

The didactic divide in initial teacher training: Can it be avoided?

Christer Bergsten
Sweden

Abstract

Teacher education programmes, organised within formal educational institutions, traditionally comprise three main strands – disciplinary studies, educational studies, and teaching practice. The aim of these strands is to develop an integrated competence in student teachers often referred to as *teacher knowledge*. However, due to organisational and other factors, this integration is not always supported by a formal education with weak links between for example teaching practice and theoretical courses in general education and/or mathematics. The lack of such links in initial teacher training programs has been termed a *didactic divide*, originally assigned to an observed gap between disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge (Bergsten & Grevholm, 2004). It is discussed in this paper how epistemological and developmental factors may interfere with deliberate efforts to overcome the divide, such as the use of *linking practices*. This puts a focus on what are the reasonable goals of formal initial teacher training.

Reference

Bergsten, C. & Grevholm, B. (2004). The didactic divide and the education of mathematics teachers in Sweden. *Nordic Studies in Mathematics Education*, 9(2), 123-144.