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Annfrid Rosøy Steele & Tove Leming

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' intercultural understanding has a growing importance in teacher education. In a society with more diverse classrooms, there is an increasing need for teachers with a broad intercultural understanding. Student teachers who have had school practice in different cultural settings have a broader understanding of their multicultural pupils and are better equipped for related challenges and opportunities. This is paramount in classrooms including pupils of migrant and refugee backgrounds. In the field, there has been a growing understanding for this matter and there have been multiple studies of multicultural student teacher practice. However, further research is needed to understand the competence student teachers get from diverse school practice. Therefore, our focus is to explore to what extent student teachers can gain intercultural competence and professional development from practice in different cultural contexts.

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teacher professional
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Introduction

Our contextual framework departs from a teacher program at the Arctic University of Norway, in Tromsø, Norway. We are teacher educators, running a practice abroad project where student teachers can sign in for a four-week teaching practice in Zambia or South Africa during their five-year master program. Experience from more than 20 years of working with international school practice in Southern Africa has given a broad overview of the field. Our study is based on this work. This study attempts to analyze the student teachers' experiences and professional development through the theoretical lens of Homi K. Bhabha's theory about third space and Jack Mezirow's concept of disorienting dilemma.

Globalization is undoubtedly affecting every aspect of our lives. The reach and reality of globalization means that what happens in one part of the world now affects what happens in another. Teachers and teacher educators operate and navigate in a rapidly changing society, where the status quo today might not be the same to their learners by the time they have finished their education. Based on this, teachers have no choice but to teach beyond the boundaries of

CONTACT Annfrid Rosøy Steele  annfrid.r.steele@uit.no

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their local context. In an increasingly diverse and globally connected world, we need teachers who possess wide competence on global issues. This fact has not been widely undertaken in teacher education (Kopish 2016, 78). This also correlates to reports from student teachers who have low levels of global knowledge and feel unprepared to teach global issues or content (Merryfield and Kasai 2004; Zeichner 2010; McGaha and Linder 2014). At the same time, the latest TALIS results (Teaching and Learning International Study), indicates lack of preparedness for diversity expressed by teachers across 48 countries (OECD 2019). Teacher educators are currently requested to prepare students for understanding the world outside their own country, communicating accurately and respectfully across cultural distance, committing to social justice, and acting towards more inclusive and sustainable communities. Global Citizenship Education, GCED, is UNESCO's response to these challenges. It works by empowering learners of all ages to understand that these are global, not local issues and to become active promoters of more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure, and sustainable societies (UNESCO 2020).

Research shows that student teachers who have partaken in school practice in different cultural settings than their own, have better opportunities to gain a broader understanding of their future learners, who include migrants and refugees from all over the world. They might develop *intercultural competency*, defined as:

have adequate relevant knowledge about particular cultures, as well as general knowledge about the sorts of issues arising when members of different cultures interact, holding receptive attitudes that encourage establishing and maintaining contact with diverse others, as well as having the skills required to draw upon both knowledge and attitudes when interacting with others from different cultures (UNESCO 2013).

Several studies refer to such competence. Baecher and Chung (2020) find that student teachers doing teaching practice abroad have developed problem-solving skills, self-confidence, and flexibility. Based on their studies, they suggest a strong potential for learning through international experiences, and claim that 'international experiences, such as these [mentioned above] are under-represented in the literature on teacher professional development yet are resonant with theoretical approaches to how teachers learn' (Baecher and Chung 2020, 33–51). They present five key themes based on several studies related to teacher students' experiences abroad. These themes are *language awareness, personal awareness, pedagogical awareness, critical awareness, and cultural awareness*. According to Goodwin (2010), quality teaching in a global context can be linked to five domains concerning what teachers' knowledge for the twenty-first century might be and how they support quality teaching. These domains are *personal-, contextual-, sociological-, pedagogical-, and social knowledge*. These domains are applied and discussed by Moorehouse and James

Harfitt (2019), who in their study amongst Hong Kong student teachers doing practicum in China find that participants' professional learning can be conceptualized within the knowledge domains identified by Goodwin.

Development of intercultural competence and global awareness are also keywording that often appears in studies based on teaching abroad experiences (Klein and Wikan 2019; DeGraaf et al. 2013). Short-term teaching experiences can also have long-term impacts on the development of the teacher profession (Shiveley and Misco 2015). The reflective and critical aspect of teaching abroad is an important part of the students' learning processes, as pointed out by Olsen and Hagen (2015) and Klein and Wikan (2019). Both studies emphasize that the competence of conceptualization and reflection around learning and cultural diversity and the process of briefing and debriefing after teaching experiences are essential to personal and professional development. Santoro (2014) emphasizes specifically the importance of academic work and critical thinking linked to the practicum period, especially reflecting upon the issue of 'whiteness' to help white and Western students to understand the privileged position that they have inherited as a member of a 'white hegemonic mainstream' (Santoro 2014, 441).

