent research suggests that school is more about learning how to maneuver socially. Acquiring life-skills and developing post-school skills/socio-emotional properties leave the learning of academic competencies (intellectual properties) isolated in either a classroom or as a memory of knowledge acquiring – leaving no room for transformation? (see ref. 10, next page)

Our practice and our experiences
If we try to “triangulate” these different sources of inspiration, a human capacity to grow, learn and develop with our own actual experiences, what seems then to be emerging?
The question rising now is a possible link to what we must change and a suggestion to focus on dismantling our understanding of how learning processes are framed, supported and actually understood.

Education as learning designs, consumer products and/or designer products will supposedly all want to support the acquisition of formal and approved knowledge. Nonetheless learning environments which support actual human development will ultimately all at some point pertain social dimensions i.e. “belonging to a group” (social status, social relations, network building, job positions, family and community tasks, crisis management, community building, human development etc. (Wenger 2010: 162\textsuperscript{10})).

**Change in how learning is perceived:** Change will and must always as we argue contain a dismissal of ancient, institutionalized and “old school” structures, where curriculums are predominantly present. This is not new, we know... and that is exactly our key paradox: We know and yet we are extremely reluctant in activating our new “knowledge” in how we work with education, developing society, in community building, in social change, in bringing up our children, working with disabled people etc. *We need to exchange ‘knowledge’ with courage to actually create alternatives to what we know* (see Chock-Box, p.18). Courage and responsibility must be seen as interdependent with specific personal competencies in working with these changes.

In the following we present some examples from our practice. We have been documenting the situations carefully with photos and with notes. In most cases we have written documentation from many participating perspectives with notes from the process and from evaluating the process and in one case photo documentation.

Our examples in this article serve the purpose of presenting empirical material, and after the presentation of the cases we briefly discuss the content, but more intensively we will now adress the implications of this “In situ didactics”.

\textsuperscript{10} Deltagelse og reifikation sikrer en fælles oplevelse af mening, en betingelse for læring praksis, som baner vejen for denne konstruktion (kilde: *At lære at være elite – præfektrollen som markør i elevernes identitetsdannelse på en elitekøbstskole*, Walker, Roddy (Dansk Pædagogisk Tidsskrift 3/2015) (our translation: *Participation & reification insures a common experience of meaning, a condition in praxis learning which lays the ground for this construction* (source: Walker, Roddy (3/2015) *Learning to be elite – prefect roles in elite boarding schools as markers of student identity and how identity is shaped*. Dansk Pædagogisk Tidsskrift, Frederiksberg, DK)
PART II: Our own experiences building on different kinds of inspiration

Neighbourhood

One of the elective modules in the present program for social educators in Denmark (from 2014\textsuperscript{11}) is called: \textit{Competence area 7: Cultural encounters and intercultural relations}.\textsuperscript{12} This area aims at organizing and supporting pedagogical processes with emphasis on cultural diversity.

\textbf{Competence goals:} The student can reflect upon and act in relation to cultural differences, cultural encounters and cultural conflicts as well as involve cultural diversity as a perspective of participation and a resource in pedagogical practice.

In autumn 2015 around 40 students started this module and the group of teachers had decided that we should work on the topic “Neighbourhood”. The motivation was a move to a new campus in a neighborhood with a great cultural diversity and we also hoped that we as social educators could become a familiar neighbor through the project. The outcome of the project should – beside the formal competencies – be an exhibition with photos. Neighbors should be invited to a vernissage so a contact could be made also into our buildings.

Literature and theories were presented as “the quote of the day” – often just a single sentence pointing on essential questions in this area. Of course the students could see where the quotes came from and they could read more.

Questions arose. Who is your neighbor? How do you meet your neighbor? How can we contact our neighbor? Will he meet us? How do we do this in an ethical way and many more questions. The process before establishing contact turned out to be pushing limits for many of the students. They started a process including their own identity and exploring own habits and values. When meeting the other or meeting the neighbor they mirrored their reflections. And their understanding of a neighbor changed during the weeks. From somebody with an address close to you or the educational context to a human being in general whom you just meet somewhere.

What could be the result aside the photos? A lot of contacts resulted in life stories from human beings who invited the students into some of their lives, but even more transforming was the process inside the students themselves. Even if there were closed doors and not all neighbors wanted to meet our students, they all got interesting experiences.

This was documented and could be seen in different ways. The enthusiasm related to the vernissage was amazing. Cakes were baked; invitations sent out; the place for the vernissage was thoughtfully considered not risking exposing new friends and neighbors wanting to stay anonymous. Presenting

\textsuperscript{11} BEK nr 211 af 06/03/2014, \url{https://www.retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=162068}
\textsuperscript{12} \url{www.life-skills.dk} look under “legal stuff”
the photos made the process alive once again and this time new dimensions were added when giving words to the experiences and by answering questions from the audience.

Some of the students used a specific method supporting their work and process: R.A.S.E.E.e.\textsuperscript{13}, Research, analyze, suggest, explore, execute, evaluate. Doing so the students work with the expanding or exploring way of thinking. You might say this exploration is two-dimensional. You are exploring your surroundings and at the same time you are exploring yourself – your own motivation, culture and identity, situated in a specific society.

