



**Students as Journeymen
Between Communities of Higher Education and Work**

HPSE CT-2001-00068

**Understanding the transition from Higher education
to Work life**

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Sweden

General issues

In Sweden there is a national authority of Higher education, Swedish Agency of Higher Education, the task of which formally is to evaluate and develop higher education. In practice the board has, however, a considerable influence on the Swedish system of higher education because of its capacity to close down entire programmes and courses in case they found them to be insufficient.

During the last years the board has focused on questions of student democracy, gender and multiculturalism. Universities have to comply with this policy otherwise they will be subject to heavy critique.

At each university students both formally and in practice have an influence. They are represented at the board of the entire university as well as different institutions and programmes. This has been effective since the late 1960'ies. Each university is obliged to evaluate their programmes and courses.

In the three programmes under scrutiny in the study the students have formally equal opportunities to influence their programmes and courses, but in reality there seems to be differences in that the students in psychology and political science have more influence than the engineering students. The reason seems to be linked to the fact that the engineering programme is a patchwork of many short courses, which brings about that it is practically impossible to make any major changes. Another circumstance is that engineering students have more than 100 per cent more teaching hours than the other two programmes. This is probably the reason why the engineering students are more critical against the programme than psychology and political science students.

The Swedish university system can be characterized as a culture of consensus and negotiation. Henceforth, solutions to conflicts are very often compromises between and moderations of standpoints.

Political Science

The novices are to be found in a variety of different work contexts. Two of them are employed in municipality administration, one works with applications for permissions to serve alcohol in restaurants and the other works in social welfare administration. Furthermore, two are working in the national migration authority. One is still studying but has been working with EU applications. One is part time working at the Swedish union of academics; two are working as teachers in the compulsory school. Two are working within private enterprises (with ICT) and finally one is still unemployed. The age in the group varies between 25 and 37 years of age. There is a majority of students/novices within the age span of 24 to 26.

The political science programme could be claimed to prepare not for a specific professional activity, but for an academic way of being. This could be interpreted as the classical liberal

art heritage, the model of the agora as the space and the dialogue as the method for learning, developing a homo academicus.

The transition can be described as a process of detailing in a transformation from generic academic skills, i.e. the capacity to read and write academic texts, to analyse and describe problems in combination with substantive skills, i.e. to be knowledgeable about the political systems and the institutions of democracy. This particular combination leads to the identity as an independent investigator or civil servant at the end of the programme.

As a result of experience a new role and situated identity as a negotiator and a mediator is crystallising as the awareness of the responsibility to be the advocate of the individual citizen is increasing. This is a typical trait of the political scientists in community, regional and state authorities. The situated identity as a mediator could also be interpreted as positioning political scientists as squeezed between conflicting interests. The transition experienced by political scientists in private enterprises, however, is characterised by a need for supplementary substantive skills pertaining to their specific area of employment, e.g. ICT-skills and business administration.

Few of the novices conceive of themselves in a position of power in relationship to the political decision making arena. This could reflect either an unawareness of the political dimension of the role of the political scientist, or indicate differences in exercising power in different organisations. A question to be raised in relation to this is whether the content of the educational programme is focusing more on the macro level of the dynamics of political power systems than the possibility for the individual political scientist to exert power in the investigation tasks on the executive meso- and micro level in their professional work.

Furthermore, there seems to be a lack of contextualisation, and meta-reflection throughout the educational programme, as the programme concerns the study of politics, rather than in politics, emphasising academic features of politics rather than encouraging students to acquire a particular political standpoint. To the extent that skills in investigation and evaluation are focused, these are de-contextualised and regarded as pure academic skills. This could explain the experience of a vague exit from the programme as well as the difficulty to be able to put oneself in a decentred position in relation to their own practice.

Power exercised by political scientists is closely related to their knowledge, in the sense that they can prepare suggestions for decisions by politicians or super-ordinate colleagues as they describe and investigate a specific problem. Tactic planning could thus be described as the core element of the power/knowledge relationship of political scientists. The political scientists are the interpreters of the legislative texts; the social language they use in their profession is thus a language of power.

Psychologists

After leaving the programme the novices spend the first year in a kind of internship during which they also have a tutor. In reality they act as and are looked upon as authorized professionals. The novices are working within psychiatry (children, teenagers and adults), as school psychologists, with investigation and counselling, with handicapped adults, with refugees and people with eating disorders. Most of the novices have both investigating and counselling tasks. Many of them primarily have individual clients and are organised in teams either with other psychologists or with professionals such as physicians, welfare

officers, and physiotherapists. They have a high degree of responsibility and the team functions as the forum for discussing problems and cases and thus support the novices in their decision-making.

The age of the students/novices varies between 24 – 46 years of age; more than half of them (7) are between 24 – 26 years of age.

The transition from the educational programme to working life is characterised by continuity and confirmation of the knowledge base achieved during the educational process. The emphasis on contextualisation to the diverse field of psychology all through the programme contributes hereto. The dichotomy between theory and practice seems to be collated. The educational arrangement is a break with the metaphor of students as empty vessels to be filled; rather they are immersed into the context of application already from the outset of the programme. The contextualisation brings along a tacit dimension to the formal education, indicated by the fact that the novices express a feeling of surprise that their preparation is sufficient to handle difficult situations and take on with professional positions comprising a far-reaching responsibility. This is a paradox to the fact that reflection is seen as an important aspect of the professional competence. Professional competence could be seen as relational, a complex relationship between the situational and contextual aspects, the professional self, the private self and the professional knowledge base. The findings suggest that the meta-reflective level is lacking, which could explain the feeling of surprise. Is it possible that the psychologists have learnt the importance of reflection as an educational 'mantra'? They have learnt to reflect on the different components of this complex relationship, but the final assembling of the internal relationships between the aspects of professional competence into a whole has not yet occurred for the novices. The feeling of being put to test rather than socialised into the professional work, leads to a legitimate participation in the professional community shortly after the entrance into work-life, indicating a close power/knowledge relationship.

During the educational programme the students see themselves as 'helpers' while as novices they are looked upon and see themselves as full-fledged professional fellowmen. The concept comprises the meaning of the helper. The entrance in working life normally means working with single patients in clinical work, but the content of the study programme is focused on clients as well as on groups and organisations. Some of the novices describe a possible future development to comprise more work with groups and organisations. Already now, although they work with single clients they attend to issues concerning their whole organisation.

The psychologists compose a kind of professional fellowmen character comprising elements both from the private personality as well as the professional role. The entrance in working life has made it necessary to separate the private and the professional spheres in order not to mix the private and the professional sphere.

Mechanical Engineers

Most of the novice engineers are at the time of the interview typically working in mid-size and larger private enterprises.

Two of the novice engineers describe their work with the words calculating and constructing, two are developing products and/or computer programmes, one is a doctoral student, two are trainees, two are certifying and evaluating processes and products and one

is a worker in a factory. The tasks are for most of the novices relevant to their educational background.

Only one of the interviewees hold a position that could be described as under-qualified in relationship to the educational level.

The age of the novices varies between 24 and 31 years with an average age of 27.

Several of the engineering students have a critical attitude towards the programme. Engineering education is a male culture, like in most other countries. Furthermore, it is also a multi step grading system. It may also be added that engineering is a culture where measurement is held to be important. All these features of the programme contribute to form a very competitive learning climate. The first year of the programme comprises comprehensive courses in mathematics. The level of difficulty in reality means that these courses function as a secondary means of selection. Probably they also contribute to the ritual character of the programme.

The transition from education to work life appears for the mechanical engineers as a discontinuity in scope and responsibility of the professional role. The self-image held as students of being representatives of an intellectual elite, mastering complex problems and building society is replaced by an identity as an employable trainee with generic problem-solving capabilities who is flexible and interchangeable. The characteristics of the work task are typically delimited and focusing on a small part of a larger project. This could be interpreted to mean that passing the programme leads to a formal legitimacy and, thereby a peripheral legitimate participation in the professional community of engineering. The ritual feature of the programme is strongest in the beginning, where also students are put to the hardest test by taking the massive courses that are more ritual in character. The experience of intensity in the programme is decreasing in the latter part as the students learn how to cope with the demands and the ritual courses are less prevalent. In retrospect novices in engineering do, however, express a certain appreciation of above all the mathematics courses.

The uniqueness of the professional role characteristics is the one of being able of thinking in a specific, exclusive way. The informants claim that there is a typical “engineering-thinking” that seeks the optimal and most pragmatic solution in any case.

The transition from higher education to work life. A comparative analysis.

In the following, the transition from higher education to work life between the three programmes is analysed according to five dimensions (table X). The areas were chosen to illuminate differences and similarities in how the students relate to their space or area of operation, and how their trajectory through the educational programme and their professional identity could be described. Further, we describe the characteristics of the professional role and the nature of the transition process. Finally, we make a comparison of the relationships between the education and work in terms of ritual or rational.

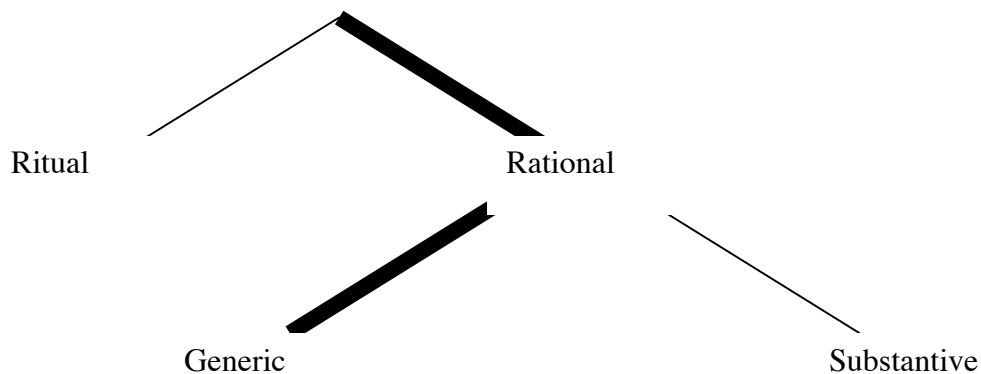
Table 1. Aspects of transition from education to work: A comparison between programmes			
	Political Scientists	Psychologists	Mechanical Engineering
Relation to space/ areas of operation	Flexible investigator: Community, regional and state authorities. A few in private enterprises	Clinical consultant: Hospitals, primary health care, schools	Employable trainee: Mid-size and larger private enterprises
Identity/ Trajectory	'Homo Academicus' ↓ 'Legislative interpretator' 'Spokesman of the individual citizen'	'Helper' or 'Social Engineer' ↓ 'Professional Fellowman'	'Selected Elite' 'Society builders' ↓ 'Generic problem-solver'
Professional role characteristics	Investigator: 'Power catalyst' 'Negotiator'	Reflective Practitioner: 'Pluralist' 'Eclecticist'	Exclusive Thinker: 'Optimizer' 'Pragmatist'
Transition Process	Transformation of subject matter knowledge	Continuity in focus on professional knowledge and role	Discontinuity in scope and responsibility of professional role
Relationships between education and work	Rational and generic	Rational generic and substantive	Ritual and partly Rational generic

The psychology programme has the most obvious professional focus and does not only educate for a certain professional field but does also aims at developing a certain professional identity. This is foremost indicated by the fact that there is a high degree of continuity between being a student and being a professional novice. The socialisation and transition to work is immediate, when the novices show evidence of professional skills in practice, this leads to legitimate participation in the professional community. Both the other groups have experienced the transition from higher education to work as a process involving some kind of transformation. In the case of the political scientists the transformation has meant to recontextualise their general knowledge and generic skills to specific areas of work. The engineers of the other hand have had to accept the fact that only marginal parts of

their knowledge and skills have been utilised. The transition process for engineers in terms of socialisation into the professional community differs from the former two groups. Engineering novices achieve a formal legitimacy through passing the programme that leads to peripheral legitimate participation in the professional community.

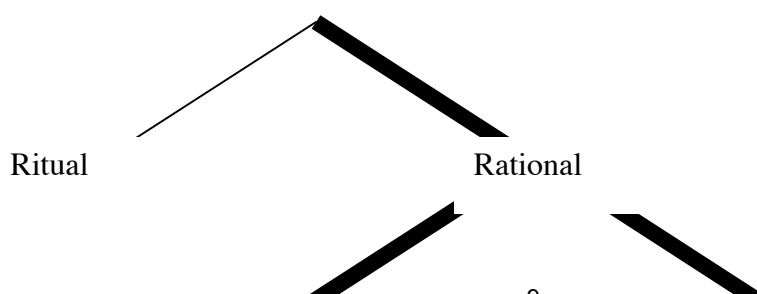
The relationships between education and work could also be described in a more abstract way. It is reasonable to assume that all educational programmes include knowledge and skills that are rational in character, in that they are preparing for a specific field of knowledge or professional field of work, emphasising the utility value of knowledge. It is also reasonable to assume that programmes include knowledge and skills that are ritual in character, where the connection to a specific context of application is lacking and the most important feature is instead the exchange value of knowledge. Knowledge could also be claimed to encompass generic skills, which are transferable between different contexts as well as substantive skills that are specifically and contextually situated. The following diagrams display the difference between the three programmes in terms of the relative proportion of ritual and rational knowledge. Hence, a more solid line for a certain programme indicates a relatively larger proportion of the knowledge in question than is the case for a programme with a thin line.

Relationships between Higher Education and Work: Political Science



For Political Science the relationship between higher education and work life could be described as rational, emphasising generic skills. The content of the studies appear as relevant to the presumptive area of professional work for the graduates. Typically, the generic knowledge needs to be transformed and contextualised in order to be applicable in

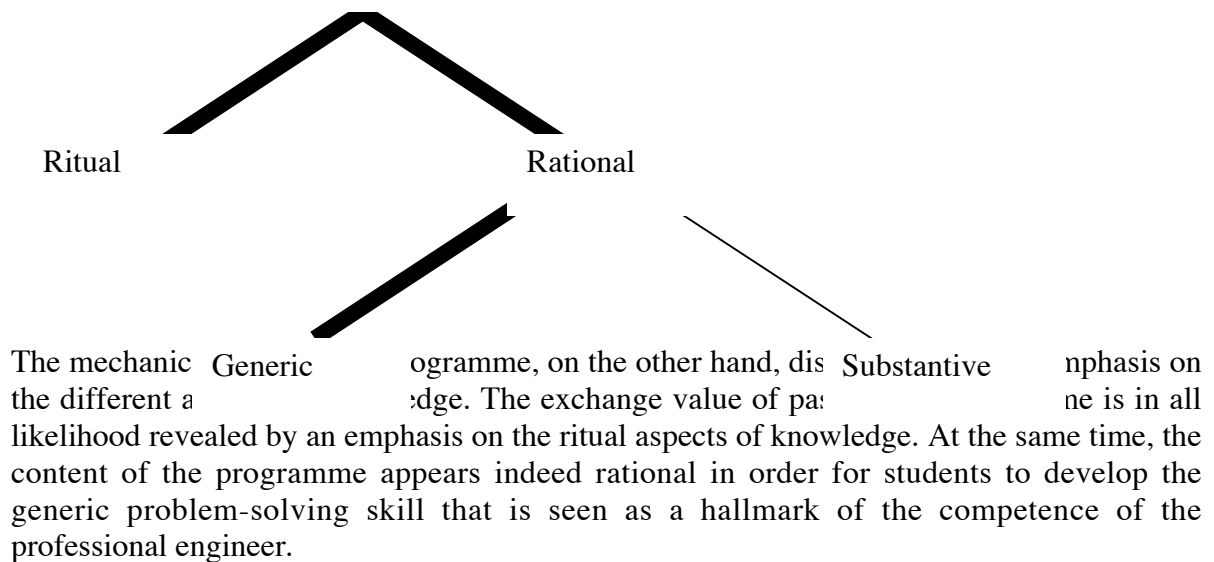
Relationships between Higher Education and Work: Psychology



the individual case. Knowledge and skills of ritual character seem to play a minor role in the educational programme.