Although there is a growing understanding of this issue, and research is being done from the perspective of student teachers' learning potential from diverse school practices around the world, there is still a need for more research exploring what the student teachers gain from these experiences. In the new curriculum reform (FF2020) in Norway, an important objective is to prepare students for a future characterized by an increasing degree of diversity in society, including national minorities and indigenous people. In such a society, with more diverse classrooms, there is an increasing need for teachers with a broad intercultural perspective which adds to their professional competence. Therefore, there is a need for studies that explore what kind of knowledge student teachers can gain from practice in diverse cultural settings. In this study, *the aim is to explore to what extent student teachers acquire intercultural competence as well as professional development from teaching and participating in cultural settings different from their own.*

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this qualitative study is based on hybridity theory (Bhabha 1990) and transformative aspects of learning (Mezirow 2006). The 'third space' concept comes from Bhabha's (1990), who argues that individuals draw on 'multiple discourses' when they clarify the world for themselves and, further, construct knowledge. Bhabha emphasizes that cultural differences mark the establishment of new forms of meaning and strategies of identification through processes of negotiation, where no

discursive authority can be established without revealing the difference of itself (Bhabha 1990, 313). According to Bhabha, differences in cultures cannot be accommodated within a universalistic framework. The differences in and between cultures are very often understood amongst the individuals themselves as incommensurable, impossible to measure or compare. For Bhabha, the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace two original moments from which the third emerges. Rather, to him, hybridity is the 'third space', which enables other positions to emerge: 'This third space displaces the histories that constitute it, and sets up new structures of authority, new political initiatives, which are inadequately understood through received wisdom' (Bhabha 1990, 211). A third space is not a static place or a complete project; it is a continual construction and a utopian prospect that is never fully achieved. Bhabha emphasizes that a third space cannot be directed by old principles; otherwise, you are not a complete participant (Bhabha 1990, 216). According to Lillejord and Børte (2014), 'third space' could be a metaphor for meeting places or border-crossing activities where practice and academic knowledge meet. Given that individuals draw on multiple discourses to make sense of the world (Bhabha, 1990), third spaces attempt to integrate or hybridize competing forms of knowledge and discourse. Third spaces draw upon practices to 'enable other positions to emerge,' which in turn, generate new initiatives. In hybridizing the discourse of previously distinct spaces, third spaces attempt to put together 'traces of certain meanings or discourse' giving 'rise to something different, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation' (Bhabha 1994, 211). In our material we find that practice in an unfamiliar setting opens the opportunities for border-crossing activities where practice and academic knowledge meet, as well as third space meetings, integrating competing forms of knowledge and discourses to enable other positions to emerge.

The American sociologist Jack Mezirow focuses on the transformative aspect of learning (Mezirow 2006), and how so-called *disorienting dilemmas* can change the way we think of certain phenomena. Mezirow, building on perspectives from Freire and Habermas' ideas on conscientization and emancipatory learning, argues that the learners will always, based on the experiences he/she has, create meaning based on the experiences they have. These experiences, *frames of reference*, are a result of our cultural experiences and language, and they shape and limit our perception of the world around us. Mezirow operates with two dimensions within this framework, a) the habit of mind and b) the point of view. The first dimension (a) is linked to meaning and is developed as a part of our upbringing. We are both conscious and unconscious of how this influences our perceptions, understanding, and attitude towards our surroundings. The second dimension (b) refers to what Mezirow calls a point of view. This is connected to

specific attitudes, ideas, and values derived from our meaning perspectives (Mezirow 2006). When we experience a situation where our frames of reference do not fit with the new knowledge we meet, we adjust to the new situation. Mezirow uses ethnocentrism as an example of how a 'habit of mind' is connected to a 'point of view':

An example of a habit of mind is ethnocentrism, the predisposition to regarding others outside one's own group as inferior. A resulting point of view is the complex of feelings, beliefs, judgments, and attitudes we have regarding specific individuals or groups (for example, homosexuals, welfare recipients, people of colour, or women). (Mezirow 1997, 6)

In situations where we experience that our frames of reference do not correspond with reality, we go through confusing and challenging processes. These processes can be emotional, and we need to reorient ourselves in a new landscape. This is what Mezirow calls a *disorienting dilemma*, and we are forced to critically reflect and reformulate our meaning perspectives.