Exploring also means exploring what you have in common with your neighbor. Finding out that you have a lot in common even if you at first glance are very different from each other was a result of the following analyzing processes. Finding these commons means that you get close to universal human values. Getting close to these values will enable you as a professional to see and perceive the human being in front of you without letting cultural and social bias dominate or disturb the interaction.

Integrating these new and different dimensions in a learning process is important according to several theories about learning. Knud Illeris writes about this and stresses the use of these dimensions if the learning really should be transformative\textsuperscript{14}.

For many students it becomes obvious that you cannot plan the result from a process like this. In the educational context we see it as important to assist and support by using the students’ experiences of all sorts, saying: \textbf{Yes and…} meaning that you cannot reject experiences as bad results merely because they do not meet your first expectations. Yes and… means an attitude of acceptance of what is present just now!

This explorative, and yet accepting and recognizing, approach will most often keep the process of dialogical research open, i.e. \textit{organic curiosity}. You must wait for the answers and you might be surprised by the answers. To cope with this takes more than knowledge about methods as hermeneutics and phenomenology. It takes the courage to wait for the answers, to invest some of you in the process, and the best way for teachers to engage in this way of studying is to be aware of mimesis, phronesis and “in situ didactics”.

\section*{A friendship workshop in Vietnam}
Collaboration between a university in Vietnam and our University College Nordjylland (UCN) was to begin. Everything is new. And it is going to happen for the first time.

The framing was 2 weeks of friendship workshop presenting different pedagogical and didactical cultures for 2 groups of students, from Vietnam and from Denmark. 15 Danish students started a 6 months’ internship, participating in this Workshop. A program was carefully worked out between

\textsuperscript{13} Developed by Mogens Lærse Stenderup 2014
\textsuperscript{14} Illeris, Knud (2013): Transformativ læring & Identitet, Samfundslitteratur
teachers from the 2 countries. Many different topics related to pedagogical work were to be presented, discussed and many different ways of activating the students together were to take place during the 2 weeks. Yet reality turned out to be totally different that “In Situ Didactics” was carried out.

Some obstacles related to the program can be mentioned:

- Lack of English competences among the Vietnamese students
- The Vietnamese students came for only 3 hours and then a new group came
- The Danish students were the same during 2 weeks
- The room was physically quite special like a small conference room

This situation reflected different expectations, different traditions and institutional cultures. Our plans and our program had to be adjusted, and as teachers we wanted to bring some meaning into this situation. What we did can be seen as an approach building on the Aristotelian term of phronesis. The situation called for new actions, and we wanted to recognize the differences in culture and in language competences in a way reflecting our recognition.

Referring to our opening quote from Lévinas we wanted to be the “locaters” of the opening. How could we find these openings in groups of students either changing very third hour or participating for 10 days? In this process we also wanted to focus on a transformative process hoping that all students would find the participation meaningful and would be able to use the experience afterwards. This hope was our motivation, albeit we could not know what the outcome would be.

Some actions in the work can be identified:

- During the 2 weeks we created documents during the sessions. We systematically used the pc and the projector writing notes when we worked in plenum. A way of ‘track and trace’.

- Identifying “commons” during different situations of interaction. These situations were sometimes planned and sometimes just occurring. But focusing on exploring these commons showed us how many aspects of our lives were common in spite of very different cultural and social conditions. When analyzing these commons we came close to our joined conditions of being human beings. Trying to identify these commons unified Vietnamese and Danish students in reflecting on the intentions and ethics in their profession.

- Create Presence , e.g. through recalling of creative processes, dialogues and contexts – also integrating small variations from everyday activities that seemed identic. Some of the everyday activities were performed as small roleplays. Through sensitivity and attentiveness even small variations became perceptible.

- Working with variation as means of understanding development and learning

- Working with attentiveness and responsiveness as part of presence – as a precondition for a creative and creating process. In this process we are becoming a developmental group.
• Transparency – e.g. writing down the dialogues taking place in the classroom – thus showing the value of taking notes – and actually demonstrating the process of creating “commons” – and thus stressing that your development and learning takes place in a relation – not individually and not just as part of the group – but in a joined process where your own notes bring in a personal dimension in the process.

What we learned from students’ evaluation was the value of sharing time and spends qualified time to discuss and share opinions. Also the awareness related to body language and culture seems to be very valuable. Experiencing confidence among teachers and students, and experiencing a serious and responsible approach to our common situation is also valued. In the evaluation we also see a deep understanding of taking notes. Other statements say: I know how to inspire great team work and this experience can support me in my professional work.

Another perspective especially expressed in evaluation from Danish students was the lack of continuity in the relations with the Vietnamese students. Language problems were one obstacle, but the fact that you met new Vietnamese students all the time made it difficult to build relations and network.

This brief description from the friendship Workshop shows us that it is possible – even within a special context and framing – to create a context for reflection and discussion that contributes to meaningful and useful experience. But it also shows the importance of the social and relational dimension in educational contexts.

According to this social dimension, we argue for a renaissance of a paradigm based on the relation and physical interaction. Form and content are interdependent. We are learning and finding meaning in a process; at the same time as we are very much aware of how the society today stresses the individualistic processes and development. Our planning for a new Friendship Workshop integrates the social perspective even more: among teachers, among students, among administrative staff.