In the case of the Psychology programme, the relationships between higher education and work life could be described differently. A similarity is that that the contents of the programme is mainly rational, but the emphasis is high on both generic skills, as e.g. the capability of communicating and interacting with clients, as well as a high emphasis on substantive knowledge, e.g. the competing schools of knowledge within psychology and the consequences of their application in the individual case.

Relationships between Higher Education and Work: Mechanical Engineering



Norway.

As a background for the analysis of the Norwegian data, it is important to notice that in Norway the great majority of the senior students are actually employed in what might be termed ‘jobs relevant to their educational background’ one year after graduation. From the 33 senior students interviewed only *four* had not got a job when we approached them as potential novice workers.

A. The content novice worker.

A general outcome from the interviews with the novices – across programmes – is that they express very positive feelings about having got a job and started working. The discourse connected to these feelings might be seen as one of being happy to be among the ‘favourite few’ who actually made it to get a job, and the job could be seen as an award for the effort they had put into their studies. This, however, is not the understanding we get from the data. It may be true to some extent for the Law novices where the labour market is tight, but not for the others. Rather this positive evaluation of their situation in work life seems primarily to be a feeling of *relief*. Three aspects seem to be combined in this feeling:

The relief from a situation as a student where there was a never-ending feeling of ‘bad conscience’ for not studying enough – or even more. As a student they have been used to living with the constant pressure of having to study even in their ‘time off’. They have “... taken their guilty conscience home with them” as one of the novices said. As a worker they experience that there is a time for work and free time outside work which they can enjoy without bad feelings about doing so. On the other hand there is less freedom for flexible working hours when you work and there is more responsibility in relation to employers, colleagues and clients. Nevertheless the net sum of this is a feeling of relief.

The experience of a better situation economically. They get a salary and do not have to live on their loans, often combined with having part time jobs in addition to their studies.

The experience that they can actually cope with the work they are asked to do, that they have a competence that ‘works’ and that is wanted. They experience that they have something to contribute. This is a positive feeling of surprise on the one hand and confirmation on the other which combines to a feeling of relief from some uncertainty about their possibility to master a job on the basis of the competence they have acquired. When we interviewed them as senior students we could suspect a lurking uneasiness about their own competence, although this was not a dominating concern among them. When interviewed as novices this uneasiness seems to have vanished, leaving them with confirmation of their competence. They are satisfied that they now have a chance to practice what they have studied for many years.

These factors are neatly summed up by one of the novices (Psychologist Alf)

It is good to be allowed to practice what I've studied, to be allowed to go out and do something. Contribute. Work. Earn money. Live a normal eight-to-four life.

B. Are all programmes "professional"?

In planning the project the idea was to include a "professional"¹ programme as well as a "liberal" one among the common programmes studied in all four countries. The underlying rationale for this was that there might be differences in the ways these two types of programmes prepared students for work life. In Norway two professional programmes (Psychology and Law) and one liberal programme (Political science) are included in the project. A professional programme might be more focused on a particular vocational/ professional occupational role while a liberal programme might have a much vaguer relation to postgraduate work and be more strongly oriented towards personal "bildung" within an area of cultural or scientific knowledge.

We have come to consider this dualism as more problematic and consequently will try to suggest a more nuanced picture, based on our findings.

Psychology was selected as a clear-cut professional programme. It aims at a professional role within a relatively well defined area of occupation, where the majority of jobs are related to clinical work within the health sector (broadly speaking). The programme leads to authorisation as a psychologist, which is a title protected by law, and there is a strong professional association of psychologist which it is important to belong to. The programme leading to this qualification is, however, quite academic and theoretical. In the discourse analysis based on the interviews with senior students we have in an earlier report (Senior students on higher education and work life, deliverable 7) referred to this as "the primacy of theoretical/academic knowledge". This knowledge is to a large extent research-based and it relates to different areas or sub-disciplines of the science of psychology as well as to a manifold of theories or ways of understanding the phenomena discussed – some of them even competing ones. Becoming familiar with this broad base of declarative knowledge on "human experience, thought, emotion and behaviour" (Study programme 2001/02) constitutes a major part of the first half of the programme. In this part we might consider the programme of psychology to some extent as a liberal programme in the sense of stimulating personal 'bildung'.

Being exposed to the application of this knowledge and the practical wisdom of the practice of psychology – including the social and ethical competence of dealing with people (clients and colleagues), is a strong part in the last half of the programme which may be seen as more oriented towards preparation for a professional role. This training is staged partly in supervised practice periods outside the university, partly by including practitioners from 'outside' as part

¹ We are aware of the fact that the concept of professionalism is contested and that it is used in a variety of versions. We hope that our descriptions below will indicate the way it is used here.

time teachers in courses at the university. The work on the thesis – which is also a part of the last half of the programme – may be seen as a way of keeping the ‘scientific’ part of the image of the psychologist alive and strong. Their professional practice is based on solid, scientific, research-based knowledge and not only on opinions, feelings and desires to be good to others.

Political science was selected as a clear-cut liberal programme. The discourse of the programme is also, in the same previous report, characterised by “the primacy of academic/theoretical knowledge”. It is explicitly scientific in character, aiming for analytic competence based on theory but does not present itself as solution-oriented. Disciplinary knowledge of theories, systems and structures in society are central in the content of the programme. Students are expected to become familiar with this declarative knowledge and be able to take different theoretical perspectives in analysing societal issues. The programme is explicitly not meant as training for politicians. An attitude of neutrality and objectivity is encouraged rather than taking a stand in relation to current political issues. The thesis is seen as an important part of the programme and is considered by the students as a piece of research of crucial importance for their qualification as political scientists.

Nevertheless, this programme may also be seen as a professional programme for training personnel for the public bureaucracy. Originally the idea was to establish a research-based theoretical education that aimed at educating “reflective bureaucrats”¹. In many ways the political science programme resembles the first part of the psychology programme. The training for the role as reflective bureaucrats who will be expected to interpret and evaluate complex situations, write reports and analyses and conduct surveys for use in the public sector, is catered for through assignments of this kind during the programme, through work on the thesis and through (voluntary) participations in different forums for discussion. There is, however, no particular part of the programme that qualifies students for the social competence (dealing with people) that might be a part of most positions in post graduate work life apart from the experience of just participating in social situations of teaching/learning.

An additional comment should also be made. While the programmes in Psychology and Law are comprehensive programmes from day one on, the study of political science (as a major) is supported by or combined with studies of two other disciplines of 1 to 1 _ year each. This means that the time a student is actually involved with studying Political science is shorter than for the two other programmes.

In conclusion it might be possible to say that the political science discourse presents the programme as a liberal one but that it still has a *tacit* but distinct professional aim of educating professionally trained *critical analysts* for a number of different positions in society where an understanding of societal systems, structures and processes is relevant – and necessary.

Law was also selected in the Norwegian project as a professional programme. It trains students for positions within the legal profession in courts, law firms, the

¹ See Mangset, M (2003) *Selvreflekterende reformator eller retoriske racere*. Cand.polit. avhandling. Universitetet i Oslo: Institutt for sosiologi og samfunnsgeografi.

ministry of legal affairs as well as for a host of positions where knowledge of laws and legal ways of reasoning is necessary. The legal profession has a reasonably strong professional association and the professionals (attorneys on one hand and professors of law on the other) play significant, and at times very visible, roles in society. There are no designed periods of practice included in the programme. Students don't leave the university to work under supervision in different types of context of professional practice – except at their own private initiative mostly as part time jobs. How do they then prepare for practicing law?

It is first important to explain that in order to be licensed to work as an *attorney* (which means giving legal advice as an occupation or appear in court), a person having graduated from the Law programme, has to work for two years (under some supervision), take a course and pass an exam related to it and present three cases in (lower) court. Consequently the graduate programme alone does not qualify completely for the full range of legal professions. The type of knowledge that dominates the programme is twofold: partly it is knowledge about laws and other kinds of legal sources in different sectors, partly it is knowledge about methods of going about dealing with legal issues in practice (defining what the legal problem is in a case, finding which rules and regulations apply, which order of priority each source will have and how to draw conclusions on this basis and present the analysis and conclusion (orally or in writing)). This Legal Method has a central position in the discourse about the programme. This is what you have to learn and be able to practice in more or less refined ways within different sectors of the law. The law and legal decisions will change over time and you need to keep yourself updated on this within the sector(s) where you practice, but knowledge of the Legal Method is the defining element of legal practice, it is of a more lasting character and it is a sort of a 'portable skill' that is applied on different legal domains. In order to do well as a student of Law, you have to break the code of the Method. These two types of knowledge may be seen as declarative knowledge (of laws) and procedural knowledge (of The Method).

The practice of Law, in this respect, may consequently well take place within courses at the university. Students are exposed to cases where the law they are learning apply, they experience 'masters' who demonstrate the application of the Method on such cases. They are asked to demonstrate their own competence in doing so themselves, and they discuss solutions among themselves as students and with their masters/teachers. The social part of practicing law, however, (listening and relating to clients, establishing trust, interpreting and judging responses, communicating with lay people etc) is to a very limited extent included in this 'in-house' form of practice. The focus is on the cognitive, rational analysis and the application of The Method.

The type of declarative knowledge described above is different from the knowledge which is central in the Political science and the first part of the Psychology programmes. Political science and Psychology refers to *theories* about social or psychological phenomena where theoretical concepts are combined in different ways to provide ways of explaining phenomena and where explanations are underpinned with empirical research. The programme of Law is *not so much* concerned with *theories* of law but more with knowledge of what counts as current law in a society (and with the practice of applying it to particular cases). However, there is a body of knowledge also in Law concerning

‘general theory or philosophy of Law’, but in the programme this is a small elective course.

Trying to put these pictures together may be sketched in the table below:

Programme	Competence in mastering theoretical, scientific knowledge	Competence in mastering contextual knowledge (systems, structures, rules)	Analytical competence	Procedural/ logical competence of “arguing”	Social competence	Explicit professional focus of programme
Psychology	strong	moderate	strong	weak	strong	strong
Political science	strong	strong	strong	strong	weak	weak
Law	weak	strong	moderate	strong	weak	strong

The characterisations of the programmes in relation to the aspects in the columns are of course subjective and tentative. Nevertheless the table may illustrate that programmes that have a strong explicit focus on being ‘professional’ (Psychology and Law) may be rather different when it comes to the types of competence they foster due to the different occupational task and societal services they are supposed to offer². Likewise programmes that are different in explicit focus on being ‘professional’ (Political science and Law) may be quite similar when it comes to significant types of competence they foster in the students.

C. The novice as apprentice or competent practitioner.

Other discourses concern the ways the novice worker is seen and see her/ himself when entering work life. As mentioned above most senior students feel uncertain to some extent about their ability to cope with requirements in their new role as workers. Some, with experience from working part time in the same or similar position, feel quite confident. Others, but few, are pretty scared at entering work life, although this feeling – as we have seen – fades away rather quickly. Most, however seem to enter work life with reasonable confidence in their possibility to cope with the tasks they will meet.

² Roles are different i.a. in this way: Psychologists are supposed to understand the client and assist him/her in understanding him/herself without arguing, convincing or persuading the client into a “solution”. The lawyer is supposed to assist the client by arguing against an opponent and convincing, persuading or winning (in court) on the part of the client.

There are, however, differences between the ways they are received which can be understood in the light of different discourses primarily in the context of work, but even to some extent also in their context of education.

The novices coming from the Psychology and Law programmes are expected to walk more or less directly into their jobs and start practicing as competent practitioners. Not that they are already experts in any way, but it is taken for granted that they can be put to competent work without too much ado. Some will be given a tour of the sites, some will be offered a contact person to relate to, but particularly designed induction periods – not to say programmes – are rare. In some work environments for the Law novices there are such provisions, but in many cases those who already work there have such a busy schedule that there is not much time for this. In psychology there are more often a provision for some supervision but it is only when they enter the specialist training programme – which is strongly expected within the culture – that this provision is formalised.

Although this experience is somewhat surprising to some of them, they don't consider it a big thing, which leads us to believe that the discourse about this in the work life context is not so different from the discourse at the university. A candidate from these programmes (Psychology and Law) is expected to be able to perform competently in a professional role. Many of the people they meet as colleagues have been through the same programme and 'know' that this will work without talking much about it. And the novices seem to 'rise to the occasion'. A consequence is that many of the novices from these programmes become quite self-confident and assertive during their first year at work. They will of course try to orient themselves in their new environment to identify the culture where they are, and they have different strategies for adapting to it – or not. But in general they feel that they are able to master the tasks they are set to deal with. They may feel that the responsibility put on them is greater than they expected, but it seems as part of the discourse that they should be able to cope even with this or ask for help if needed. This also corresponds with their actual experiences; most of them really do cope with the challenges. In other words, as newcomers they relate to the local discourse and produce their own meanings of it when forming a negotiated role for themselves in their new context.

For the Political science novices the discourse of their role at work is somewhat different. They find themselves in work contexts (public administration/bureaucracy, media etc) where their colleagues have quite diverse backgrounds (law, economy, sociology, administration, journalism etc) and in some cases quite a number of them may not have a university education. In these contexts the main discourse – as the novices perceive it – puts the novice more in the more traditional role of an *apprentice*. They are expected to learn to deal with new tasks with experience and by watching models in a 'legitimate peripheral position'. The work environment doesn't have a sufficient knowledge about their competencies and see them as trainees who will have to prove themselves competent for the new tasks. At the same time the novices may be regarded with some scepticism and even as a potential threat. Consequently they often feel that they should be somewhat strategically careful with what they say and do not to be provocative in any way. On the other hand they do not necessarily feel that the tasks are challenging and they do not speak of any burdensome feeling of responsibility. Rather than having problems with the actual work they are doing,

they may struggle more to become recognized as competent practitioners on their own terms.