An important part of transformative learning processes is the process of critical reflection and dialogue with peers or with advisors. In such a learning process, it is important to make it easy for the learner to assess and understand the reason for the preceding knowledge, i.e. being a teacher does not seem to be applicable in a different context. It is important to discuss exactly how one's framework can be extended to also integrate a different understanding and practice of the profession, depending on the cultural context you are in. Critical reflection on one's own pre-understanding is central, but the dialogue that consists of sharing and reflecting on the arguments and actions of others is also important in such a communicative process (Mezirow 1995).

Mezirow's theories of transformative learning were originally based on adult learning. These perspectives are constantly being interpreted and further developed for use in various contexts (e.g. in research on health treatment and therapy). Critiques of Mezirow's theories have been varied and related to several factors: for example, the claim that transformative theory is unrealistic and politically naive (Taylor in Taylor and Cranton, 2012) or that the term 'transformative learning' can essentially be replaced by the term 'good learning' (Newman 2012). However, the major objection towards the transformative learning theory is that the context of the learning is under-communicated; learning processes are not only connected to an individual level (Cranton 2005; Illeris 2013). Illeris argues that the social and societal side of learning is not included as an appreciative element in Mezirow's perception of learning. Learning takes place in a relationship with others, and in a societal context. Illeris (2013) also highlights a second aspect of the learning process that he believes is under-communicated in Mezirow's theory: namely, the emotional aspect of learning, which makes the theory seem more instrumentalist than necessary. The driving forces of learning, which Illeris uses as a concept, is the motivation,

will and emotions of learning. Much of this criticism has been answered by Mezirow (Mezirow 2006, 2009). He emphasizes that the focus must be on the individual's consciousness, even if other factors influence the learning process. Illeris (2014) points out that despite this critique and Mezirow's own contribution to the discussion, it has not been possible to find a good and comprehensive definition of the term transformative learning. He proposes a definition that should be able to contain all the various elements he believes must be covered in order to bring out the meaning content of the concept: 'The concept of transformative learning comprises all learning which implies changes in the identity of the learner' (Illeris 2014, 40).

We will argue that the risk of increased ethnocentric attitudes will always be present where cultural encounters take place, which must be met with an analytical and cultural relativistic approach. The concept of ethnocentrism, in contrast to cultural relativism, seem to be useful and relevant concepts in earlier research in the field, i.e. how the two concepts contradict each other. These two concepts, originally developed by anthropological theorists like Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict, are applied to methodological challenges primarily within the field of social anthropology. However, the concepts can also be applied to the processes that take place in cultural encounters in general. An ethnocentric approach in such a meeting would be the tendency to believe that the cultural or ethnic group you belong to, is superior to other groups, and that you judge other groups based on this attitude. A cultural relativistic approach when it comes to cultural encounters, is an approach where all actions and interaction are understood and interpreted in the individual's specific cultural context. The challenge when using these two contradictories, but at the same time complementary concepts, is that they present a polarized understanding of cultural encounters. They do not immediately embrace the fact that a certain ethnocentric view is natural for all humans, and that normally, we will have to adjust our perceptions and opinions of representatives from other cultural or ethnic groups as we learn more about both our own and others' cultural contexts. Student teachers in our project get introduced to these concepts in a preparation course before travelling. We will argue that the concept of culture is dynamic, cultures are constantly changing, and ongoing processes of negotiation and interpretation will always take place.

In this article, an attempt has been made to use Mezirow and Bhabha's frameworks to describe the learning potential third space settings and transformative processes could have for student teachers. We argue that third space will be the ideal setting for the transformative processes we describe to happen. Although for the student it is a subjective journey, and it is impossible to predict or to prepare for the learning outcome that will happen. However, in this article, we will further describe how the student teachers got prepared and how the praxis was organized for the experiences.