From Monday 7.12.2015 – as part of program 08.12.2015

List of commons was created from physical and personal interaction in a transportation situation, where everybody was in the same situation despite of many different nationalities and other circumstances:

Step 1
Without a common language it is hard to discover commons
When language problems are overwhelming – how can we then develop a dialogue and a basis for development?
Why do we see these commons – examples: music, family and friends, travelling, shopping, and what do they reflect on a deeper level?
Fish
Family
Honesty
IPhone
Selfies
Travelling – new culture
try new things
having a dialogue
Selfies / Music
Swimming,
Going shopping
Make up
Being around family and friends
Listen to music
Dance

We like to eat
Concerts and festivals
Travelling
Taking photos
Shopping
Being around family and friends
Games
Concerts and festivals
Soap opera
English
Methods for work
Food
Exchange of methods between cultures
Beer
Step 2

A new position – shifting positions – when we are producing alternatives to what we already know

How can we use the reflections from step 1 in a process creating more of the commons, e.g. a festival (motivation – values - creating – ongoing curiosity on commons)

And how do we create this in a pedagogical context – engaging in a transformative process (not duplicating).

Meaning that you create from your everyday values, impressions and experiences – instead of……

Example: a template from Ho Chi Minh City – we try to give it more dimensions:

One dimension: activities based on a kind of programming, script

Another: activities based on arguments based on analytic observations

And a third: activities going beyond the template

Essential questions and levels in working with transformative processes and motivation:

What we have in common

Working with what we want “to have” in common

Working with what I know

Working with what I do not know

Working with what I want to know

Chock-Box, UCN 2016

The ‘courage and responsibility must be seen as interdependent with specific personal competencies in working with … changes’ (see p.10) – releases the question on how it will be possible to transform, redirect or reconstruct any given fixed curriculum context into a non-fixed curriculum situation where pursuing learning goals by paths of genuine influence become administered as ‘a classroom managed reality’ and where choices are produced by the group as actually validated and with negotiated consequences in construction of the different lines of learning processes?
Situation 1:

Framing the situation: Official description of the elective study module (University of Northern Denmark, Bachelor’s degree program in social Education/1st year/3rd study module /5 weeks)):

**Art, aesthetics and performance:**

The module focuses on exploring how art, craftsmanship, methodology and expressive dimensions can be developed and integrated in the student’s educational approach understood as new primary experiences. The learning process is a creative, performative and hands on founded module and the work is engaging areas of artistic, pedagogical and aesthetic nature. The aesthetic didactics of the study module will support the student in planning future social work and developmental activities in professional arenas.

The module contents are:

- Exploration of how art and pedagogy can be inspired by each other.
- Acquiring handicraft skills and methodological competencies allowing the pedagogue to establish a practice based on emphatic analysis (the other person’s perspective).
- Engage in- and establish discussions and projects from aesthetic theories and a performative understanding of human development and identity.
- Drawing different perspectives of knowledge into presenting real life activities and integrating aesthetic practice, performative methodology and understandings plus acquired craftsman’s like skills into addressing and solving professional tasks.

Teaching and working forms/designs:

- Workshops, sharing work process findings through different documentation and communications formats (the objectification of content: selecting and deciding what is relevant, how this is relevant, to whom it could be interesting/relevant and finally creating actual objects, events, situations and activities with this ‘material’ (exhibitions, performances, events, lectures, conferences, books, choirs etc.).

Key elements in the module:

- Participation, new primary experiences, aesthetics, performativity, art, curiosity, live action playfulness, developing of methodology (toolmaking), networking, life-skills, craftsmanship etc.

- Students are engaged in a workshop where they want to focus on developing interactive elements for an official event at the University College. As the group is students as such and

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15 [http://ucn.dk/uddannelser](http://ucn.dk/uddannelser), and [www.life-skills.dk](http://www.life-skills.dk) look under “legal stuff”
because the students are addressing their own learning and development in terms of – or towards - gaining new primary experiences with a focus on developing creative tools\textsuperscript{16} – we came across the idea “to explore ‘development’ as a ‘construction containing a preconceived idea of how it is to be confronted with the new and unknown’ – translation:

How development feels – the experience of experiencing something as chocking\textsuperscript{17}. We named the creative process: Chock-Box:

- Chock as surprise and as oppositions meeting and wrestling. Chock as surprise, as humor and chock as the fun in what we do which is allowed to be about having fun: Playing and to play and play which is all around ‘all’ which has its origin in impulse\textsuperscript{17}. Creative activities become play in processing, molding and developing ideas and helps in engaging in creative activities and in creative problem solving.

Current human and existential problems and themes become crossing roads of art and pedagogy – art and pedagogy meet in addressing current existential human themes and problems. We are focused on addressing how we can engage in developing prototypes for our target groups and we begin this process by asking ‘the good questions’. Questions born in a critical emancipated thinking and leaving the consumer paradigm for a moment, trying to create alternatives to individualism, medicine consumption, diagnostics and consumerism (both materialistic consumerism and ‘human trash’ like consumer perspectives\textsuperscript{18})

“As if” is like ‘performing a head taller\textsuperscript{19}’ which is Vygotsky’s vision that human development is relational, ‘zonal’ and a performance. If the self exists this self is constituted by relations to other people and people create meaning (truth) contextually. Framing, creating and developing the context or a context around identified human needs become either community or culture or legislation (law) or society but this is all created by humans and therefore can be changed by humans: The materialist doctrine that men are products of circumstances and upbringing, and that, therefore, changed men are products of other circumstances and changed upbringing, forgets that circumstances are changed precisely by men and that the educator himself must be educated\textsuperscript{20}).