Nevertheless most of them see themselves as competent political scientist, more or less waiting for a chance to do real political science work. We may picture them as being in a position of ‘postponed’ or ‘latent’ professionalism where their real professional competence is provisionally ‘put within brackets’. In the meantime they exercise it more in private when watching the news or reading the papers or when discussing with friends with a political science background. They rely on other “communities of practice” to maintain or support their identity as well-qualified intellectuals.

These discourses of the role of the novice at work present themselves differently depending on to the type of programme they graduate from: a professional or a liberal one (see above). However, it may also be seen as a consequence of coming to ‘your own people’ compared to ‘being among strangers’.

Psychologists and, although not to the same extent, Lawyers go to work in environments where their educational background and competence is better known to – and trusted – by a larger proportion of their colleagues. The competence of the Political scientist is not as well known in their work contexts and consequently not as trusted, although it might be just a relevant and useful if put to work with proper tasks. While the Lawyers have a field of competence which is more obvious to the public, the competence of the Political scientist is possibly more obscure to people with other backgrounds. To some extent the Political science novices describe themselves by distinguishing themselves from colleagues with other backgrounds – by saying whom they are not.

D. The discourse of professional responsibility.

In this context we choose – for reasons of simplicity – to refer to the responsibility of the novices from *all three programmes* (‘professional’ and ‘liberal’ – see above) as ‘professional responsibility’. This is a comprehensive term that may refer to obligations/loyalty towards employers and colleagues on the one hand as well as to moral and societal responsibility on the other. It is a topic or ‘domain’ that has been included in the interviews at all three ‘levels’ of the project design: freshmen, senior and novice, but in this report only discourses relating to senior students and novices are included.

Discourses concerning these types of responsibility are not particularly explicit. Most of the senior students and novice workers themselves have a limited vocabulary for talking about the way they see their responsibilities and the responsibilities they experience in the contexts of study and work.

Our main finding is that there are no evident and fundamental changes in the way the seniors and novices talk about their responsibilities. In other words the notion of responsibility hasn’t changed significantly after a year of work. The changes we can see are that more general statements made as seniors become more contextualised to the type of job they go into and also are somewhat more nuanced: from clear-cut positions to expressions like “... it is not always easy to know what is best”. Some novices indicate that they – as students – possibly had

too high ideals in their moral code, and it seems difficult to live up to them in every practical situation. Despite the fact that we find no *obvious* changes in this respect, we notice that some personal values are challenged when facing the complexity of some real work life situations.

One of the differences that appear, though, between seniors and novices is that they bring up somewhat more the responsibility they have to their *employer* and to *colleagues* after having practiced for a year. They may point to dilemmas and disagreements about efficiency, productivity, financial interests (in a private law firm and a hospital) or methods of treatment. These dilemmas/disagreements are, however, only in few cases strongly expressed tensions between their private interests or values and their obligation to the job / employer / colleagues.

Although there are no significant changes from senior to novice *within* each programme there are some differences *between* programmes when it comes to the notions of professional responsibility found in the discourses. A description of these differences are suggested in the table below:

	Psychology	Law	Political science
Thematising the discourse	Empowering individuals	Justice according to the law	Educating the public
'Directions' of responsibility	A relatively <i>coherent</i> and <i>one-sided</i> notion of prof. resp.	A <i>split</i> and <i>double-sided</i> notion of prof. resp.	A <i>coherent</i> but <i>double-sided</i> notion of prof. resp.
Main professional role	Clinical therapist	Deputy attorney /judge Public adm. executive	Public adm. executive
Chief client	Individual patient	Dep. attorney: individual or company client. Judge: client and society.	Society and bureaucracy
Influence by programme	Explicit and clear	Implicit and clear?	Vague

The discourse on *psychology* clearly is one where the 'mission' of the psychologist is considered to empower *individuals* to cope with their life in better ways and realise their potentials. The chief client is the individual patient and the professional responsibility of the psychologist is towards this person. The typical

role of the professional is cast in the form of the clinical psychologist. This is a person with high standards when it comes to abiding by the professional code of ethics in relation to clients. The *societal* responsibility is however vague and concerns – when articulated – an obligation to inform and make their knowledge available in favour of a (more) humane society.

The discourse on *Law* puts the professional in a somewhat more double-sided position when it comes to professional responsibility. It is partly to the client (whether as an individual or a group/company/organisation) but partly also to society. The understanding of responsibility is in a way also to the law and it is the notion of ‘justice’ according to the law that strikes the balance in this double responsibility. The balance is also somewhat ‘split’ between professionals in different societal positions: for the attorney working in a law firm it tilts towards the client, for the person working in the Ministry of Justice it tilts towards the society and for the judge or the civil servant in the bureaucracy the balance is possibly more even. This is also mirrored in ‘who’ is seen as the chief client. The two professional roles most relevant to the novice worker seem to be the deputy attorney/judge and the executive in public administration. The ethical responsibility of the lawyer is strongly connected to the law: to do the right is to follow the law.

The discourse on *Political science* is more related to the *ideal* responsibility of the professional. As we have seen in one of the other discourses above, the novices are mostly employed in low or medium positions in the bureaucracy while the ideals for future positions are somewhat different. In keeping with the notion of a ‘latent professionalism’ the discourse of the responsibility for the *ideal* professional, however, pictures the professional as a neutral, intellectual watchdog in society who should use his/her competence in the interest of society by advising politicians and decision makers about possible consequences of their actions and remind them about democratic values. They should also inform and educate the general public in relation to current issues and contribute to analysing and clarifying complex issues as well as engaging the public politically and stimulate active citizenship. Their chief client consequently is society as well as the general public (rather than the individual citizen) but their responsibility is to both sides (individual – society). Ethically they should be seen as trustworthy and neutral.

Does education mean a difference in this respect? Are the differences we identify results of differences in the ways programmes deal with these issues? In general only the programme of Psychology seems to deal explicitly and relatively comprehensively with ethical questions. Here the students have a separate course of some scope on code of ethics and ethical aspects of professional responsibility is dealt with as an aspect of other courses as well as in the practice periods. Law has a few lectures on the code of ethics, but students refer to this as a neglected aspect of the programme. There seems to be no particular part of the Political science programme that deals with this aspect.

Differences between the discourses described above consequently seem to be more related to differences in types of practice and the professional tasks that

practitioners in the different professions are engaged in. These differences influence the discourses even at the university without materialising themselves explicitly as very specific parts of the educational programme, apart from what has been said about Psychology. The individual professional's own sense of professional responsibility consequently is negotiated between the formal code of ethics (to the degree that it exists), the type of activities the professional engages in, and the individual moral of the professional as a private and public person

E. The institutional 'pact' between higher education and external stakeholders

Higher education institutions have over the last few decades been confronted with increased outside pressures in order to adapt to market demands³. This is visible in national policy documents as for instance the commissioned report *Freedom with Responsibility* (NOU 2000:14) where it is stated that universities and colleges are primarily

....viewed as knowledge enterprises with increased demands on productivity, greater corporate efficiency and improved user adaptation. The significance of research and teaching in relation to this is best defended by means of arguments that emphasize their usefulness in relation to product development and economic growth. The distinctive self-managing structure that has been characteristic for higher education institutions is criticized for its lack of adaptability and is challenged by the introduction of user interests.

In the following part we will focus on how these three programmes are linked to some important external stakeholders. This relationship can be analyzed as an "institutional pact" that plays an important role in order to understand the profile of the programme, its stability and how changes in the wider society or reforms in the higher education sector disturb this pact and creates a need for negotiations.

Political science and the bureaucracy

The educational programme of political science follows as mentioned a disciplinary discourse emphasising learning the knowledge structures, the concepts, the methods and the modes of arguments defined by the discipline itself. Political science is theoretically oriented and this is noticeable on all levels of the programme. In our material it seems that important stakeholders like the public bureaucracy does not alter the focus of the programme. It seems as there are some sort of division of labour. The educational institution is responsible for the theoretical formal knowledge base and the work place is responsible for training the novices for the concrete professional work. The traditional

³ c.f. Amaral and Magalahas (2002) The emergent role of external stakeholders in European higher education governance. In Amaral A et al (eds) *Governing Higher Education: National Perspectives on Institutional Governance*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, p. 1-21.

Norwegian bureaucracy acknowledges, as mentioned, that in order to become an expert you have to “climb the ladder”.

Reforms in today’s higher education challenge this “pact”. There are a growing numbers of stakeholders who insist on seeing higher education in the first place as an industry emphasising the need for professional institutional management, the need for economically based and market-driven decision-making and revenue-generating activities. One example is the former Minister of Labour and Government Administration Victor Norman (from the Conservative party) who has made a critical comment where he questions the legitimacy of social science. He argues that the university “produces” bureaucrats who are not well educated for the private sphere. This, he continues will weaken the international competitiveness of national trade and industry (NRK.no 14.3 02). Whether the statement of the Minister represents a general and increasing critique is difficult to say, but there may be signs that challenge the alliance between the educational institution and the bureaucracy.

Psychology and the professional organisation

The Norwegian Psychological Association is the official association of psychologists and it organizes about 94% of all psychologists in Norway, and count about 3 800 members (<http://www.psykol.no/>). When it comes to its relation to education we can read that the association “Provides an extensive educational program for postgraduates; Manages a publicly recognized program for education within specialist fields (clinical specialist); Provide postgraduate studies in association with the Norwegian universities; Emphasizes the need for the different domains to be linked to (and inspired by) basal and applied psychological research “.

The institutional pact between the educational programme within the university and the profession can be understood as a pact which on the one hand underlines the importance of the cognitive/scientific legitimation of the profession and one the other hand emphasises a practical/professional legitimation. In this sense it is an “invisible agreement” between the educational institution and the professional field. The essential element in this pact is the agreement about how to regulate the profession through education and certification. If this regulation is changed, the pact will be challenged.

Law and Lawyers

There is no professional association for lawyers that can be compared to the Psychological Association concerning formal postgraduate education. There are some regulations and professional requirements in order to become a deputy judge/ deputy attorney, but there is no extensive professional training programme in the same manner as what the Psychology association offers.

There are some important bonds between the educational programme and the professional field that shape the institutional pact. Many of the lectures are held by professionals outside the university and likewise, many faculty members have part time positions in the professional field. This creates a tight relation where the division between internal and external stakeholders becomes unclear.

An important part of the “pact” is the mutual understanding of the meaning of the grading system. This is the “regulation tool” when it comes to the selection of the graduates and even the further professional career. Until recently the Faculty of Law used a “fine-meshed” grading scale based on two decimals. With the introduction of the European credit transfer system (ECTC) the University of Oslo as the rest of the higher education sector in Norway, changed to a standardised grading scale descending from A to E for different pass grades and F for fail. This new arrangement challenges the pact and there have been strong reactions from both the faculty members and the professional field. In order to “reset” the pact there is a need for an additional system that makes the regulation possible.

Poland

Transition between HE and work as a critical moment within the life trajectory

Considering the problem of transition between higher education and work, its discontinuity seems to be the most noticeable characteristic within the group of political scientists. It seems obvious that the basic reason for this state of affair is non-professional nature of education in political science as well as the absence of a range of defined vocational roles for PS within a labour-market. These reasons, however, do not reveal the broad picture of the 'chequered' transition. More deeply, the disjointedness between academic studies and work-life experience could be analysed on the following levels:

- The level of identifications with the professional role as a *politologist*
- The level of social bounds between people representing the professional role of a '*politologist*' (seen here as a problem of collective identity)
- The level of cultural environment of studying/working in its institutional aspect
- The level of everyday-life activeness

The level of identifications with the professional role as a *polytologist*

On this level, rapidly decreasing power of identification with the professional role of political scientist could be noticed. New social and cultural environment of a workplace, fresh aspirations towards the future, loosening relations with other PS graduates etc. lead to generating new forms of identifications. Thus we can speak of incision of the continuity of personal narratives where – within the group of senior students - the past had been defined in the perspective of acquiring professional identity as a political scientist whereas – within the group of novices - looking forwards to the future inspires the subjects to develop new forms of identifications, even though perspectives for professional development still remain unclear for the majority of our respondents.

'First of all I hope to have any job, it is the most important thing. But I would like to work here for not more than two years. Maybe later on, something will change in the job market' (POL, 14, N, F)

The level of social bounds between people representing the professional role of a '*politologist*' (seen here as a problem of collective identity)

We can observe loosening social relations within the group of former students in political science. This problem, partly disclosed by the senior students, becomes evident in the light of opinion given by the novices. Though from this perspective we might speak of the dispersion of collective identity of a *politologist*, it could be bared in mind that the common

identity structure within this group of people seems to be construed on the basis of *re-sentiment* towards “talking politics” as the dominant form of learning activity during their academic studies as well as a leisure activity at the present time. The latter is the situation when the novices find themselves *politologists* ‘again’ (see: the problem of *simulated profession* in the previous report).

‘(...) at the present I name myself a politolo-economist working in the banking sector. I’m such a hybrid, but the truth is that my identification with political science is very weak’ (POL 1, N, M)

‘sometimes we meet each other, talking about the fantastic time of our studies, talking about politics, about life (...)’ (POL, 1, N, M)

The level of cultural environment of studying/working in its institutional aspect

There is a clear discrepancy between the cultural environment of academic education and work-life context. The first one, that could be briefly characterised in terms of narcissist climate and jamboree academism (see the report: *Education and Work...*) constitutes an antithesis of workplace cultures mostly ruled by the neo-liberal climate of rivalry and effectiveness within a private sector or by a dull routine of working order within a public one.

‘What I encounter (here) was an envy more or less hidden or attempts to marginalize me’ (POL14, N, F)

‘All that counts is my effectiveness’ (POL10, N, F)

The level of everyday-life activeness

Here we can observe an essential change within everyday rhythm of life during the studies, described by the subjects in terms of *freedom* and *relax*, and the working life arrangement, regulated by new obligations.

‘I don’t like the new rhythm of my life: waking up every morning, going to work, and finishing at four o’clock. (POL, 10, N, F)

It is worth reminding that the shift within the life-rhythm is fundamental for the problem of transition between HE – W, from the perspective given by our respondents (see the report: *Developing professional identity*).