Context

The project is based on institutional partnerships with modifications with schools and universities in Southern Africa and Norway. To clarify, when the groups of students in our early material attained their practice (2017, 2018), the partnerships could not be considered equal. The focus was strictly on the Norwegian students to have practice in Southern Africa, and how to organize practicalities such as housing and enough schools that would agree to host them during their practice. Since then, the universities and schools have committed to stronger participation, involving groups of students and teachers travelling from both countries. Student teachers need grades above average to be qualified, and we have interviews with the students that sign up. Before travelling, student teachers must attain a 6-hour preparation course spread over two days. On the first day, they are introduced to formal information such as vaccination requirements, how to order tickets, and so on. They must send an email to the principals to introduce themselves, including which subjects they can teach. They learn about Southern Africa, culture, and local school culture. In the second meeting, they get information about the blog they must commit to as a tool for reflection and learning about their professional experiences. They also must start the first blog where they write about their expectations for practice, and during the practice they will have to continue the blogging. A formal requirement from the home institution is that during their practice they will conduct a research project. In the second meeting, they must start drafting their project ideas. Most of our empiric material is based on the final bachelor exam papers from these projects. In the last meeting, when the students are back in Norway, we also talk about differences in teaching style and culture, and about respect and culture differences in general. This meeting functions as a debrief, and each student group must have a presentation of their practice for the rest of the peers.

Similar to what Olsen and Hagan (2015) and Klein and Wikan (2019) reported, we find that reflecting in briefing and debriefing processes is important to the student teachers in order to learn from their experiences. We also find that doing student research and having to report on this by writing a larger paper provide good opportunities for reflecting on and learning from their experiences. The reflective process for the students was important although it had several phases and forms. Since they worked in collaborative groups, they shared and discussed their points of view amongst each other and with the local teachers. Supervision was also given from their home institution and by mentor teachers at their different schools, either by physical visits or digitally. Supervision included the process of writing their thesis, which we will argue promoted transformation and extended professional learning. The relational and social aspect of learning is important, as is the perspective on learning as a collective and communicative process, and not only a matter of the individual's consciousness (Illeris 2017).

Method

We have chosen a qualitative approach to the study, and our material contains students' bachelor exam papers, emails, field notes, and research diaries. As already mentioned, student teachers can gain empirical materials in the schools in Southern Africa for their research and development work as part of their practice. Some of the students write their paper alone, some in pairs. Student teachers were required to use an action learning approach to collect data for their enquiry work. Action learning can be defined as a continuing process of learning and reflection, supported by colleagues with the aim of addressing a mutual challenge between the participants (Revans 1998; Tiller 2006, 52). The research approach was conflicting with the frame for their practice, i.e. they did not know their colleagues or had the opportunities to plan or discuss mutual challenges. Consequently, they often ended up focussing on their own learning, conducting small research projects in the classrooms and trying out different didactic approaches for learning. We started out with 15 bachelor theses, five from each year (2017, 2018, 2019. Because of covid-19, no students travelled in 2020). The empiric material has been cross collected from student teachers training to become teachers in grades 1–7 and 5–10, the third year of a five-year program. The 15 papers were the ones we got permission from the students to use for research. Since we discovered that some of the student teachers had different approaches to their projects, (i.e. some of the students had focused more on the action learning project and the executing of the project itself), we strategically chose the papers which had detailed descriptions of experience from school practice in an unknown culture. After this round of selection, we ended up with six theses, two from each year. However, as researchers we discussed the reason behind our students' decision to leave out cultural reflection and description from practice in an unknown culture. An explanation could be the lack of support from supervisors back home, and supervisors' heavy focus on the methodological challenge to conduct action learning in a foreign and unknown setting. A possibility is that the student teachers thereby weighted, linked to the word count, the methodological process more than reflection of cultural experience.

Analysis

A Stepwise Deductive-Induction (SDI) method has been employed for analyzing the material (Tjora 2017). The analytic process was conceptualized with the theory in a deductive feedback process (Tjora 2017). This method involves a stepwise process of working the material into categories in an analytic theoretic process based on discussion and comparing perspectives inspired by Mezirow and Bhabha. During the analytic process, these categories became important for the study: emotion, transformed view of professional identity as

teachers (Hargreaves 2003), meta-perspective on teacher profession, and intercultural competence. The material was then coded further and conceptualized into variables for this study. The selected material has all included reflexive considerations about the cultural meetings and how these meetings had affected the students. The most important variables were emotional experiences (such as irritation, joy, frustrations, and despair), a changed perspective on what the role as teachers imply, and thereby an extended professional development, which might lead to a changed professional identity; and insight about how to learn to relate to other cultural contexts and gain increased cultural sensitivity and new perspectives about own culture background. We carefully analyzed these descriptions through the lens of Mezirow's concept of transformative learning (Mezirow 2006). The selected material all contained descriptions of what we interpreted as disorienting dilemmas. From these disorienting experiences, two themes emerged as being more important than others. These we have illustrated in the following model

Model: Illustration of the two themes that derived from the empiric material

Ethics

The data for the project are collected according to the rules drawn up by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data. To ensure anonymity, no names are mentioned. The selected empiric material is presented with the rules of research ethics in mind and the acknowledgment of student teachers

Discussion

In this study, the aim is to explore to what extent student teachers acquire intercultural competence and professional development as well from teaching and participating in cultural settings different from their own. The findings are organized in three parts. Firstly, the understanding of the student's transformation process related to Mezirow's disorienting dilemmas. Secondly, a presentation of the importance of disorienting dilemmas for development of intercultural competence. Lastly, a presentation of how practice and experience from teaching in a different cultural setting provide opportunities for extended professional development.