- The greatest chock might be connected to recognizing that we can actually develop as individuals by saying: \textbf{yes and…} and by recognizing and experiencing how the group can again actually created something bigger and other than what the individual would be able to conceive alone/thought was possible/was able to imagine etc.? So, what we have is a choking line-up of surprises or a line-up of chock surprise!? As if coming up with new ideas and concept developing would prove to be other than hard, or a piece of cake, a piece of ass or peace on earth?

\textsuperscript{16} Glassman, Michael: \textit{Dewey and Vygotsky: Society, Experience, and Inquiry in Educational Practice}, \textit{Educational Researcher} May 2001 vol. 30 no. 4 3-14
\textsuperscript{17} Ross, Malcolm - the aesthetic impulse, University of Exeter U.K., 1984, Pergamon Press
\textsuperscript{18} Baumann: (2003): Wasted Lives
\textsuperscript{19} Holzman, Lois - Vygotsky at Work and Play, Routledge, 2009
The module evaluation session:

**Evaluation * Module 3 * PS15-V7 * January 22nd 2016:**

Preface: A summary of the evaluation format/design.

Timeframe: 11.00-14.30 pm Friday, January the 22nd

Prepare a presentation of no more than 6 minutes. Present a theoretical, didactic and aesthetic understanding of our common (group) process. This could be:

- Methodology (how to begin something/starters)
- Didactical models and methodologies (Kolb, SMTTE, Hiim&Hippe, model 22 Astring&Sørensen, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (flowmodel), 3 learning positions\(^{21}\), Malcolm Ross model 19, Hansjorg Hohr sensuel, symbolic interaction and form etc.
- Learning theory (Stig Brostrøm, Lévinas)
- Aesthetic theory
- Systematic (observation, presence and practice)
- Relational approval in a creative optic
- Performance (Illeris, Helene)
- Marina Abramović (performance art artist, Serbia) as a pedagogical thinker
- Knud Illeris
- Mold/recipe for developing ideas, context analysis, creative processes
- Techniques and the acquisition of techniques
- A theorist you know from the first 2 study modules
- Vygotsky & NUZO – magnifying glass approach to what actually happens in the zone of proximal development
- To plan, execute, explore and evaluate activities
- Opinion making
- Challenging (emotional/meaning schemes)

You get extra points and ovations if you present an angel, a theory and/or a method which is not included in the above listing/line-up. You also get extra points and ovations if you can - keep it simple and if you can contextualize the module content into a known ‘sphere’.

It is going to be awesome!

___________________________________________________________________________

**Under/The almost impossible and unseeingly imaginary reality of In Situ didactics par example:**

POST-face: (provides a set of notes which reveals the following)
Art, aesthetic & performance – UCN/pæd          Evaluation = development (?)

Development challenge

Surprise

Psychology

preconditionings assumptions

create the/an alternative

Culture

To follow ...: "commitments/obligations"
Notes (part I/MLS)
- The significance and importance of the intermission (the break): To recognize and to understand ‘the unconscious working processes and that the unconscious mind is working even when we are not conscious about it.
- If you can say it you can ask for it, if you can ask for it you can get it
- People want to be asked, people like to enter into conversations
- Totem = manifestations of rituals (liturgy) artifacts’ symbolic
- Creativity calls for practice (especially when the group is new (why?))
- Consensus calls for…?
- Going beyond your own self-awareness requires?
- The activities emotional- and physical (tactile) limitations
- Creative experiences, experiences with being creative
- The mechanics of innovation (programming: 1 task: 1 deadline) framing and catalyzing creativity
- Leadership and management demands – management stimulates? Group creativity?
- Community building (creating culture) calls for? Assignments?
  - Yes and… supports the capacity to listen and relational empathy. Yes and… supports human development, the ‘follow-ship’ (recognizing and actually develops ‘the person, the individual, and the one who is saying yes and…!’)
- We are developing our capacity to grow emotionally (becomes the practicing reality of the performance methodology (development through performing) – and this equals being authentic which is knowing emotionality and being able to present emotions strictly performative; like performing an emotion and doing this in a way which makes the emotion credible, real, something we as an audience can relate to and believe and ‘be taken by…’!
- Meeting other people’s ideas, presenting an idea to the group. Yes and… and experiencing how we can perform to (or just) to be appreciative/approving when listening to others presenting ideas and arguments for ideas. How can we follow ideas and create a ‘yes and …’ approach in our collaboration with others (planning how to work with an idea, framing (contracting) the work processes)? Avoiding to talk an idea down, not to be over-enthusiastic about an idea and thus sort of ‘locking it down’ (ownership vs. supporting the/a creative process) – if we follow an idea like ‘just accepting it’ without ‘further due’ (engage in the creative process by talking ‘from the presented idea’, around the idea, trying to be the idea …!) – and get into a mode of sensing, feeling and experiencing the sensation of appreciating another person’s work supporting the group and at the same time learn to be able to grow yourself performing like this.
- Honneth: Production, aesthetics, multiple opinions

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- The individual – the group: The paradigm shift is radical in it recognizing core and is/can be a developmental experience (both as an opportunity to experience this although with some destabilizing perspectives (social life after this)). The ‘pursue of yes and … practice’ offers the group possibilities to explore the groups creative capacities (de facto) and at the same time shows how we from an evaluating point of reference can identify ‘that we have become a creative group’: We see this in how we are now able to constantly get new ideas and in how we go along with others ideas and support the realization of ideas together and with great enthusiasm! It is like a creative explosion, a massive acceleration of ‘a power to act and to do’ just before, under and after deadline.