Identity in the context of transition between HE and Work

In spite of the discontinuity on the life trajectory caused by the transition between education and work, some general features of the dynamics of identity construction as prevailing within the group of graduates in political science are still noticeable. Plausible similarities seem to rise on the basis of the influence of discursive construction of the field of academic education they had experienced. Hence, though we could not pose the thesis that graduates in political studies share a common structure of professional identity, it could be stated that there is a relative consistency within the ways in which subject identities are reshaped within the experience of transition. Such a consistency could be explained on the basis of the following aspects:

- Elitist conviction
- Particularism
- Adaptability
- The shared memory of profession

Elitist conviction

Elitist conviction, as generated within *the discourse of elitism*, still remains the hallmark of this group of people. As a source of self-esteem it develops:

elitist aspirations towards the positions/occupations in the future, in spite of the fact that in many cases they would remain in a sharp contrast with positions occupied by subjects currently;

repeated attitudes of disregard towards co-workers;

pretensions to higher social and economic status accompanied by complaints about the inappropriate structure of labour market that does not secure the job for *politologists* (herein '*the society*' is the addressee of the grievance that expressed)

'Because I was the only one person with the university background, (...) from the very beginning I tried to change something in my workplace, teach them (peers) something new. But what I encountered was envy, more or less hidden, or attempts to marginalize me.' (POL14,N, F)

'Here I'm the only one university graduated person. So, everybody treats me as someone exceptional which depreciates themselves as a ordinary salesman' (POL 2 N, M)

Particularism

The label of particularism refers to the horizons in which most of novices perceive the field of their responsibility as well as their personal goals. Herein, the common leanings towards personal success sized up in terms of both economic and social position seem outstanding whereas the question of public engagement remains barely mentioned. Nonetheless, when asked about moral and social responsibilities of a professional, the novices still accentuate their social obligations. The '*mythical*' – missionary vision of a *politologist*, however, no longer refers to a possible role model within a 'real life'.

The private attitude of the novices could be generated during their studies within the discourse of *professional cynicism* (See: *Education and work...*) as well as the role model as a *player* (See the report: *Freshmen students ...*)

'In my work I do exactly what is expected from me, not more, not less. I learned here not to have different opinion than the bosses. (...). At present the main motivation for work is money, but I can also see some perspectives for the future. I don't want to be an ordinary employee all the time, but rather becoming a member of the management staff here' (POL 1 ,N, M)

Adaptability

Functioning of the novices within a dispersed field of a work-world might be characterised by adaptability that relates to their readiness to take up new vocational tasks, easiness in acquiring different skills, and a relative adaptableness to various social contexts and institutional rules. Such abilities could be explained by referring, on the one hand, to the *discourse of the incompleteness of education* as resulting in developing by subjects autonomous learning strategies, on the other, to the phenomenon of *coterie culture* as well as the role model of *talking head* as the factors stimulating acquiring social and communicative skills and conformist attitudes.

It is worth mentioning, however, that jobs occupied by the novices do not demand a high level of professional competence but, rather, the *trainability* instead.

"First of all I should follow the given rules and also what I can say it can be perfect subordination – do not argue with bosses' (POL14, N, F)

The shared memory of profession

The identity of a graduate in political science seems to be construed within the two different forms of narratives: the retrospective one, that pertains to the experience of the past, and the prospective one that seeks for new forms of identification and engagement. The former, as the *shared memory of profession*, involves the experience of *simulated profession* acquired in the period of the study that, in fact, supported students with the strong conviction of *being professionals* rather than *becoming professionals*. Such an experience seems to be an important point of reference even for the prospective mode of identity construction, providing subjects with the 'sense of roots'.

Discourses of psychological professional identity of psychologists in the making

Bridges of Transition

The following features characterise transition as the critical moment in the trajectory of individual life:

- feeling of maturity – getting out of cocoons, instability of employment and dreams of stabilisation, work as a desired foundation of being on one's own
- independence and responsibility as dominant features of the experience of work (regardless the kind of job)
- deep relationship with peers (friends from the time of studies) as professional support group and socialising group

Bridges to Work and Professionalism

- The respondents take diversified positions in the world of work, hence their 'bridges' are different, too. 7 out of 10 have found employment within their professional fields in the public sector (school psychology and diagnostics) and private sectors (trade consultancy, personnel training). Work is a source of satisfaction, mostly as a source of experience and test of validity of the academic knowledge (of which they speak with respect). Those who do not work in their field present some frustration and are more critical about their studies. However, they all consider themselves to be “good psychologists”. Three persons consider starting their PhD studies and cherish the possibility of keeping up the contact with their tutors. Three other persons work as volunteer therapists.
- The highest self-esteem may be seen among those graduates who work in personnel training and education.
- Those who graduated from the clinical specialisation seem to feel relatively less competent than the others, which may be related to the influence of some significant teachers (probably making them cautious about their competence in order to prevent them from taking up too difficult cases). An example:

I feel indeed incompetent all the time. Still, I have some knowledge. (PSY, 11, N, F)

In contrast, those from the line of child and youth psychology present a conviction of high capacities, and so they act in different sectors of society. The graduates from organisational psychology seem to present a relatively higher degree of independence and entrepreneurship.

Professional identity. Referents of identification

The professional identity of psychologists can be described as a social construct built between the “real” and “ideal” selves.

The real self – the place where they currently are – is a position from which they point to different aspects of the profession which they take as referents in their process of building professional identification. The diversified “landscape” of those referents reflects the heterogeneous character of the group:

- psychology as a scientific discipline
- the status of the diploma
- specialist knowledge and skills accumulated through professional experience
- realisation of the social (ethical) duty outside the work place (voluntary work in an AA group)
- solving difficult problems of the clients and experiencing professional efficiency
- working for the social image of the profession (against stereotypes) and building public trust

- experiencing the burden of the role and its influence on the self:

I kind of object to being a psychologist all the time and in my normal life, to serving that social duty, [... you need to] separate work from your private life. (PSY, 7, N, F)

- professional competence (e.g. the ability to listen attentively) as helpful in work and private life; interesting that this is especially stressed by persons working outside the profession (a bar tender, for example)
- being in two roles in one workplace (e.g. a psychologists and a teacher) – identity built on the opposition of roles and tasks

The ideal self is based on the conception of the psychologist helping the others. Against this conception the respondents define themselves as not fulfilling the ideal,

I have never thought of myself as of a psychologist one should really be. (PSY, 1, N, M)

or locate themselves on the way to fulfil it regardless what their jobs are:

I have a plan to care of some children who have no families, and I feel this is my social duty, apart from what I am doing. Now I am short of time for this, but this is my intention. (PSY, 8, N, F)

Between the real and ideal selves, activity and voluntary work perform a compensative function. One of the informants works in a trade company where he is responsible for personnel training and has a feeling of success in the work. However, 'true' psychology is also for him linked to the ethos of help, which somehow diminishes the value of his work:

Q: Do you see yourself this way? A:Perhaps, but not because of my work. I have got involved in alcoholic therapy, voluntarily. There is a good centre in Gdansk and whenever I have some time, usually once a week, I go there and work as co-trainer in group therapy and it is there where I find myself to be a psychologists more than in my job. This is because I have to concentrate of sales in my job, and there is only a small fragment there where I am a psychologist, when I see that someone wants to talk to me as a psychologist, then I feel it. Generally I try to be that sales trainer rather than the ['true'] psychologist, although it is interconnected. But when I go to the group, when I run the session and talk to people in trouble, then this is it. (PSY, 3, N, M)

The Work of Discourses

Limited professionalism – to be or not to be a true psychologist

Even though a novice in psychology may find satisfaction in the job, the discourse of therapeutic help works against such satisfaction, remaining the main referent in, and the way of control over, the

construction of professional identity. The desired professional identity is accessible through the bridge of voluntary work, which – however valuable as a social ideal and in terms of gaining work experience – may postpone responsible decisions of the subject on the one hand, while on the other it may be an easy (and hence irresponsible) 'economical' way of solving problems of staffing organisations with professionals. An example of this can be found in the case on an unexpected change of rules and standards of work experienced in an attempt of changing the status of voluntary into paid worker in the same organisation:

I remember that my the biggest problem was the lack of certainty of what to do. It was, additionally, such a place, in which I worked earlier as the volunteer and I had good relationships with all the people there. Suddenly, it has appeared that all my relationships are formal, so 'dry', and full of personal distance. And it was not longer simply talked to me that I do something wrong or good. There was a great admiration of my work when I worked for free. Everything that I did was fantastic. And suddenly I have realised that I am estimated and I do not know the criteria.... This is most significant, strongest impression, experience of my very initial work.(PSY, 12, N, F)

There is a striking discrepancy between limiting the access to therapeutic work for graduates (it needs licences from the professional association and the process is strictly controlled) and opening it for voluntary student-workers in numerous organisations. It seems to stay in contrast to the claims of responsibility in managing the professional field.

Another aspect of the discursive construction of *limited professionalism* may be identified in the ramification of psychology as an academic field in Poland. The strength of the model of psychologist as therapist is based on well developed theoretical and ethical claims and well grounded institutionally, in contrast to managerial and organisational psychology – a sub-discipline in the making, with a field defined in a sketchy way, interconnected with other disciplines and vulnerable to demands from organisations it attempts to serve (business corporations, etc.)

These issues also relate to more general aspects of the culture of the university. For instance, the focus on research in academic training may contribute to the perceived lack of training practical competencies (like communication skills or empathy) and the 'vanishing of the clinician' in Seniors. Some personal preferences and values of the teachers in particular specialisations must have also a strong influence on the construction of the limits of professionalism.

Elitism

There are diversified and individualised sources of elitism in Novices. However, there is a conception of professional hierarchy emerging in the material (not visible in Seniors), and an awareness that the subjects occupy the lower parts of the ladder. At its top, there is a well-known figure of the expert:

Q: What in your opinion is the status of a psychologist in the society, and yours as well, what do you feel about it? A: I think it's pretty high. On one hand there is a **psychologist of a very high status, who usually is a university professor**, expressing their opinions on the radio or on TV; **on the other hand there is a common school psychologist-educator**, who is a little bit worse perceived. What about **my status** as a psychologist? I suppose it's ok, **above the average**. I don't know in what way people see me but the fact that I do what I do, gives me very much. It all makes up a favorable image. (PSY, 3, N, M)

The awareness of a relatively low position in the professional hierarchy is compensated by a high status of the psychologist in general (especially in relations with non-psychologists in the workplace). Here, the distribution of knowledge as a source of power plays a crucial role (lay people know very little of psychology, while psychologists supposedly know 'everything' about lay people):

Q: Does being a psychologist give you any special position at your workplace? A: Definitely it does, I feel it and I know it's like that. Because, firstly, **people do not know exactly what the psychology is about**, secondly, **I simply do know more about some issues and I've got the knowledge which others do not possess.** (PSY, 3, N, M)

The identification of Novices with this power/knowledge structure is also visible in those who, working in places like schools or educational consultation centres, experience influence on real lives of their clients. The experience of power is reinforced by a social stereotype ascribing to psychologists a miraculous power:

...there are a lot of stereotypes concerning psychologists (...) I suppose (what my experience so far says) that when I'll be working at school, I shall expect to be the final oracle and to wrestle not only with problems affecting my job, but also the teachers to require miracles from me. (PSY, 12, N, F)

Markers of Professionalism

In Freshmen, the professional jargon was a distinctive marker of being a prospective psychologist. This is no longer the case with Seniors and Novices. This is probably due to the fact that they seem to have already mastered the jargon and it works on them in a 'transparent' way. Instead, it seems that knowledge becomes a more distinct marker of professional identity. It distinguishes the psychologist among other people in the workplace. Another area where professionalism is (virtually) 'staged' is the space of work. An example can be found in an interview (PSY, 6, N, F) where a psychologist speaks of a certain conflict with another person sharing the same room (a pedagogue) as to how the space should be arranged. The issue is the spatial arrangement of distance between the professional and the client.

Personal and Professional Identity: Between the Real and the Ideal Selves

The portrait of the novice psychologist could be sketched with the following traits: fear of ambivalence in the situation of change in life and the burden of responsibility and independence; strive to stabilisation in the situation of limited possibilities of self-realisation; strive for integrity; diversity of positions taken in work. The dominant discursive powers that operate on this unstable field are: the discourse of psychological help and the academic discourse of psychology as science. Novices relate themselves to these two discursive structures. They fear responsibility in therapy, they have no right to practice it, but try to gain experience in voluntary work. The combination of economic factors, like the massive character of higher education, limited access to professional courses and licences, restrictions on the access to professional practice, plays an important steering role in the world of work of novice psychologists.

Discourses of ICT Novices' professional identity

The experience of transition

The very case of information technology graduates makes it hardly possible to view the transition between education and employment as a critical moment: they went through **the process of transition** during their studies. These life phases (education and employment) overlapped in the analyzed group. The substantial majority of the information technology students embarked on a professional career in the course of the studies and therefore belonged to both worlds simultaneously.

The information technology graduates tend to adopt an unceremonious attitude to the polytechnic; the function of the college was not just to educate but to certify that they display a high level of professional competence. The appraisal of the academic curriculum as well as of the methodology of teaching continues to be critical: software engineers are the most critical group in comparison with the other analyzed ones, which is a direct consequence of their pragmatic approach (useful/redundant). They maintain there are no outstanding members of staff who influenced the choice of their professional career. During the studies they were provided with out-of-date knowledge; they had to acquire up-to-date knowledge on their own, outside the college. This raises the question of whether it makes any sense at all to do five-year information technology studies, especially if we consider factors such as rapid changes which occur in the field of information technology and the inadequacy of the curriculum in relation to the contemporary level of achievement in the field.

The development of this domain takes place outside the polytechnic which does not participate in the process of knowledge production and distribution; neither does it reproduce this knowledge. What role does the polytechnic perform then as far as this flow of information is concerned? It imparts merely basic knowledge, its invariable fundamentals (mathematical values, algorithms). The process of spreading the most current, up-to-date knowledge is being taken over by the world of business.

The lack of ‘critical moments’ of transition – the information technology graduates do not encounter a change in rules or professional standards since they had to conform to them much earlier. They do not undergo any significant change in their work schedule, they do not assume greater responsibility, they do not mention any new tasks, challenges or new experiences in the workplace. The only change concerns the lack of the necessity to function in the two worlds at the same time and the possibility of confining one’s attention only to one’s professional environment. After completing the studies they were relieved as they no longer had to combine education with their professional career. They are released from certain duties now. They completed their education a year ago. However, they have belonged to their professional environment for a long time – **premature professionalism**.

The representatives of the analyzed professional group take jobs compatible with the type of their education. Very homogenous picture – all employed respondents work in the computer sciences field. Computer firms are the most popular workplaces and programming is the main professional activity of the respondents. The majority of the respondents work in the private sector, one person set up his own computer company, two people work in the public sector (they chose an academic career), two people are currently unemployed.