Disorienting dilemmas

Most of the students reported about their experience as a journey. It started out with their expectations before travelling, i.e. that they had some pre-expectations about what their research project was going to be, and what they expected about the African schooling system and the learners they were

going to meet. Then the journey continued when something happened that made them reconsider. These situations are what we have identified as disorienting dilemmas.

So, how were we able to identify so-called disorienting dilemmas? The outline for the task the students were given was to reflect and elaborate on their thoughts, ideas, and biases, and to discuss whether or how they changed their perspectives from the sketches to the research projects they had developed in the preparation course. As an example, a practice group of students (2019/1), who tried to plan for inclusive learning in the Zambian classroom, realized that they based all the planning upon a Norwegian school-context, and they had to reorient themselves in a new and different context. They did not, for instance, find a mutual understanding of the concept *inclusive learning* with their African colleagues, and they concluded that this principle of learning did not exist in the local school system. However, after the teaching practice, they found that the challenge was themselves: they had a too narrow and limited understanding of the concept when they arrived, and the experience had made them realize this. This is how they described their new insight in their joint exam paper after finishing the program:

Experiencing a new and different school culture in this way, functioned as some kind of magnifying glass on the school system and practice we have in our schools in Norway. It gave us new knowledge about inclusive learning in an unknown culture and about inclusive learning in our own culture (2019/1).

A similar experience was described by another group of students. They described their journey as a 'hike in the mountains': they had to find another mountain since the 'track they were using didn't fit properly' (2019/2). They changed their research approach to examine what they as students could learn from the new school context, not what Zambian schools could learn from them. In our material we found several descriptions of these kinds of journeys. Students had often a normative starting point, and then something happened that made them develop new insight in their own learning process. This usually started with a situation where they realized that they could not implement the research project as planned. Although students get prepared before travelling by participating in preparatory courses where they learn about cultural differences and the local schooling system, students often experience unexpected challenges during their practice period.

Various approaches to disorienting dilemmas

The emotional aspect of learning processes was also described in the material: students expressed both frustrations, disappointments, joy, and anger during the work period. This aspect of learning corresponds well with Illeris' view on motivation and emotional factors being important for learning. Illeris' point of

view is similar to what Bhabha describes as the possibilities within third space. Bhabha claims it is through tension and conflict, where oppressive ideologies can be interrogated and challenged. This conflict is often fruitful, unleashing new possibilities for learning and subsequent change (Abraham 2021). However, sometimes student teachers meet situations in their practicum that become a challenge emotionally and a big hurdle to overcome. As mentioned earlier, Mezirow's example of ethnocentrism, as a habit of mind and predisposition towards other groups and other systems and feelings, beliefs, and attitudes as a point of view, becomes clear when student teachers experience different teaching styles than those, they are familiar with. A complex and common challenge that we meet as supervisors is our students' reactions when they witness the local teachers' use of physical punishment of learners. As one of our student teachers wrote in an email to the home institution:

Similar experiences regularly come up, and it is a controversial and challenging issue for all involved. Students experience and observe that teachers use physical punishment in the classrooms. The students get emotionally affected by this, and we do not have good solutions to how to handle such experiences. The use of physical punishments in schools is forbidden by law in both Zambia and South-Africa, but even if there are movements towards less use of such methods, students still report that they experience this in some of the schools. The punishment can have different forms and varying degrees of severity. It can be the use of sticks on learners' hands or other parts of the body, it can be the use of the 'invisible chair' where learners are forced to sit in a certain position for a longer time, or it can be punishment in form of work tasks like sweeping the schoolyard as a result of missing classes and thereby learning. This is an issue that is difficult for students to understand since they often express strong emotional involvement on behalf of the learners. They feel anger, frustration, and sadness, and they feel the lack of power to interfere in the situation. As a way of helping them in the situation, we always give the specific schools feedback when such issues occur, and we have also ended cooperation with schools where this is a recurrent experience. Still, we have no guarantee that physical punishment will not occur when the students are in their practice.