- It is important to develop transparency in regards to our decision processes (document and monitor how narratives emerge, how the group construct and re-construct the developmental processes: influences, decisions, choices, prototyping, reflections, experiments, solutions, methods, systematics etc.)

- @ecognitions:

  - The dialectics in the group: to be asked, to be invited = possible development (scaffolding)
  - Response is inspiring
  - Ideas and developing ideas: Associatively, institutionalized ideas (normative), other people’s ideas, and perspectival approach (like following a line of ‘logic’). Changing our aesthetic assumptions (pre-conceptions)/images (emotional + meaning schemes)
  - Improvisation in group processes = listen + meet the other person
  - Invest your honesty and power (H+E) in a project = HE
  - Invest something significant, honest and emotional (S+H+E) in a conversation = SHE
  - Emotionality and honest and projects
  - Investing emotionality and honesty in a group = being developmental about it!

Notes (part II/msn (Mads Sigurd Nielsen))
Fragments from tutorial activities:
- ‘it is much cooler to develop an answer than it is to be told an answer’
- ‘I experience an extreme and challenging feeling of independency’
- A good relation makes it easier (ergo it must be a part of the group process to build relations)
- I want to use this (what I have learnt) in real life (social entrepreneurship)
- How do I present or produce or make a task (an assignment) to myself? The white canvas is scaring (provoking anxiety).
- The building of a wall moved me because I didn’t know how to!
- Normally we only meet one way and one answer (in school) but here there are multiple ways and more than one answer or no answers

- I feel a responsibility
- We are good at finding excuses and reasons for avoiding to actually act (we are trained in becoming resource weak)
- How come bad comments are more remembered than the good ones?
- Just dive into it – but, there is nothing!?
- I hope I can come up with an idea from what someone says or does.
- To get an idea can be hard, but being in a group makes it easier.

Premises:
- How can one prepare for a tomorrow - we do not know what will bring?
- Can you teach someone without knowing more/knowing better than the other?
- Confusion can be an indicative of, a premise or a precondition of ‘learning something new’ – but if you are constantly confused there is a tendency to give up (NUZO)
- Learning is a smaller crisis
- You can’t demand the other to change but you can change the way you interrelate with the other
- The people we meet in our professional work must also be able to act (with reason/sensible) when we are no longer around
- Development is to support, develop, challenge the meaning schemes of others
- Art is to address current existential problems and themes
- Pedagogy is to scaffold (support) development (by addressing the individuals current existential problems and thematic issues)
- Both artists ‘offer’ the individual/the spectator ‘new perspectives’ (glasses).
- You must be able to meet and accept and appreciate what is there/here and you must be able to separate this from what you want to be presented (authority and power)

Evaluation:
- How much must you have learned in X time for the process to ‘have had a sustainable pay off/value’?
- Creativity demands practicing. Ideas demands practicing. We want exercises – to get us started, to establish relations, to get ideas!
- What research must we do as a group to become ‘actors’ (= not thinkers or talkers but doers)? Creative creators? What kind of research will support the becoming a group instead of just a collection of individuals? Of values are relations and to make relations (but how?), how to get to know each other, how to able to talk about who you are and your emotions, and how experiences can be of the same emotional nature and doing the same at the same time together (the screaming choir, meeting ‘the creative and emotional wall’ and building an actual wall from this inspiration of encounters with our own creative and emotional fears! To provide ourselves space and being open. To exile ‘the self” and focusing on the other (Lévinas). To recognize the other both yes and …
but also the no’s. It takes a strong presence to make a large group like this work – how does a strong presence emerge?
- When synergy is experienced /obtained in the group this accumulates competencies and they (the competencies) reach places they would not even touch on their own. When you ask for help, you are not only helping yourself but you are helping the group
- Do – experience - reflect – do – experience – reflect (Kolb\textsuperscript{23})
- To do something/to try something/to test something/to explore something versus imagining something inside the head
- Do it (like you mean it) / show it. The difference between and the meeting of fantasy and sensing, reason and emotion, body and mind (brain)
- Tools of development: specific assignments/exercises/tasks: which we propose to ourselves (when we have learned how/how do we learn this?) or which are being proposed or presented (by ‘the other’, the teacher/educator/professor) or as what an impulse will start/suggest? Or a material of some kind, or the architecture, the room we are in (let us move the tables, let us establish a workshop, let us go out in the snow)
- The difference between being told to do something (creative) and to create something
- Actual actions creates change
- We cannot change without actions
- We must learn to act
- To learn to change we must learn how to change
- ‘We need an assignment!’ ‘You are not getting one!’ (Now what? – a direct parallel to practice)
- Present/create worthy problems/question to your target groups and to yourself (problem oriented project work)
- When we suggest (present/ask) interesting questions and/or discover a dignified/worthy problem (target group), how can we then variate the material/options/components in ‘the contracting’ in order to make conversations motivational and inspiring?
- Common ground for students is the experience of how it is much more ‘cool’ to get to an answer through a process rather than being told an answer. A case of leaving a classical learning concept. The activation of integrity / independency and entering a different paradigm other than ‘receptor’.
- What was the question? What is the question?
- What happens when answers are not the most important (present)?
- Does all end with an answer and is the answer equivalent with perfection/completeness?
- ‘It is sometimes hard for me to participate but being invited helped (to participate)
- Choosing rather than forcing, having choices, open processes, different ways to contribute
- How can I participate (design, inclusion)? To talk/be a voice in the screaming choir. Maybe I can if I wore a mask? Maybe I can if all you guys can/dare? The group as a tool for developing the individual and the individual as a tool for developing the group.