PL, ICT, F, Nov, 1 – works at the Technical University in Gdansk as a assistant, teaching is a main activity; age: 24

PL, ICT, M, Nov, 3 – owner of a small computer firm – searching clients and programming; age: 25

PL, ICT, M, Nov, 4 – unemployed, considers working abroad (in USA) only as a computer scientists; age: 24

PL, ICT, M, Nov, 5 – programmer in computer firm; age: 25
 PL, ICT, M, Nov, 6 – network administrator, programmer; age: 26
 PL, ICT, M, Nov, 7 – unemployed, looks for the work (considers working in EU) only as a computer scientists; age: 25
 PL, ICT, M, Nov, 9 – works at the Technical University in Gdansk (EU project), creating tools for reading archival documents; age: 25
 PL, ICT, M, Nov, 10 – programmer in an internet portal; age: 26
 PL, ICT, M, Nov, 11 – programmer in an internet portal, creating internet services; age: 24
 PL, ICT, M, Nov, 12 – programmer, creating software for accountancy; age: 25
 PL, ICT, M, Nov, 13 – not graduated yet, programmer in a computer firm; age: 25
 PL, ICT, M, Nov, 15 – programmer in a small firm now (after being a programmer in an internet portal); age: 24

The novices have a subordinate role in their professional environment (they are on the lowest level, which they wished to avoid as senior students). A software programmer is the most common function performed by them in their workplace whereas the respondents consider the job of an analyst as the most worthwhile one. However, everyone who began a professional career – has a job compatible with the type of their education.

The creative aspect of the job (being innovative), producing novel solutions, which was strongly emphasized by the senior students, recurs throughout the novices' statements, too.

To their astonishment, it appears that it is not the most significant prerequisite for employment in this particular environment. They are disappointed with the routine of the job they must do. Earlier they thought that as computer engineers they would have to face tasks requiring creativity, ingenuity, and now they have to do the job they find beneath their capacity.

They claim that they have little chance of developing in their workplace: it neither offers them promotion prospects nor trains them in more recent technologies or programs. Consequently their professional competence begins to deteriorate (is this a typical feature of the profession?/a temporary standstill in a professional career?/the current situation on the job market in Poland?).

A year before they felt to be engineers, co-authors of this social and technological system, helping to regulate its operating mechanism. These days they do not feel the sense of being indispensable or irreplaceable. Currently they regard themselves as minor elements of the system.

The novices realized that the job market does not receive as many software engineers as they had thought when they were students. They are bitterly disappointed at this situation – they thought they could be fussy about job vacancies whereas they had to confront the harsh reality of the job market. The sense of awareness of the irrelevance of their own expectations about the job market lowered their sense of their market value. Their previous hopes for rapid promotion have given way to fears of failure to keep the job. At the present moment their prime aim is to maintain the status quo.

Prospects for the future

The previous clearly defined professional prospects have become distant and uncertain. They used to be confident of success in entering the job market; now their professional

stability has become seriously threatened. The novices have voiced fears that they will fall behind with bringing their knowledge up to date and that they will be squeezed out from the market by their younger colleagues.

They have no fixed professional plans for the future. What possible career patterns might they follow? If we take their previous expectations and motivations into account, their hope of getting a job strictly connected with the domain of information technology, an innovative, well-paid job with plenty of scope for development seems to have been an important factor which influenced their choice of the type of education. This points to the conclusion that the software engineers wish to move high up the career ladder in an international concern. They hope that their professional career will develop, they will be able to make use of their creative potential and they won't become 'greying coders'. The vast majority of the respondents consider getting a job abroad (in an English-speaking country).

The analysis of the professional identity of a software engineer

Identity referents

The analyzed group developed their professional identity in the course of their studies. It was a period of smooth transformation: the information technology students launched professional careers and lost their sense of belonging to the academic world, which led to the development of their professional identity. The job strictly connected with a particular professional environment (programming in the context of specific applications) causes the respondents to represent a homogeneous model of professional identity. They do not experience the conflict of roles as far as their professional identity is concerned: they are only software engineers. One of the typical features of the professional identity of a software engineer is its particularly powerful internalization. They identify solely with the job of a software engineer which brings about certain rigidity and a lack of flexibility. They refrain from taking a job connected with a different domain; however, they do realize that their current job is not a lifelong one. The professional identity of a software engineer is based on the competence and knowledge acquired outside the polytechnic (the internet, the workplace), and not on the academic education. The identity connected with the professional duties and the perception of one's own efficiency hinges on the results of performing one's duties. Competence is a key factor which constitutes the sense of identity of a software engineer. Their social duties are understood in the context of the quality of their work, of the projects they do and they do not extend to the sphere of their private life. It is not a professional role which enters the boundaries of the private self, which offers the possibility of distinguishing between the private self and the professional self.

The sense of belonging to the profession dictates the way of perceiving the world and of establishing positions in the professional environment.

Identity as a trajectory (the dynamic)

The typical feature of the analyzed profession is the dynamic development in the domain which determines the process of shaping the professional identity of a software engineer. This particularly fast pace of changes in the field exerts an impact on the acceleration in the pace of getting old in the professional sense. The information technology graduates usually have a couple of years' working experience; they often hold senior posts without direct supervision (they often demonstrate a higher level of professional competence than their superiors). They feel they are at the peak of their professional career and they begin to grow

old in the professional sense. One year after completing the studies they feel apprehensive about the possibility of being squeezed out of the market by their younger colleagues. This springs from the nature of professional maturity of a software engineer ('premature professional old age'). They are fully aware that their experience is not valued, as opposed to being familiar with modern technologies and solutions. They fear they are heading for retirement. What strategies for coping with the 'premature professional old age' do the information technology graduates implement? Is it really true that their market value goes down so rapidly or is it only a temporary standstill in the professional career? It might be a chance of development; software engineers face the necessity to specialize in more and more narrow fields, they have to become experts at their domains and then they begin to move higher up the career ladder. Perhaps such specialist knowledge is harmful to a software engineer. Perhaps the current economic situation and the related tendencies on the market place are responsible for a severe crisis of self-esteem which recurs in the novices' statements. Perhaps the profession itself establishes boundaries, erects barriers and makes it difficult to meet the demands of the market. The strong sense of belonging to the profession causes the software engineers to lose their mobility on the market. The software engineers are not flexible. They are reluctant to retrain; their perception of their own professional identity is very narrow and delimited only to a sense of self as a software engineer. If this is true, where did such a picture of one's own self originate? What are the driving forces behind this rigidity?

The influence of discourses

Masculine culture and technocracy

The software engineers continue to function in the sphere of **the masculine culture**. **The motif of survival** becomes clearly visible in this context. A battle for survival becomes the key factor which determines their activity. The primary aim is to be able to hold down the job (in the past they had to struggle for the possibility of completing their education at the polytechnic). The rival, a source of menace, has changed. The previous opposition 'we - members of staff' has changed into 'I - my rivals' (those with better education). The previous support from friends has turned into intense competition; they compete against one another and as a result they have become forlorn in this struggle and have much more to lose now as a number of respondents decided to start a family. Their professional environment is utterly meritocratic: they are able to hold down the job as long as they are efficient enough, as long as their competence is sufficient to solve problems connected with the domain - the culture of the free market. When their knowledge becomes obsolete and they fall behind with technological advances, they become redundant and they are squeezed out of the market by the younger ones who are able to keep abreast of the most recent technologies. In their professional world they encounter **technocracy** (so they did in their studies). What really counts is productivity, efficiency, fulfilling tasks on time, this approach to work can be derived from Ford - an emphasis is placed on efficiency. This world is orientated towards tasks, not relations. It turns out that it fails to represent the postindustrial culture. The software engineers perform the role of contemporary labourers who carry out the most dull, routine tasks (the job of a typist, a coder).

Elitism

The earlier sense of belonging to **an elite** has been undermined: they have lost their self-confidence, they feel their market value went down, they are afraid of the competition. Their utterances reveal that their previous elitist sense of being authors of the social system has

been undermined ('they have lost their vocation'). The disintegration of the elitist discourse – it has been dominated by the survival discourse. The novices continue to perceive information technology as an integral element of the contemporary life. However, they realize that they do not influence the state of the social life or the economy; they work for the service sector (for education, medicine, military science, industries) and they further these particular branches. They begin to acknowledge the equality of various professions. Their closer contact with people from different walks of life results in the fact that they no longer elevate their own professional group.

They only point to the privileged position of software engineers on account of the fact they are employed – a competent software engineer can feel secure about his/her post (more secure than an expert at marketing). According to the respondents, in this domain there are more experts who specialize in one field and there is greater job security.

Where did their previous sense of belonging to an elite originate then? It might have been bred by independence connected with the studies (a change of place of residence, a rise in the social status). It is also possible that in the course of their studies they were made to believe that they belong to an elite and carry out weighty tasks which improve the quality of human life. As employees they discovered they are mere cogs in the machine. Their perception of their own professional group as an elite has been additionally undermined by the fact that they feel their market value went down and they are threatened with dismissal.

The discrimination between personal life and professional life

The technocratic vision of the world (a society dominated by advanced technologies), which used to recur in the students' utterances, is losing its destructive power (it used to weaken interpersonal relations). Information technology graduates recognize the meaning of interpersonal relations (family bonds, friendship, social life) and they begin to devote their free time they used to spend at the computer to fostering these bonds. Their personal life becomes discriminated from the professional one. Previously the two were inextricably linked, which took the form of a nearly pathological addiction to the computer, to the net. They begin to protect their leisure time and recognize its value. Their existence used to be dominated by their occupational activity before. They might be tired of this intense devotion to their job. They begin to distinguish between the professional sphere and the personal one, they 'get away from the computer' and devote more time to their families and friends.

Such restrictions on the access to the net have a negative consequence: they do not follow technological novelties any longer, they cannot carry on with their constant education. Their younger colleagues who haven't started their families yet keep exploring websites, acquire up-to-date knowledge and become the powerful competition. They devote almost all their time to following new trends in the domain of information technology. The novices begin to experience the results of professional exploitation (overwork, burn-out?).

During their studies they could develop their competence – they had enough time, a virtual community, carried out creative tasks. Now their paths have diverged so information processing is not so successful any longer. Besides, they begin to protect their leisure time with the result that they are unable to keep abreast of recent advances in information technology.

In summary it should be emphasized that the motif of time is a powerful factor which determines the professional development of software engineers. They develop their professional identity relatively early, they work at a frantic pace, get burnt out and grow old in the professional sense. They function on the axis of time whereas a geographical location does not exert such an impact on the course of their professional career. The novices

maintain that the workplace itself does not have any special meaning to them. What really matters is the nature of the job (it should be creative, well-paid and conducive to their development). The current standstill in their professional career has made them lose a sense of control over their professional future. They realized they are also subject to the market conditions. This has undermined their sense of belonging to an elite. Now they have to take the social and economic conditions into consideration and plan their professional career afresh.

Germany

We like to introduce the German report with a brief historical view on the curriculum development in higher education starting from the early seventies onwards. Then the focus will be put on discourses that could be identified on the basis of empirical statements from students and novices of the following three university programmes: psychology, political science, and educational science. Finally, a comparative analysis of the transition from higher education to work life completes the German report.

Structure characteristics of the reform of higher education in Germany from the seventies onwards

1. Historical development of structures

In the course of the recent decades universities have lost their traditional “unitary ideal” (cf. M. EIGEN, 1988). By now, while examining this process of reform during the recent decades, four ideal types can be identified which have led to diversive functions and structural models of universities on an institutional level. They are defined as:

Type 1: Republic of scholars –

which is exclusively committed to science in the sense of Humboldt’s traditional ideal and in which the ordinaries cooperatively arrange all issues of research and teaching activities. This self-conception of universities is purely defined by the quality of the teaching personnel whom is attributed a high degree of autonomy.

Type 2: Group university –

which consists in legally cooperative groups with various interests. In the field of research and teaching activities these groups reach their decisions together – on the basis of their own spheres of interest under the terms of extensive autonomy,

including financial management which is largely administered on their own account.

Type 3: Service enterprise –

which is in accordance with the neo-liberal competition model – with its supply and demand of alumni on the open market – similar to the way many institutions of higher education are structured in the USA. Universities provide their services in the field of research and teaching activities on the market; and the demand for services generated on the market reflects the quality of the individual institutions.

Type 4 Junior agency –

as an institution which is subordinate to the respective governmental department with highly restricted authority to decide on research and teaching activities and whose quality can be derived from the allocation of funds with regard to staff appropriation, research and property. The higher the number of qualified scientists and funds, the higher the expected quality.

These four ideals of universities existed in East and West Germany until the nineties in various distinctive forms. Especially the structure of universities in the sense of Humboldt was re-established in the FRG after 1945. Due to the political awareness represented by lecturers and students universities aimed at tying in with the Weimar Republic. Not until the first half of the sixties a rethinking was emerging, as a consequence of the student movement and their goals, namely a comprehensive democratisation of the educational system whereby a great deal of discussion on reform has been initiated. The results of this process can only be precisely understood when overviewing the research on higher education in retrospect:

The neo-liberal idea of a competition-based university was established just a few years ago and thus the service concept of universities has increasingly become the focal point of debate. However, this model cannot be implemented unless a fundamental and comprehensive institutional reform is put into practice. The competition model places stronger emphasis on the quality of the teaching performance as a crucial element of competition. This is presumably also the case because the existing research markets are structured on the basis of other criteria than those on markets-to-be which target on teaching activities. (M. BÜLOW-SCHRAMM 2002, loc. cit., *translated*)

2. Curricular differentiation and quality assurance

Though the structural model of the university as service enterprise for the academic labour market is still being implemented, the typical characteristics are already sufficiently discernible (cf. M. BÜLOW-SCHRAMM, loc. cit.):

1. Students have the right to choose their university and, in turn, universities may also select their students.

Under the provisions of competition, the autonomously operating university has to lay open its accomplishments and aims so that students are actually in a position to choose. Vice versa, universities select their students by means of entrance examinations which are formulated in accordance with the targets universities set themselves autonomously.

Evaluation of research and teaching activities.

The evaluation aims at detecting weak points in the field which is to be evaluated so that the foundations for a an improved efficiency in the field of research and teaching activities can be set. Yet if teaching activities are evaluated by asking the students, the evaluation of courses depend on their interests or disinterests, respectively, and at best provides indications of the acceptance as regard content.

Since there are no generally accepted criteria for any evaluation, alternative options must be found for the evaluation process. Especially the *Wissenschaftsrat* (German Science Council) prefers commissions of experts whose consensus then completes the evaluation of research.

Yet the experts' consensus cannot be replaced, neither by objective factors such as prizes, awards, allotted third-party funds, publications nor by the incidence of citation. Regarding these factors, at best it would be possible to generate discipline-related indicators which, however, are scarcely sufficient to establish ranking lists. (M. BÜLOW-SCHRAMM 2002, loc. cit. *translated*)

Even more decisive for empiric comparative tests on the European level is the differentiation and flexibility of service offers which have been updated since. By means of this, universities may respond to the changed demands on the academic labour market. As a result, the consequences of the current structural changes and the ongoing revision of the academic curricula are the following:

Flexibility of service offers requires above all a dynamic higher education policy which leaves open the subject canon and thus both, the occupational and academic career. [...]