The students have various ways of coping with this. Some students accept that it happens, even if they do not accept physical punishment as such. Other students go to the teacher or principal and confront them directly. This approach might for them be a way of solving such problems there and then. However, such an approach will often give the students more challenges in the local school since this way of acting can be viewed as impolite and rude behavior seen from the teachers' and the principals' point of view.

The question is, how can a young student from a country far away tell an experienced local schoolteacher that his or her approach towards learners is wrong? This is a matter of understanding one's place in the hierarchy, and is really at stake here, is the tendency towards a belief that whiteness is superior to age

and experience. Applying a cultural relativistic approach seems to be difficult on issues that involve strong emotions. The principle of universalism tends to dominate according to the basic view of children's rights as part of Human Rights, in the students' minds. This opens a more ethnocentric debate, and a debate about the position of justice of the child, where the students do not compromise. However, they also understand that for a local teacher, it is important to have full control in a classroom with 50 learners sharing 20 desks and almost no resources such as paper, textbooks, chalk, and pencils. Even if they do not accept physical punishment on a moral basis, their knowledge about the situation, and the forces involved, has expanded. Debriefing over years with students experiencing these situations have taught us that on the issue of physical punishment there is no easy solution to how to deal with it. But this might also be a recognition for both us and the students: we will always have to live with dilemmas like this, and some are more disorienting than others.

Other examples of disorienting dilemmas we have identified are related to different ways of teaching. For instance, class management is an important topic in the bachelor papers, which might be related to the focus on this topic the first two years of the teacher education program. The students therefore have practical experience and theoretical knowledge of the matter, which they bring with them to a new cultural context. In the bachelor papers, they often illustrate processes where they had to change their original understanding of the concept of class management. Our general observations, field notes, and debriefing activities also confirm that these experiences are challenging. Students often describe coming to the classrooms with certain intentions based on what they already know as correct class management from tutoring from the home institution, just to find that the map does not fit with the terrain. In one of the bachelor papers in our study (2018/2), the group of students describe how they met a learning culture in a township school that they characterized as 'dominated by an authoritarian learning style'. They describe the teaching practice as based on an instrumental understanding of teaching with focus on traditional ways of teaching in a negative way of meaning. The teachers' focus was basically on distributing the content of the learning. Building good relations and a safe environment in the classroom had less priority, according to the student teachers. Based on their observations, the student teachers further describe how their intention was to promote a more *authoritative* learning style in the classroom (Baumrind 1991). According to this approach, teachers should focus on giving warm and positive attention and positive feedback to good behavior in the classroom. The ambition is to have a safe and predictable environment for their learners, and within these frames, teachers build expectations from their learners.

The students' starting point might be characterized as having ethnocentric characteristics since they used ideal standards learned in a Norwegian context to judge the teachers they observed. The students wanted to introduce, and try out,

a more authoritative style of teaching in four different sessions in the class. For the first session, they planned a teaching session using a similar method to what they would have used in a classroom setting in a Norwegian school. This was to acquire some experience, and to become aware of the challenges they might meet. When the session started up, the students soon understood that the situation came out of control. There was unrest and noise in the classroom, and the learners went around all over the classroom. Some even offered them rulers to gain control. A local teacher passing the room, understood the situation, walked into the classroom, and took control by raising her voice and instructing the learners to find their places. At the same time, she shouted things like *You are all disrespectful, naughty and rude!* She left, but the chaos was soon back. The students write: 'we became desperate because we had no control over the situation'. The students' reflection in the bachelor paper shows that they compared the two contexts, South African and Norwegian, trying to find solutions for how to continue the work in the class. It is important to emphasize that the students' experience in Norwegian schools is usually limited, and that this will be their third teaching practice since they are in their third year.

According to the students, an authoritative learning style has an ideal about how to start a class properly, which means standing at your desk and waiting patiently while learners find their seats. By doing this, there will be silence in the room, and their learners will wait for them to start teaching. During supervising and in some of the papers, students describe the fact that this is not possible in the new context, and what they see is necessary, is a defined and clear start to the lesson by for instance raising one's voice. They further reflect upon the need for clearer rules regarding behavior in the classroom in general. For instance, stricter rules about raising hands, showing more respectful attitudes, and moving around in the classroom. Many of these rules would be normal in a Norwegian setting but might be enforced and to some extent changed in this new setting.