\textsuperscript{23} Concrete experience-reflective observation-abstract conceptualization-active experimentation
- The group as a tool is not just about meeting (embracing) the other but also about meeting another version/variation of yourself. To surpass your own idea of what you think you are capable of and to perform a head taller! The group become a playground (we create the space/a space)
- The group as a machine/an appliance: what are the rules are there any rules? Who is in charge? Who takes over power (in the group) when the teacher/educator loses it/drops it/delivers it/passes it on? The good argument? Loudest voice? A vote?
- The group is listening. The group is answering.
- When ‘people’ have ideas ... how do they become real (the ideas)? How does one facilitate a creative process? It is suggested that often when something is beginning to happen it becomes auto-supporting (a process which has its own momentum) as a kind of snowball-effect. Silent knowledge would be that sensing becomes activated. Their bodies are smart. They develop techniques and tools/methods without necessarily being aware of this. They play. They are. They do something – waits – experience – does something else. They balance the aesthetic experience in one moment. They experience that it is almost self-evident (FLOW)
- But what can then begin something?
- A starting point
- A given assignment
- A deadline
- Another
- Aesthetic double up (being inspired by an ongoing activity/action)
- Aesthetic experience (being inspired by another tactile/sensed experience)
- Boredom
- Talk
- A decision
- A Space
- Experiment
- Hearsay
- Emotions
- Intuition
- Reaction
- An idea
- Nicolai said: 'It began being squares and ended up being chickens’
- It is everything in-between which is hard to understand/put words to. But looking at the objects everything suddenly makes sense (is understandable). If you were at the party (translocation) there is no doubt.
- Confronting a consumer culture: Use’n’dump – now in a use’n’dump humans version? (fast assessment)
- Shuffle/Zap culture – is that me? How is assessment of this possible? (emotional filtering, assumptions/pre-perceived), assessing from who you are (confirmation of what you know/or suppose)
Here – we are working with addressing emotional filters and habitual orientations (through primary experiences, variation, confrontation, disturbances) and the shorting’s we produce are important to register (systematically) – going further performative-ly the individual tendencies might change/alter. We need disturbances and being reluctant is a healthy response to this (temperament is character-building).

- How do we create impressions? (Which parametric tools do we have available?)? Velocity, cause, effect, emotion, reason?
- Are we so afraid of wasting time that the ‘now’ disappears?
- The art is to hold on to ourselves in time and place and be present with that and those who are present
- Amplifying something emotional, mental and sensual in you in an authentic way – a great artist/performer tears off the surface and breaks down the distances between what is being presented (as subject matter), how this can be presented (technique) and what they are (the performers is a tool and just a person). Sometimes things you do are only good the first time you do them even if they are not perfected. Life is best lived live.

Principe/methods which can be applied in idea development/creative processes:
- Transformation
- Do something which is not planned
- React on an impulse
- Turn the brain off
- Make it uglier
- Do the opposite
- Ask – ask again
- Say what is on you mind
- Just do it
- Lie
- Say yes and … and not yes but…
- Dismantle something
- Deconstruct
- Change volume
- Amplify it
- Macro it
- Press it hard together
- Expand something
- Make it wet
- Apply air
- Examine the proposed something
- Read a book
- Read a human
- Burn a book
- Do a sketch
- Set a deadline/time limit on your actions/activities
- Change a well-known form
- Mass-produce
- Do parallel to
- Listen
- Structure
- Connect something which does not fit together
- Put things into other things
- Write something down
- Write more things down
- Just say yes
- Simplify
- Complicate
- Create a problem
- Look at something
- Taste it
- Variate
- Do what you just did
- Do what you just did in a new way
- Do what you just did but change the size of the different components
- Do what you just did but switch the elements around
- Learn by doing
- Hands on/hands off
- Learning by watching
Workshop presented at PTW2014/New York.

a) The workshop description (ideas & intentions)

b) The workshop (what happened, visuals and reconstructions, stories)

c) The workshop perspective (in the aftermath of interacting with ideas, intentions and participants)

Ad a) Program Text for PTW14

- Learning & performing: Live skills & leadership in adult education - the Danish way.
- Thinking, playing and participating: Democracy, education and human development:
- Think, play, participate - Performing 2Educate

What is a social educator? The presentation and workshop had a dual perspective – simultaneously including education and professionalism in a blend of inviting emotional personality and function for professional education into play.