In the end – within such a model – the state can only implement its claims and interests if it becomes a market participant and – on the basis of its supply and demand activity – influences the academic service provision.” (M. BÜLOW-SCHRAMM 2002, S. 91, *translated*)

Owing to the dependance of changing structures within higher education institutions mentioned above, the curriculum of the individual academic subjects has strongly been influenced. In this context, the concept of “differentiated universities”, developed in 1997, is attracting increasingly attention. This curricular model is based on expert courses of studies on a general level and modular courses on an advanced level, whereby eventually an academic degree is awarded. The expert courses on a general level are supposed to be completed with a BA degree, the chosen courses on a modular level with a MA degree. A third optional degree is a PhD. This model of “differentiated universities” is

based on the assumption that both, courses of studies on a basic level and those on an advanced one are provided by all universities which ought to offer the same degrees so that students may continue their studies at other universities. Moreover, the study programmes have to be constructed in a way in which they finally will be compatible with common international accepted programmes and degrees (K.J. SCHMÜCKER 2000, p.77).

3. Institutional changes within the higher education system and students' expectations of academic study programmes

In this context, it is of particular importance that those changes in Germany's higher education system which have had a lasting effect also occurred on the level of its institutional structures. Due to an agreement which Germany's federal states already made in 1968, *Fachhochschulen* (universities of 'applied' sciences) were attributed the status of additional institutions of higher education which particularly meet the economic demands in line with the market discussed in this report. There are some basic principles *Fachhochschulen* are subject to which deviate from those of universities:

- introduction of the advanced technical college certificate as requirement for access;
- duration of the standard period of study: three years, that is six semesters;
- the right to change from technical colleges to scientific universities, i.e. for post-graduation
- enabling research and development activities (in accordance with the *law providing guidelines for higher education*, 1985).

Universities of 'applied' sciences have developed quite well since 1970:

They established themselves as an integral part of the entire institutional system of higher education, creating an independent profile of their own, in particular, developing a strong orientation towards occupational practice, as compared to the transitional universities; they developed numerous innovative study courses; internationally, they perceived a special opportunity to integrate students' visits to foreign countries into these study courses; and finally, programmes of applied research and further scientific education were initiated. (R. MÖNCH 2001, p. 25)

Summarising these previous reform processes, the catchword in the new study programmes is *job orientation* :

This is particularly true in the humanities and social sciences where anything like profession-based guilds, with the exception of law and possibly economics, are few and where anything like job orientation of academic endeavours is considered to be the detestable victory of industry, commerce and profit-driven capitalism as a whole over academic independence and idealism [...].

Job orientation as a yardstick for course and curricula reform on the background of the Bologna Declaration is nothing but client-partner orientation half way between secondary education and the labour market. This means that the student

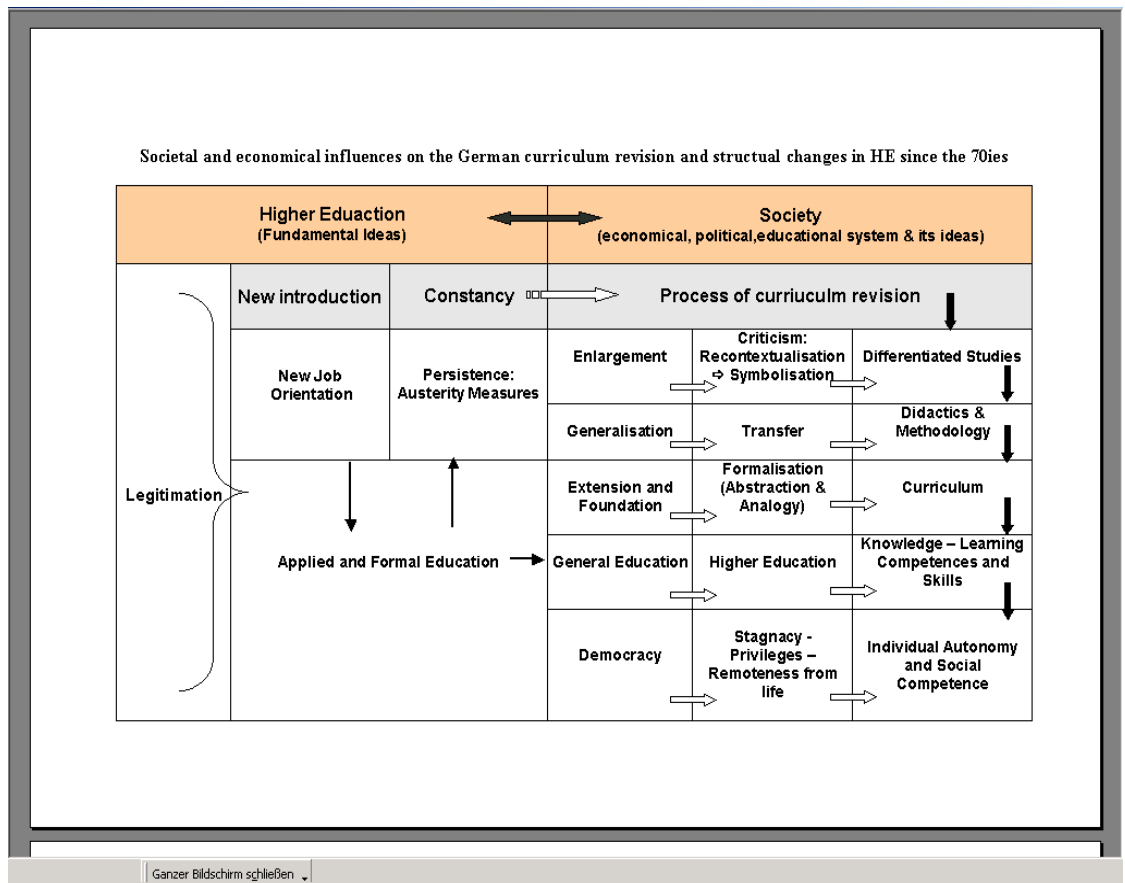
must be accepted and integrated at a point where a reasonable average student can be expected to stand in accordance with the present standards of the school system. And it means that the student must be taken to a point where he, or she, meets the expectations of academic study programmes.” (J. KOHLER 2001, p. 35)

Table (X): Educational reforms at German universities from the seventies onwards

The following table comprises the various influences on the German curriculum reform on higher education as provided by economical, political and societal interest groups. The suspensible relationship between fundamental ideas of higher education on the one hand, and society on the other, is marked by the three items “new introduction”, “constancy”, and ”process of curriculum revision”.

This process has an impact on all areas of education and on its targets which have mutually intervoven forms of structural and institutional organisation, contents and its legitimation. While the curriculum development reacts on new job orientation and on austerity measurements, courses were more and more differentiated - mostly under economic pressure – and competence-based education has been established as a long-ranging key element of higher education.

Another goal of the educational reforms was the democratisation of institutions and of the education system as a whole, whereby access to higher education was supposed to be no longer exclusively restricted to economically privileged groups (Bildungsbürgertum). The Duisburg University - like many other universities - was founded during these years and followed a new comprehensive approach: the double tracked *Gesamthochschule*. Students with working-class origin were entitled to access university on the basis of second-chance education. At present, this fundamental idea is disappearing as there is a correlation between the social origin and the privilege to access higher education (cf. the German results of the PISA Studies, 2000). The concept of elitist universities with elitist students returns on the agenda of future curriculum revisions - as a future oriented scenario.



Psychology

Discursive formations on higher education and work life identified among students and novices:

Psychology as a human technology – quantifiable behaviour

The expectations that psychology explains and interprets human behaviour are not satisfied as philosophical problems are not included on the programme's agenda. The phenomena of human behaviour are often viewed in a standardised way (from a methodological point of view) which means that previous notions of psychology have to be abandoned. Surprisingly, the notion of psychology seems to change with the practical confrontation with work life reality. Due to the application of psychological topics, mostly within school-reality, the approach to psychology appears to be more emotionally as the novices have to impart different topics of knowledge.

The advocates of “correct” research methodology

Particularly older lecturers represent a traditional academic culture in Germany, the majority of them is quite dominant in the relationship with students as they are in prominent key-positions. They try to protect the quantitative approach to research and to ban alternative methods from their seminars and research practice, such as qualitative research. Certain branches of psychology, such as psychoanalysis, are valued by them as unreliable and unscientific, i.e. because they use projective methods and ignore basic scientific standards. The students “inherit” or adopt this understanding of science and use the recommended instrumentarium, such as standardised questionnaires. Interviews and participant observation within group processes are mostly excluded in their scientific repertoire. There are some elementary courses on Human Psychology (e.g. conversation rules by Carl Rogers) interwoven in the programme but insight into psychoanalytical theories, for instance, can only be won by additional learning efforts outside the university courses.

Difficult social challenges for teachers

Many students are afraid of teaching in schools due to social conflicts which are strongly discussed and problematised in society. It is difficult for teachers to solve or to compensate the social conflicts they are confronted with. According to the two functions they have to play they are in a dilemma: On one side they should impart basic knowledge to the pupils, on the other they are on a difficult educational mission concerning issues of personality and values.

Financial security provided by a teacher career

The labour market gives reason to take a pessimistic view on work life. Work contracts are more and more limited to a short duration as the jobs are often related to temporary projects. The graduates regard the envisaged teacher career as very promising from an economical point of view. Although they are not sure whether they like to work at school in the long-term.

Therapists are “real” psychologists

The students and novices know about the multitude of psychological application but at the same time therapists are regarded as the real psychologists. Clinical psychology is not well-represented in the university programme and the majority of the senior students is not longer interested in this subject any more. Telling a stranger that one is a psychology student supports the manifestation of the feeling of dissonance. Due to the intensity of various reactions (i.e. extraordinary interest or fear) the students experience that they carry a “heavy weight on their shoulders” together with uncomfortable justification. They start communicating about topics of human behaviour outside university, but indeed they rather like to avoid this kind of conversation as the ordinary notions of psychology have nothing to do with their experiences inside the programme.

Flexibility of psychological application

A great number of senior students change from the psychology to the pedagogy programme. Thereby, the graduates have many different motives: They believe to have better opportunities on the labour market, furthermore, they feel superior to their colleagues due to psychological education and acquired research methodology. In some cases they enrolled in pedagogy in order to have additional opportunities provided by the diploma as they already work in the envisaged area of profession (so called nichés). The liberal pedagogy programme supports almost all kinds of activities with regard to human interaction, whereby psychological application at work is not only possible, but also a great advantage for those who have studied psychology before.

In the following, the discourses will be explained in detail with regard to the specific work situations of the novices. The perception of the discrepancy between former expectations and different experiences during their studies leads to different consequences. There are two major strategies the students obviously choose in order to cope identity crises during their studies. In both groups at least two minor characteristics can be taken into consideration (above).

Change of the university programme and drop outs (first strategy)

Due to the experienced stagnation during the studies a number of students decide to change the academic subject, a few of them even leave the university because of their dissatisfaction. Often, they decided to change the programme at the end or in the second half of their studies. In most cases the students enroll in programmes of social science or pedagogy which are closely related to psychological issues of human behaviour. On the one hand, the motivation for this decision is mainly rooted in promising alternative professional areas, and on the other, the students seem to follow their interests in social topics which were somehow “lost” in the psychology programme. Individual performances besides university often have an impact on professional targets (so called “niches”).

“I have got three jobs, I give seminars at the university (psychology for IT students), I work at the terristic zoo (workshops for kids, seminars, tours,etc.), I produce internet-sites and create digital learning cd’s. Soon I will found an institute for ecological pedagogy, the whole project is is in the application-process. I am looking for a start-up financing.” (Ger, ES 4, formerly psychology, male)

The senior students and graduates believe that their degree in psychology is not very valuable for the labour market as the programme mainly places emphasis on teacher’s education. Paradoxically, the seminar-reality at university does not necessarily meet the ends of efficient teacher. Contrary to its official concept the study programme offers well-elaborated courses in industrial psychology and a newly founded institute especially employs students in the area of accident research – which is rather irrelevant for teacher’s work area. It is barely

comprehensible that this highly specific field of psychology was once established in this programme. For these students who partly like to satisfy their social ambitions beyond the means of teaching activities the change to the pedagogy programme seems appropriate as the psychology programme originally recommends to do the school internship even though it does not prepare very well.

As a matter of fact the attempt to become well-established in research activities can end in stagnation. The power of the “economic security discourse” can be seen in the most extraordinary case among the respondents. A psychology senior student decided to change to the pedagogy programme in order to follow his research interest in the institute he has worked for as a student. After a time of disappointment concerning his envisaged PhD-project he decided to leave the field of research. Now, he plans to become a psychology teacher through additional studies besides scientific job - a professional aim he originally rejected.

“There was no problem to start working. I felt very selfconfident, because it was my former working group from the study. In the beginning there was a phase of high motivation when we planned to found our institute. We wanted to realise our own ideas, but now there is missing the perspective. I cannot manage my PhD. Now, it is a mixture of earning money and pulling the duty. I do additional studies in order to become a teacher, so I asked for a reduction from full-time position to half-time”
(Ger, ES 2, male)

Becoming a psychology teacher - assimilation or vocation? (second strategy)

Another quota of students decides to complete their studies in order to become psychology teachers after the obligatory school internship. This group of students is outnumbering and highly represented within the last interview periods, but this is based on the fact that the fellow students (about the same number) with other orientations and aims already left the programme - as described above.

Generally, this group can be divided in two subgroups according to different characteristic motivations. While a couple of young psychologists were more or less convinced to become teachers for a longer time already in the middle time of studies, others justify their choice by the lack of alternative perspectives.

Thereby, the perspective to become a teacher is the result of a spontaneous wish for financial security and of an absolute lack of alternatives. Instead of reorienting themselves, i.e. by post-graduate offers or immediately through the labour market, they avoid the confrontation with other opportunities based on the notion that teaching appears to be closely related to the nature of studying. In other words: these graduates adapt to the expected teacher role, even though most of them could not imagine choosing this professional area when they were freshmen or senior students. Coming back to the motivation firstly mentioned within this group: the young psychologists who were intrinsically convinced according to their decision. They mentioned their lasting interest in the teaching

tasks and in the context of education based on the idea of psychological competence. Somewhere along the studies they began to feel attracted by the notion of working as a psychology teacher. They arranged with both the demystification of psychology and the lack of socio-clinical issues at earlier time. It is very likely that the psychology students hesitate to become clinical psychologists: in Germany, clinical psychologists have to participate in an additional (post-graduate) educational programme in one of the private institutes for at least three years which is very expensive. Some of the therapist societies have elitist self-conceptions and are interested in preserving this status of exclusiveness. The role of the psychological expert among the teacher colleagues seems to be very pleasant, especially, on the background of solving social conflicts at school. Forms of social commitment influence the perceived reality of working life indirectly. A comparison of the strong social motivation of freshmen students with senior students' and novices' attitudes helps to draw a clear picture. While the senior students were most distanced from ideas of social commitment, the novices now recover their social ambitions. In the German society, the teacher role is associated with high responsibility towards the social education of children. Similarly, persons who engage in these professional activities touch a tender spot as the quality of education is widely discussed in popular media. The curriculum of school (supervised through the ministry of education) implies the task of personality development "Erziehungsauftrag" as an essential teaching objective.