In one of the bachelor-papers, the student teachers conclude that they had to adjust their learning style from an ideal on authoritative style to a more authoritarian style (2018/2). They wanted to build good relations with their learners but were met by rules and guidelines at the schools that challenged the values of equality that the students had come with. The rules and guidelines could be looked upon as both formal and non-formal at this schools. 'These are not your friends; they are your teachers!' a local teacher shouted towards the learners when the students played and talked with their learners in a break in the schoolyard. The learners went immediately back to the classroom and kept quiet. To be able to understand this situation, one must accept that the context the students operate in, is dominated by a hierarchy where children have a low position compared to teachers. From other and similar experiences, local teachers often react to how Norwegian students use physical contact to develop good relations with learners; they play with them, cuddle their hair, let the

children climb on them, etc. This is an unexpected, and to a certain degree unwanted, way of communication for various reasons. However, the most important aspect in this connection, in a southern African context, this type of contact can be seen as degrading your respect as a teacher, disturbing the traditional understanding of the relations between teacher and learner.

The students express in the bachelor paper that this had been a tough experience: 'we understood that coming into another cultural context and teaching in classes where the learners are used to completely different learning methods, is extremely challenging' (2018/2). These students had to reorient their perspectives on learning styles. Even though they do not express it directly in the paper, this could indicate a deeper understanding of the context for teaching. The importance to adjust and get to know your learners, spend time building trust, and that good class management is an ongoing process that requires time and experience.

Another group of students (2019/1), who focus on *adapted teaching* in their bachelor paper, concluded after the first interviews with local teachers that this concept was not much in use in the Zambian schools.

Based on our findings and observations, we concluded that adapted teaching did not exist due to cultural frames . . . we thought this was a concept we used in Norwegian schools as a result of something we have learned as a member of a Norwegian cultural context. In Zambia, there was another culture, other systems of knowledge, competences, practices (2019/1).

The students tried out level differentiated tasks as an adapted teaching strategy in the classroom, but soon concluded that this did not work as they had planned. The students further describe how they had to reorient themselves and change their perception of the content of the concept: 'We must admit that we earlier had a narrow understanding of what adapted teaching means. We had viewed this as a concept of method and had associated it with various methods for teaching' (2019/1). The more understanding they developed regarding exploring the concept, the more they reflected that adaptive learning also had to be contextual. They concluded that adapted teaching also is based on the different schools' values and visions, focusing on what each individual learner needs. They pointed to the fact that Zambian teachers know that the final exams would be a multiple-choice exam, and that is why it is important to adapt their teaching for this purpose. They end their paper by concluding, "By observing parallels between different school cultures, we have become open to new perspectives on adaptive teaching, both in our own and in a Zambian school culture. We think this is the most important learning outcome we have gained "(2019/1).

All these examples show students in a process of reorienting themselves in both personal and professional ways. They develop pedagogical-, critical-, and cultural awareness (Baecher and Chung 2020). By gaining new knowledge about

a different schooling context, they gain a meta perspective on the Norwegian schooling system, as well as a meta perspective on the role of a teacher. Mezirow's theory of disorienting dilemmas provided us the lens to understand these transformative experiences. As already accounted for, most of the students describe a process where they had to reorient themselves towards a new setting. The frames of reference they started out with initially developed and changed during the process, i.e. the professional concepts of inclusive learning and class management were extended and given new content.

Intercultural competence

In a society with more diverse classrooms, there is an increasing need for teachers with a broad intercultural competence. We will argue that student teachers who have had school practice in different cultural settings might have a broader understanding of their multicultural pupils and are better equipped for related challenges and opportunities. In almost every bachelor thesis in this study, the student teachers reflect on what new knowledge they have attained by having school practice in a different cultural setting than their own. Some describe that the experience has made them more aware of the importance of knowing the background of their future learners:

We experienced making the learners feel uncomfortable applying our understanding of good teaching in the classroom. The learners did not know us well enough for our project [project about pair and share] . . . our lack of knowledge about their way of teaching made us more aware as future teachers of the importance of adapting to and really knowing the diverse culture backgrounds of your learners (2017/2).

We acknowledge that knowing that learners might have been introduced to different teaching styles than their own is an important intercultural competence for student teachers and becoming teachers. Thus, they become aware that the style of teaching also needs to be introduced and must not be taken for granted as basic knowledge. The notion of the importance of knowing your learners well we found in almost every student project: 'The acknowledgement of trying to apply what we had experienced in Norwegian classrooms in a different school culture made us realise that there is no fixed way of teaching; we need to adapt our teaching to the specific group of learners we are responsible for' (2017/1).