24 http://www.performingtheworld.org/
Core values include:
- humanity
- cultural development
- democracy
- participation
- empowerment
- emancipatory thinking
- playing and participating
- attention involving all our senses
- developing educational situations and possibilities

Structure:

The practice of building bridges between practice and theory as a live performance. Part of this process involves maintaining an open attitude, supporting spontaneity, while simultaneously being aware of intentions and official tasks in relation to legislation, learning, socialising, performing, training, and development.

The R.A.S.E.E.e model is introduced to present an idea of how to build the structure (see p.12)

Content:

A cross-disciplinary, integrative and applicative fusion of drama, music, art, nature, physical movement and theoretical subjects.

Intentions: To create a drive-in-learning-like-activity-situation as an interactive knowledge-developing forum. Workshop participants would meet the design as the first impulse (framing by suggesting a display and a displayed media set up; this with 2 intentions: Presenting a concrete presence of the different aspects in working 2-dimensional alongside with ‘live’ 3-dimensionality (body, artifacts, clay, real materials, participant activities etc.)).

The second impulse was introducing study in Denmark didactics and the bachelor’s degree program in social education (PowerPoint Presentation)

The third impulse was the introduction of ‘the dead sparrow’ to the participants- the presence of a dead sparrow (a finding just outside the Conference Center /42nd Street) and the same dead sparrow displayed on the wall (video transmission).

Ad B) The interactive workshop commenced by asking the participants for immediate (uncensored and just from the top of our heads) reactions as an example of how ‘we can begin’ developing the group into a learning group and establish a ‘common starting point’ as well as the basis for selecting ‘what we are doing next’. Suggestions were presented in plenum – and the span of responsivity did indeed vary: From reflections on death (emotional and feeling sorry about) to aerodynamic ideas into suggestion about ritual ways of coping with dying/death.
The immediate reactions to the impulse were then (re)presented as proposed lines of possibilities or suggestions: What participants suggest from the lay-out impulse become ‘our starting point(s).

Workshop-lay-out: Large long lanes of heavy paper were initially placed on the workshop floor and we bought paint (1 color white) and cut out felt pieces. 1 person would be the paint stand (fixed position not moving just holding the Feld dipped in white paint) – the group would then be responsible for developing a process of working out together a way of deciding how, where, the motion extend and what depicting that should be applied to the large heavy paper. All were creative obstructions to follow principles of K.I.S.S. (keep it simple) and combining “impossible’s” (creative tools)²⁵.

This became reconstructions of the sparrow’s last flight, a rhythmic line of flying through the air and a 3-dimensional plus a 10:1 reconstruction of a bird (sparrow interpretation).

Ad C) The workshop perspective (in the aftermath of interacting with ideas, intentions and participants)

Experiences from working in more open oriented learning and workshop designs such as the one described above has become the basis for the In situ didactics presentation. Improvisation is an important aspect of this methodology (but) maybe we need to twist our working with this dynamic 'improv phenomenon' in education? The performance of an educator and/or teacher is a lifelong performing improvisation to become systematically open and interested in what emerges when we 'frame learning and new experiencing through creating qualified impulses'.

If we succeed in doing so we believe we have created a unique situation of a shifted nature; instead of didactics being both singular and linear it now becomes a plastic and integrative concept. You might say multiple parallel lines are crossing where didactic lines are shifted and the educator/teacher can enter into an observer’s privilege.

The impulse is imperative as to developing ways to go further.
PART III

Perspectives

The change is about a shift in didactics. If we always construct learning ahead and if we relentlessly insist on wanting to control the what, the how, the who, the where this leaves little room for the Other (what others from the group might add and carry with them (slumbering, neglected, dismissed ‘forces’): Mikhail Bakhtin (1895 - 1975) was in his Rabelais-book concerned with introducing an aesthetic form of expressiveness (The culture of laughter/Carnival) with a materialistic-physical (tactile, sensual, body oriented) center; understood as a living process containing birth and death, change, renewal and decaying, as humans concrete exchange with others and the world: it eats, and drinks, shits and pisses, it loves and fights, parties and works etc.

Quote:

“…Bakhtin understands that when one is in art, one is not in life and yet he attempts to elaborate the terms through which both are answerable or responsible for one another. Neither the world nor art is taken as an intransitive given; they are both for Bakhtin created in the ongoing event of Being. Yet the whole in Bakhtin’s argument is not a stable entity but must be in the event of Being for the subject whose existence depends on it. Several elements are at stake, then, in the relationships of author to creativity (and author to hero, but this need not detain us here), to the world, and to existence... Ultimately, it is not the other as object that is important to Bakhtin’s definition, but the other as another consciousness, as another being who is productive in the eventness of events (the capacity for co-being in events). The world, as such, is participative to the extent that the aesthetic activity required in apprehending it is an acknowledgement of I and Other. And yet, the world as is remains non-participative to the extent that either aesthetics is read as individualistic or that the world of culture itself is split off from the world of life as it is lived in all of its once-occurrent eventness.”

Following Bakhtin and our other sources of pedagogical and philosophical inspiration we see the bottom line as an in-situated (in situ) attitude of participants – a sort of balancing and alignment in the relations. An open attitude, inquiring and exploring the existence and existential values in the relation – and to do this you could use the term “hero” as Bakhtin does, or you could use the word courage as e.g. Lévinas and Hannah Arendt do. Often it is said that the relation is crucial for these types of situations, and what we want to add to this is an awareness of the very situation in itself. You do not just need courage but also sensitiveness and a sensibility to the very situation.