"For me as a teacher it is important to help the pupils on their way to become mature citizens and to provide the development of their personality. I am a role model to the pupils, I like them to learn how to reflect on societal values, such as honesty and truthfulness and how to improve a general critical awareness." (Ger, Psy 5, m)

A high percentage of novices strive for transdisciplinary learning approaches which rather points to the principle of universality – the basic idea of university. Another condition provides the identification with the role of psychology teachers among the novices: As a matter of fact psychology is a very rare subject at the German schools, due to its exotic nature the subject "psychology" gives the teachers an image of exclusiveness which is supported by temporary meetings organised by the *Psychology Teacher Association*.

"When I think about my responsibility, at first I think about the composition of my lessons with regard to the learners. But we are also reliant on the cooperation with other colleagues when we do common arrangements. At my school there is a strong interdisciplinary approach to learning." (Ger, Psy 9, m)

"I already belong for longer time to the Psychology and Pedagogy Teacher Association." (Ger, Psy 2, f)

Problems of identity - Who is a psychologist, who is a pedagogue?

Among both groups the question whether they see themselves as psychologists caused doubts - their statements mostly show ambivalence. The pedagogues who used to be psychologists still think and act in psychological categories, but they are pedagogues, whereas the psychology teachers talk about ways of psychological intervention from the educationalist perspective, that is as teachers. When asking for professional identity, it is also necessary to ask *what is desired and what is not desired?*

“I don't feel like a professional psychologist, it is more complex. I am on the way to become a teacher so I am rather a professional pedagogue.” (Ger, Psy 9, m)

The pedagogues who were formerly psychology students themselves believe to have certain advantages over “usual” pedagogues due to their psychological expertise (knowledge and competence) and to their scientific approach which is rated more seriously. As a consequence thereof, they seem to cultivate an elitist self-image; furthermore, they see themselves more as psychologists than their former fellow students who mostly work as teachers now. Whereas they struggle with finding a satisfying niche of their interests and deal with a kind of vagueness, the teacher group has to cope with the self-adaption concerning their (future) teacher role.

The psychology teachers feel superior to teacher colleagues who teach other subjects. When the opportunity was given, they appreciated to point out their psychological expertise (knowledge and competence).

“First of all, cooperation has to take place with the pupils .. I think I am able to become a counseling teacher because of my psychological competences. In this field I edge over my colleagues.” (Ger, Psy 7, m)

But at the same time, they clearly avoid to identify themselves as psychologists as they only consider those psychologists as “real” who work in the classical therapeutical context.

“No, I don't see myself as a professional psychologist, okay, maybe to some extent. It is my task to put certain contents across the learners. The image of a professional psychologist rather suits to a therapist. However, I have difficulties with this term.” (Ger, Psy 7, m)

This reduction of the psychological roles can be seen as resulting from the learning process during the first study years where the students have learnt to

distance themselves from clinical issues. The programme's approach to psychology particularly remains within human technology. Preferences for research methodology expressed by senior students seem to function as a substitution effect regarding the problem of a missing identification with rather applicable, social topics. Hence, research methodology was appreciated as the field of practical implementation. This, however, follows a latent tradition of academic culture in Germany which is distributed, especially, by older scientists who are protectionists of "correct" scientific methodology. Modern alternative approaches, such as, qualitative research methods are usually regarded as unscientific and even banned by the lecturers: Human behaviour is almost seen from a numerical point of view and always has to be measurable and quantifiable. Based on this scientific understanding, rather interpretative and projective approaches, such as, psychoanalytic theories are regarded as more or less speculatively and therefore not suitable for humanities. Consequently, the students seem to inherit this understanding. But within the youngest transition process the young teachers change their preference and perspectives due to the necessity of finding a successful way to simplify specialised knowledge with regard to the addressees: young learners at school.

"There is an immense difference when you explain something to your lecturer or to fellow students who are more or less specialists and when you have to explain the same content to younger school-learners." (Ger, Psy 5, m)

"The didactics of psychology was too thin. You need to know more about the different paradigms, biopsychology, psychoanalysis, and holistic psychology have not been dealt with adequately in the programme. The whole curriculum should be arranged differently. It should be oriented to the basic paradigms." (Ger, Psy 7, m)

Side observations

As the meta-conversation before and right after the interview sessions may indicate, many of the interviewees have changed their personal attitude towards empirical methods. Most of the senior students of psychology were quite critical about the given interview questions but at the end (and later on during the second interview period as novice workers) they became more open-minded and often expressed their interest in qualitative research methods. In the beginning, the interviewers had to "fight" against a kind of resistant attitude among advanced psychology students.

Organisation of learning and the fear of practice

Most psychologists appreciate their learning activities during the last period of studies. At the same time, the respondents complain about the insufficiency of practical training and regard the materialistic conditions in the programme as poor. The successful self-organisation in small learning groups (3-6 persons)

results from negative experiences on the one hand and from theoretical “insider” knowledge about learning-processes on the other. The senior students cultivated and established learning-networks consisting of fellow students which they still benefit from as novice workers.

“I am the youngest staff-member and I am the first teacher on probation at this catholic vocational school, the fact that I am the only one here is a bit difficult to me. I have no companion there, but we have regular meetings of former fellow students in order to help each other at the internship.” (Ger, Psy 8, f)

Presentations in many study courses are experienced as the most positive basis for further learning efforts. The (supposed) fear of practice could be compensated in a better way by the programme through a more efficient preparation for actual teaching. The work on the final thesis is also valued specifically important among the respondents as they often draw the balance of their previous learning activities and experience something they have missed beforehand: The examination period functions as a kind of quality control. During the studies they could hardly assess their individual level of knowledge and ability due to missing concrete feedback by lecturers. During the final exams, they concentrate all their efforts on a certain topic as they have to reproduce theoretical contents on the one hand and to transfer these to empirical data on the other. The graduates feel challenged by the self-responsible way of interpreting their own results while this experience is often connected with understanding the procedures of scientific work processes and with acquiring a deeper approach to psychological problems.

Teachers as jugglers in school-education

The discussion in Germany about the difficult role of school-teachers who have to perform different tasks in multi-faceted ways contributes to the expressed uncomfortable relation to practical experiences. Although the programme demands two practical training courses from the students during their studies, this offer is valued critically by the students. They feel enormously challenged by the confrontation with the educational role a teacher nowadays has to due to seemingly increasing social problems of the children and teenagers. While the media expound the problems of issues of mobbing and violence among young learners, the students have great respect and sometimes even pessimistic expectations towards the perspective of becoming a teacher.

“I learnt (by observations) that the handling of hierarchies will challenge me very much. You need to discipline the rather difficult and socially disadvantaged pupils. I am not used to an authoritarian style.” (Ger, Psy 9, m)

As a matter of fact, the situation is (maybe) less alarming. Meanwhile, the novices are confident to be able to manage this educational role, as some of them explain, on the basis of psychological background knowledge and social competence. After the first year of work, many of them can look back on certain successful achievements:

“The pupils look at me more intensively; there is more assessment because I am a psychologist and a role model to them. This challenge is not too difficult for me; because on the one hand I can use my psychological knowledge from my studies and on the other I feel prepared by my own personality.” (Ger, Psy 7, m)

Knowledge and competence

The classical notion that an academic person is provided with an outstanding level of knowledge has to be put into perspective. Regarding the common statements among psychology students and novices, the notion of competence gains more and more importance. This view seems to be strikingly represented in the linguistic usage of many branches in society and business. Forms of specialised knowledge are often seen secondary compared to social skills and a manifold repertoire of acting.

“The application of knowledge was not sufficient during my journey, but I learnt how to think scientifically and self-dependently and at least how to organize myself.” (Ger, Psy 8, f)

“When I look back on my studies, there are some significant key-qualifications I have acquired at university: Firstly, oral and writing skills, they are important for teaching in order to be able to develop useful methods and contents of learning in very short time (from a pragmatic point of view), and to know how to socialise with others, e.g., for exchanging materials, experiences and for making friendships.” (Ger, Psy 9, m)

There is a contrast between two major positions expressed among students and young professionals. On the one hand, the idea of lifelong learning and “learning to learn” is mentioned in many contexts, but on the other, young teachers explore that basic knowledge is put on the agenda of their daily work. They think that the first two years in their professional life demand more learning efforts than the studies at university. As a consequence, knowledge has to be refreshed and its structures have to be reorganised in order to impart knowledge to young learners. The most challenging task in the beginning of a teacher career is the acquisition of suitable methods and didactical approaches. The research methodology acquired during the studies seems to collide with the factual requirements in

school sometimes. From the perspective of the other group of psychology students (who graduated in pedagogy), this circumstance is not concurrent as some of them work in research institutes. Although specialised knowledge is more important in these fields of psychological application, i.e. at accident or industrial research, issues on competence and its linguistic representation are essential. Competence is also used as a key-term from general economic perspectives: While German companies mainly advertise with the pretended competence of their employees, research activities deal with employee rating, democratic structures in companies and questions of workers' participation. These problems are also mirrored in several attempts to put the managements of academic institutes on a professional level. In the process of restructuring the different work places, new job requirements and profiles are going to be developed. For instance, forms of quality evaluation and control are discussed among all institutions of society. In some cases, the studies have a positive effect on institutional knowledge and managerial competence as operational procedures are recognised by work life experiences.

“The studies didn't help me to become a professional psychologist, but I would say the whole time was positive due to my experiences of project work and institutional knowledge.” (Ger, ES 1, formally psychology, male)

Notation to the academic culture in Germany

Higher education in Germany is organised in two major institutional branches. The institutions are divided in rather academic universities and in rather practical *Fachhochschulen* (there is no suitable english translation, *Fachhochschulen* may resemble technical colleges or “polytechnics”). The graduates of universities usually receive more income in social professions than their colleagues from *Fachhochschulen* as their study programmes demand longer study times. The students of *Fachhochschulen* are less confronted with theoretical knowledge and research but, on the other hand, they are often advantaged in their experience of practical problems concerning their future job specification. Consequently, the learning surroundings are organised differently. On the one hand, the universities which aim at academic *bildung* provide a liberal way of learning, whereby the professional applications are not defined clearly. On the other hand, the organisation of learning activities at *Fachhochschulen* is often problem-based and more compact from a temporal point of view. Due to the difficult German labour market many social companies currently prefer to employ graduates from *Fachhochschulen* as they are less expensive.

Educational Science

Discursive formations on higher education and work life identified among students and novices:

1) The openness of education and work life application

Although the pedagogy programme is not designed for professional purposes, a majority of the students has a strong idea of their professional careers. Due to the open structure of the programme, the students can choose between different pedagogical subjects according to their individual ambitions and interests. This diversity and the wide range of personal choice (explained below) support a certain openness of education and work life application. The pedagogues can be regarded as open learners for two reasons: a) as long they take non-academic activities for granted by themselves they are able to acquire a wide range of knowledge and competence; b) the matrix of the educational science programme provides interdisciplinary learning approaches. Concerning the various pedagogical issues, the different seminars rather provide a theoretical basis than a concrete education. Students learn to speak about “everything and nothing”, however, they claimed to be disappointed by the offer of academic courses as they miss practical and applicable knowledge.

2) From social romanticists to professional realists

The basic motivation for studying pedagogy has changed over the last two decades. Even though the cliché of social romanticism has not completely disappeared from common attitudes among students, rationalist and professional attitudes have become more dominant. In other words: traditional ideological backgrounds have given way to a pragmatic point of view and a broader career orientation; by which this orientation, however, can still imply social and ethical values. During the process of professionalisation in the eighties and nineties the programme for diploma-students has run through various stages of differentiation and formalism. The present stage, i.e. since 2000, can be described as follows: The diploma course of educational sciences includes general adult education / continuing education in the main course. The previous courses of school and social education (offered up to 2000) have either been integrated or transferred to other diploma courses. Another growing emphasis within the university calendar is put on the area of media pedagogy. Based on the changing external conditions the students develop new career perspectives and become involved in specialised fields which used to be separated from educational scientists, such as: adult education or human resource management.

3) A shore for stranded individualists

To give a suitable explanation of the multitude of different approaches to higher education and working life it is inevitable to consider the specific biographical backgrounds of the students. Many pedagogy students, for instance, have been working before they started to study. Another reason for the advanced age of

pedagogy students and graduates is based on the group of “side-entries”, i.e. students who came from other academic subjects. These individual circumstances partly support the quality of the study reality. As a lot of students are able to give worthwhile contributions the subject as a whole takes benefit. Nowadays, more and more students constitute a second identity in a strong involvement in a side, parallel to the collegiate one. Hence, they appear to be a more mature group of people compared to other academic graduates. As a matter of fact, however, the pedagogic students seem to act creatively from necessity as the programme itself is seen very critically.

4) Competence exceeds knowledge – learning on the job

Regarding the different internal and external learning activities competence is seen as more important than knowledge. The preference for competence is based on students’ work life experiences and their insight that most of the job specifications rather demand various social, technical, or methodological competencies. The reverse means specialised knowledge can be acquired directly “on the job”.

5) Pedagogy - the unknown profession

In Germany, the status of educational science is rather unpopular. Society perceives pedagogues either as teachers or as social workers; indeed, there is only a vague idea of application as regards content. Equally vague is the idea pedagogy students have, since the German job market does not allow broad-based career planning. It seems to be that the only suitable preparation for professional life is to start work already during the studies thereby establishing necessary contacts, i.e. with companies, networks or individuals in central positions.

Where did they come from, where do they go to?

There are enormous differences among students of educational sciences. For instance, it is necessary to consider the individual learner biography as the range of informants shows a high diversity of previous work life and study experiences. This group as a whole can be characterised as a pool of individualists. Many pedagogy students are already 30 years old when they graduate. This circumstance often results from specific characteristics of their educational biography; at least three minor-groups can be determined as can be seen below:

- Students with a professional past life and/or in the second-chance education
- Students in their second course of studies
- Students with a worker identity during their studies

A view on the background informations of pedagogy students points at their immense spread. They have either been working before and during their studies or they have been enrolled in another university programme. Among the respondents, there were an army officer, a locksmith, an geriatric nurse, and a medical secretary. These pedagogues can revert to different work life processes and the knowledge that results from former activities seems to influence their general attitudes. The oldest one of the novices (40 years) mentioned that he once belonged to the working class and that his idea of self-discipline and performance orientation mainly results from his (ten years old) experiences as a worker in the mining industry. During his studies he started to work as a self-employed person in the area of multimedia. Affected by strict hierarchical structures in the coal-mine and the lack of hierarchies during his student`s life he now avoids to subordinate himself to anyone else. But at the same time he insists on the obedience of others. He describes his performance orientation and provides a statement of requirements for colleagues.