We also found several descriptions in the material about how the experience of teaching in an unfamiliar setting had led them to look at their role as future teachers and the Norwegian schooling system in general, in a different way. As already highlighted, student teachers describe the experience as looking at the Norwegian schooling system through a magnifying glass. This could be interpreted as if the experience of teaching in a different culture gave an opportunity to see the Norwegian way of schooling from a new perspective, and thereby develop new knowledge about things they would never have questioned.

These descriptions from the students, about how practice in different cultural settings has made them reflect upon their own learning and their school system in a larger context, can be interpreted as evidence that *third space* settings have an extended learning potential in teacher education programs. We will argue that the reflection came from the fact that the student teachers had to teach and interact in a different cultural setting than their own, where they had to adapt and be challenged over a certain time.

Extended professional identity

In a general way, professional identity refers to the way members define and enact their place within a profession (Samia, Bernie, and Bob 2007). Teacher professional identity can be defined as a teacher's perception of their professional responsibilities. The aim of this study was to explore to what extent practice in a different cultural context can make student teachers gain intercultural competence and extended professional identity. Starting this article by briefly describing the concept of global teachers, we argued the importance of gaining experience from culturally different school contexts for improving competence in the teaching profession. In one of the bachelor papers, the students directly pointed to this:

Norway is and will become a more and more diverse country, and in our job as teachers we are sure to meet learners with different cultural backgrounds [to our own]. Meeting these learners, we might be more prepared now because we have had this experience (2017/1).

In another paper, the students conclude:

We find that we have developed a deeper understanding of teachers' professional ethics since we had to develop our own understanding of cultural differences ... we have developed an insight about how important it is to reflect upon your own teaching, how important that is for developing as teachers, both individually and as a team. We have also experienced that cultural differences have a lot to say about learning outcomes for our pupils (2018/1).

We also find that students have gained new knowledge and competences in their specific subjects (i.e. mathematics, physical education, social science, and so on) which they might not have gained from their normal practice at home. In one of the papers, a group of mathematics students, who had conducted a research project focused on ethno-mathematic, claim: 'We find that learning from a different [school] culture is experience that is important in any classroom (...) extended cultural knowledge can give teachers better opportunities to mathematise justly' (2019/2).

They further explain that by 'teaching justly', they think it is important to know that there are cultural differences in how you learn math, and that realizing this will make it easier to accommodate learners who have a different approach, to their own teaching style. Thereby they will teach more justly. We interpret to 'teach justly' as meaning that as teachers they can meet all their learners' individual needs.

These findings in our material made us realize the extent of professional learning outcomes that practice in a different culture can give. Furthermore, we realized that learning outcomes are rooted in third space situations, and that transformation processes are linked to disorientating dilemmas.

Concluding comments

The concepts of ethnocentrism and cultural relativism might be useful to explain how the students move from a starting point of view, where the Norwegian schooling system is thought of as superior, towards a broader view where they realize that there are many varieties of schooling systems that work equally well in other parts of the world. The students explore during their practicum and become aware of their own cultural biases about schools and education. Experience from supervising students who have attended practicum abroad is that they gain new insight about other systems of schooling, but mostly about how they themselves are 'products' of their own system, and the culture and values that this system is based on. This transformation process potentially leads to a changed professional mindset and what we will argue, increased professional development.

In the introduction, we argue in favor of teachers in a globalized world and thereby the need for greater intercultural competence in teacher education and schools. Although the debate of how intercultural competence should be implemented in the profession is multifaced, there is no doubt that in our 'white Western' society we need this focus. In this article the goal was to explore to what extent practice in a different cultural context can enable student teachers to gain intercultural competence, and what kind of extended professional development this type of practice can provide. By using the theoretical framework of Bhabha's third space and Mezirow's transformative learning, we have highlighted the development of professional identity and intercultural competence. Disorienting dilemmas and third space meetings can provide extended professional identity that might not be conducted at home. In our article, we also point out that disorienting dilemmas have a beneficial purpose for students' learning processes. We claim that authentic experience, by spending time and getting to know the culture in an unfamiliar location, provides valuable conditions for transformative experiences. However, we see the need to strengthen the focus on more culturally different practice experiences

in teacher education, and the need for more research being done in this field.

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Notes on contributors

Annfrid Rosøy Steele is an Associate professor in pedagogy at the Arctic University of Norway, University of Tromsø. She lectures in the Department of teacher education. Her interest lay on internationalization and culture encounters in education.

Tove Leming is a Professor at the Arctic University of Norway, University of Tromsø. She lectures in BA- and MA programs in social studies in teacher education. Her scholarly work focuses on democracy and citizenship, internationalization, and cultural encounters in education.

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