27 Ibid.
Through our examples we have tried to present images of the emerging and possible in-situ-reality. When operating with developing new ’situation specific’ didactics our live experiences as educational collaborators are becoming a catalogue experiencing, creating and developing new educational environments. Experiencing actually being able to develop and create even in constantly changing and dynamic processes is very motivating and invigorating. The developing of alternatives to what any of us (educators, students, pedagogical practitioners etc.) imagined learning could ‘look like’ has that same invigoration effect. Learning and developing becomes relational, and researching become exploring and enjoying the feel of asking questions as a true and embraced curiosity manifests motivational ownership of the learning process.

Prototyping from this position of experimenting with leaving what we know is associated with being nervous and very emotional … but also the very process of creating new examples is a true radical activity, which is almost life-destabilizing (of existential nature). Leaving what you know and changing your perception of the world is a-toolmaking-maneuver and calls for creative thinking. Not just courage but courage, creativity, timing, intuition, attention, patience, self-awareness, consciousness, holding back and at the same time creating new structures asking new, good questions.

Consequences of our experiences and inspiration

Through our examples we have presented our experiences. Actually we do not say anything profoundly new. We read articles and books on this, and many of the authors are inspired by the same sources as we are. But to think the situational didactics in a radical way as we do, we seldom see. You see terms as and examples of e.g. learner led education and still they seem very well “orchestrated” with quite well-known roles and tasks. We show some elements of our work based on a kind of trust, implicating that a relation and a motivation are present.

What we see as necessary in “In situ didactics” is courage. Courage seen from the person, whom we use to call the teacher. This position changes profoundly! You can understand this courage in many ways:

- Courage as part of timing,
- ability to shift between being close and distant,
- stepping back and yet structure and ask questions and WAIT for answers
- actually USING the answers in the process
- courage because you actually are about to undermine traditional curriculum based education but also courage for the participant – the learner or student
- courage because learning this way is more than the traditional task – often dominated by scholastic and cognitive elements. This way of being a part of a learning process is another kind of task: it is existential and this process can seem overwhelming and provoke anxiety.
This kind of work is characterized by “natality” as Hannah Arendt calls it. We must see every situation as new, and as “teachers” we carry a big responsibility in our way of being, she says (Kahl: 2006).

We think that this way of working didactically could improve our educational situation. We see improvement and a higher level of knowing and reflecting as a possible outcome. And at the same time we see possibilities and perhaps a new enlightenment (Jørgensen: 2015; 2009).

**Discussion**

Doing so, we argue for a renaissance of a paradigm based on the situation and the relation understood as an almost existential encounter or meeting. That we are learning and finding meaning in a process - at the same time as we are very much aware of how the society today stresses the individualistic processes and development.

We see from e.g. from China, Japan, and South Korea how problems follow an extreme individualistic approach to learning. In Denmark we could say that we have a long tradition and stable society to integrate both dimensions, i.e. the individualistic and the community based approach but perhaps we have been blind to the consequences of school and didactics influencing and changing fundamental patterns and values. This might also reveal a situation where teachers are restricted in their choice of methods – from outside or from inside.

Partly the whole question about didactics can be seen as a matter of control and concern. The control also can be seen as intrinsic and coming from outside. The intrinsic wish for control can be changed, we think. And it is necessary to do so. If we are too reluctant and hesitant still planning teaching in a way with no focus on these existential matters, we might lose the opportunity to teach and develop sociality and democracy. We also see a lot of psycho- or socio-pathologies obviously related to the individualistic tendencies (e.g. Baumann, Habermas, Honneth). Our horror scenario we share with the Danish Dorthe Jørgensen characterized as a techno-therapeutic society (Jørgensen: 2015).

This text is based on joined experiences in our positions as lecturers. During time and after giving words to this we hardly can use the term teacher without an inner distance to the traditional meaning of the word. This is what happens when you work with “In situ didactics”, so you have to be very much aware of your own integrity and own values. A big question is next to this: how do we educate students to become teachers and lecturers? Teacher training Colleges and Universities must be ready to flip taxonomies along with changes in the educational system in general.

Saying so we are very much aware that a question of knowledge is part of our discussion of didactics. We think that we must work with many dimensions of knowledge and knowing. Some of our knowledge has to do with life skills, some with academic skills – and always powered by a personal and existential presence.

In a rapidly changing world we see a need for integrating different dimensions. A profound question is what kind of basic education can “preject” the future? World Economic Forum, Davos, made this
list partly as a consequence of both realizing the now and the future where highly specialized knowledge never will be enough coping with rapid changes in work life and in life in general. Because of this situation we see a need for “In Situ Didactics”!

Top 10 skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>in 2020</th>
<th>in 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Complex Problem Solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Critical Thinking</td>
<td>2. Coordinating with Others</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Creativity</td>
<td>3. People Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. People Management</td>
<td>4. Critical Thinking</td>
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<td>5. Coordinating with Others</td>
<td>5. Negotiation</td>
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<td>6. Emotional Intelligence</td>
<td>6. Quality Control</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Judgment and Decision Making</td>
<td>7. Service Orientation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Source: Future of Jobs Report, World Economic Forum
Literature:


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