“I don’t accept any kind of boss because I always formulate the conditions of my own work. I prefer an unpersonal contact to colleagues, because I am highly performance oriented. You see, I think managerial, including attitudes, such as, discipline, strictness, and distance. I see myself in the role of a work-creator.” (Ger, ES 4, male)

Novices who were non-academic workers before their studies are able to negotiate their two professional identities. At that moment when the pedagogue (above) criticizes the laziness of academic culture he likes to come back to his identity as a locksmith with regard to the associated working attitudes.

From worker to student and worker again

Other students who had entered work life before their studies may be less performance oriented, but they also take benefit from the experienced working processes in professional organisations. In comparison to their younger fellow-students they experimentalise less with new forms of living, i.e. flat sharing or having all-night parties. Nevertheless, the transition from a worker to an academic identity takes place through active participation in higher education. One of the novices who originate from a working class family participated in two different trainee programmes after her school graduation. During her studies she had to cope with at least two roles: being a student on one side, and being a mother of two teenage daughters on the other. The transition process from a worker to an academic is articulated as she mentioned her self-awareness in conversations. Moreover, she appreciates the value of her efforts on learning and knowledge for shaping her personality.

“There are many things you learn by the way, and you take these for granted later on. The studies are important for your own development. I changed my awareness of learning and knowledge and I have changed myself, I am much calmer and have more patience. It is the way you talk to others. All these changes result from gaining knowledge and lifelong learning.” (Ger, ES 11, female)

The person-related changes are especially articulated by female pedagogues. Higher education seems to support emancipation processes. It is not clear whether these two statements are a specific gender issue or not, but female respondents rather attach importance to topics of personal maturation compared to their male colleagues.

“The university influenced my personality; I know how to fight, to open my mouth, and how to motivate myself.” (Ger, ES 10, female)

Two parallel identities- students as workers

Work life experiences are also valued by novices without a past life as workers. They stress the importance of organisational knowledge before the beginning of their engagement in a company. The professional approach among novices can result from different activities: practical trainings, project work at university, or self-initiated art-projects. The key-terms mentioned by the pedagogues in the context of professionalism are *teamwork*, *hierarchies*, *institutional knowledge*, *management*, and *acquisition*.

“The access to my profession was easy because I had done some practical trainings before and knew how a company works, how teamwork can be done, and how to behave within strict hierarchies.” (Ger, ES 9, male)

“The studies didn’t help me to become a good pedagogue, but I would say the whole time was positive due to my experiences of project work and institutional knowledge.” (Ger, ES 1, male)

“Some years ago, I founded a registered association, called social creative projects e.V., and I realized some art projects with pedagogical approaches. Based on my contacts to different project partners I have learnt how to manage all these events and how to acquire money for it. To do a job like that was my childhood dream.” (Ger, ES 3, female)

Due to financial shortages most of the students are obliged to do one or more jobs during their studies. The pedagogy programme seems to enable the students to manage both working and studying to a certain extend as it is not too

demanding. This fortunate condition has an effect on the preparation for future duties and responsibilities in work life. Hence, the completion of the studies often constitutes a “soft” breach only. From the perspective of the employer, a graduate who is experienced in different working processes is more attractive than newcomers without relevant job experiences.

“I don’t see myself as a newcomer, because I have done a lot of work before. Generally, the colleagues were friendly, open and helpful like I knew them before. I put pressure on myself concerning the tasks. There was very short time for introduction, so I felt badly prepared. It has changed a lot now, I am integrated in all work processes and I work self-dependently, e.g. I can direct the processes of work because of routine and experiences.” (Ger, ES 7, female)

Pedagogy - the second choice?

Regarding the learner biographies it is noteworthy that the majority of pedagogic graduates have studied other university subjects in the beginning. Particularly, the psychology programme is a source of “side-entries”, but some students have started with art history and primary school. The open learning environment of the pedagogy programme is promising for those students who are engaged in individual projects. They often see educational science as an accurate means to an end, furthermore, the obligatory parts of the programme are regarded “simple” and as accomplishable without very extensive learning efforts. Due to the provided possibility to base the diploma thesis on topics of individual interest (or on recent or future work activities) - as long as they find an interested lecturer - students of other programmes change to pedagogy. The students benefit from this openness of education which is mirrored in the undefined - or manifold - area of pedagogical application. For a detailed programme description see the attached graphic at the end of the chapter.

“The image of pedagogues is ambiguous as you get classified as either teacher or educator. There is no clearly defined occupational image – this is exciting. I feel as a professional pedagogue, especially, in the informal area. In discussions I feel superior and I often say at the end: Wait, I am a pedagogue, ha ha .. In the future I like to write children’s books and to put issues of racism in forms of theatre and literature on the school’s agenda.” (ES 7, female)

Work life preferences of pedagogues – flexibility as a virtue

The openness of pedagogical application is also mirrored in the different job-engagements among the respondents: They are in scientific institutes, adult education, or in “self-initiated” jobs. One male pedagogue worked his way up in a financial institute where he already jobbed as a student, another one changed from scientific work to business consultancy. During the interview period there was only one novice unemployed and another one who decided to do additional

studies. Comprisingly, the rather classical engagement in social education disappeared from the agenda of professional application although many of the jobs, mentioned above, deal with educational and social issues in the broadest sense. Due to the individual career choices it is difficult to estimate a special preference to work life. The novices have created an individual profile of competencies they can now combine with different voactional targets. Thereby, not every novice has got the courage to initiate his/her own job, but at least two respondents try to realize their distinctive ambitions. They design what their specific work area will look like independent from the external manpower situation / requirements.

“Now, I have free choice regarding the issues and methods, for acting on a professional level the university study was helpful. You can use academic knowledge very well. I will combine all my interests and abilities, such as, multimedia, psychology, learning, social and ecological ideas, and biology. ” (Ger, ES 4, male)

“For me pedagogy is not a real profession. I call my work pedagogical project-management.” (Ger, ES 3, female)

Flexibility and modesty seem to be the most important virtues among young pedagogues as their work contracts are mostly limited to the duration of a project. Generally, the German labour market is characterized by more and more short-term jobs for all areas of both academic and non-academic professions. Hence, the post-graduates who aim at their PhD have to get along with limited half-time positions; some of them are able to do so, some do not. The scientific involvement is often seen as a spring-board to working life or as a bridge between academe and profession. The young research associates expect to become more qualified through the PhD or at least through single working tasks.

“Great independence is given at my work, but you also depend on others. There is a flexible time-setting. I get the opportunity to develop myself and to follow my individual interests.” (Ger, ES 7, female)

Two interviewees wanted to give up their future career in scientific institutions which indicates the necessity to meet financial ends. One of them already started to work for a private company, the other one wants to engage in teaching. The importance of flexibility and the value of competence is also mentioned among the pedagogues in adult education. As the learning processes mainly take place at their work the respondents are aware of the incompleteness of their academic education. The role of the university is seen in the preparation for future learning processes. Once again *learning how to learn* is considered as a basic idea that university provides for pedagogues. Before starting his job the following novice had no concrete idea what e-learning is about.

“I was surprised by the technical progress in the general communication practice, e.g. the multipoint conferences, but it was not a big problem to get into the subject.” (Ger, ES 9, male)

Educational science links other sciences – competence exceeds knowledge

The experienced material shortages of the pedagogy programme are compensated either way by practical experiences during the studies, interdisciplinary approaches (compare *pedagogy - the second choice?*), and by upvaluation of generic competencies in relation to knowledge. Especially technical and social competence, such as PC skills, oral and writing skills, rhetoric and presentation abilities are seen as necessary for every kind of profession. Pedagogues do not claim to have a broad and specialised knowledge, and maybe, this low (self-)expectations can mean an advantage at the end. They are aware of the possibility to acquire certain forms of knowledge later when it is necessary. It is up to the individual to develop a sense of responsibility with regard to own performances. The demand for better utilization of knowledge and pragmatism is common among the students as they put a strong focus on work life application.

“Pedagogues have got the ability to get into a new subject quickly, that is most necessary .. I would add up more practical trainings outside university and recommend the university to install long termed learning groups to increase teamwork skills. By that more intensive work and a better performance level could become possible.” (Ger, ES 9, male)

Another adult pedagogue also places emphasis on teamwork and communication skills, as he confirms:

“It was good to acquire certain techniques of moderation and presentation. That was very important. Free speech, because oral presentations are demanded by working with people. And if you lead a group by yourself, it is valuable to play the role of the moderator. This was helpful at all.” (Ger, ES 5, male)

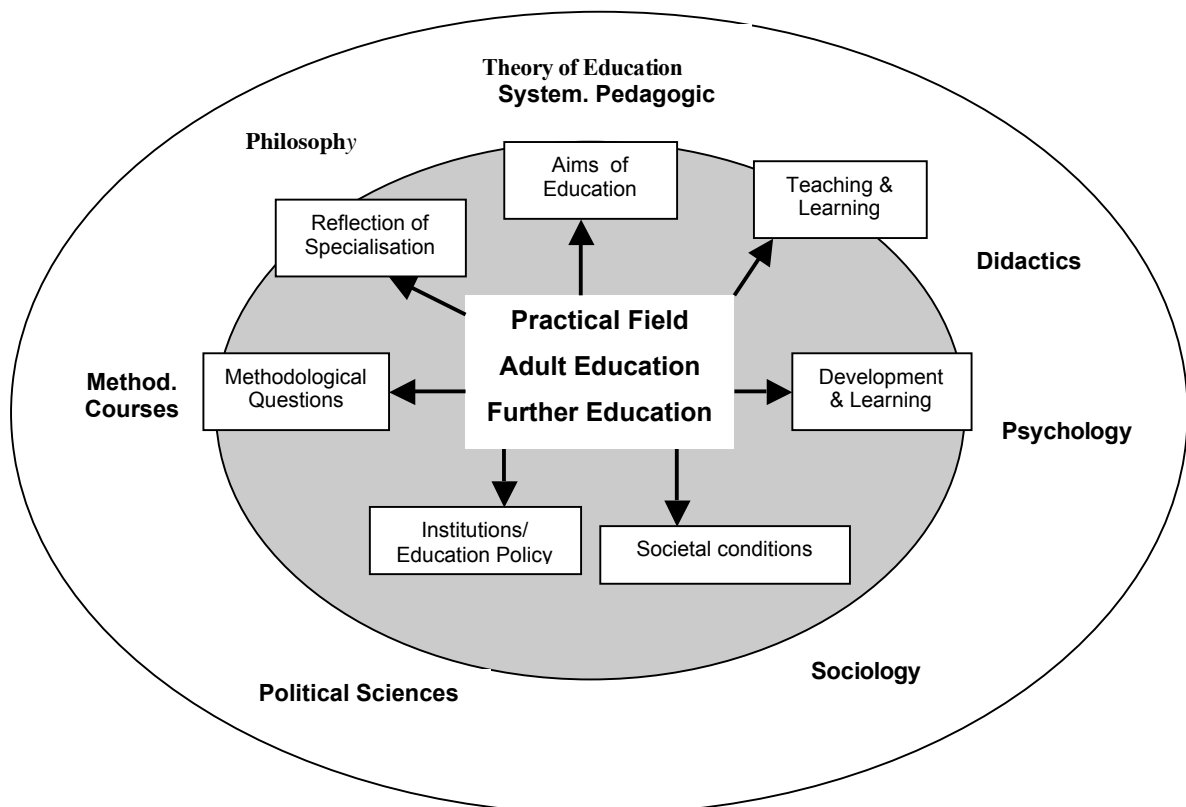
In this respect, it is more important to learn how to communicate and to become a flexible learner on the labour market. Moreover, pedagogues do not expect to solve global problems of politics; they prefer to deal with the practical reality and

its surrounding problems. Education is perceived as a “linking science” between all areas of life and work. On the basis of didactical competence and a theoretical background, the novices can be able to act in various disciplines.

“I have learnt at work that it is important to entertain the customers. You need a lot of humour to distribute knowledge successfully. I always try to prevent the school-like atmosphere. Before I started to work in the *terra zoo* I observed ten different zoological schools and their didactical principles.” (Ger, ES 4, male)

An example for the disappointment concerning specialised knowledge in affairs of social education is given in the following statement. The female expects the programme to be more concrete and oriented to an education that provides techniques of socio-pedagogical intervention.

“You need a better practical training, such as, learning about therapeutical procedures, counselling conversation, the parental problems are not being mentioned at studies. I think you should know your clientele and get in contact with them earlier. The common practicals are useless at all.” (Ger, ES 11, female)



Political Science

Discursive formations on higher education and work life identified among students and novices:

1) Political scientists will not become politicians

Unless the political scientists are members in political party, they normally will not become politicians. In order to advance in policy-related occupations the novices have to socialise with insider relationships. The study programme rather places emphasis on knowledge about international relations and philosophy whereas courses on national and local administration are marginal areas; and moreover, topics of current policy are mentioned rarely in the agenda. Consequently, the students rather prefer to think and communicate in terms of universalism than in terms of particularism.

2) Leading positions not for political scientists

In Germany, there is no explicit labour market for political scientists. Positions in governmental departments or in communities are traditionally held by jurists and economists. There is a certain mistrust against political scientists held by institutions as they possibly provide political hazards for the approved structures. The liberal university programme targets on academic bildung and there is no concrete area of profession to be focussed on.

3) Cautious optimism- bordered influence capability for solving religious conflicts

The attitudes to societal change vary from optimism to cynicism among the novices. Especially the influence capability of political scientists is seen as relative bordered. The potentialities with regard to societal change are directed to education tasks and general enlightenment on the basis of dialogue. The moderate optimism results from individual disappointment with limited job offers and with German politics. Novices who are employed in scientific institutes seem to be more confident in their work and strongly convinced to be able to leave their marks on society compared to their colleagues. Generally, the religious conflicts between Islam and Christianity, that were mentioned by most of the respondents, could hardly be solved in the short term.

4) Cultural conflicts experienced by migrant students

Academic novices with a migrant background see different ethnic, religious and cultural problems as the most challenging issues besides economic affairs. Differently to other respondents of their group they have been confronted with personal disputes regarding their ethnic, religious, social, or cultural affiliation more frequently.

5) Pluralism as enrichment for society

Almost every novice has a positive attitude towards pluralism in society. They think that cultural diversity means enrichment for the German society, whereas homogeneity is seen negatively.

6) The door to social enhancement

The university graduation is valued higher by migrants. This evidence was already given at previous interviews with freshmen and senior students. Novices with migrant backgrounds are more proud to be an academic because they hope to improve the difficult conditions their families were once confronted with as migrant workers.

7) Communication – the weapon of political scientists

The utilization of language is regarded as an important competence for political scientists. Especially the discontented novices believe that they are able to compensate the lack of societal appreciation of political science with good communication skills. As they have to cope with a small job-offer they try to speak an elaborate academic jargon in order to stand out from the crowd.

Relevant vs irrelevant jobs

A great number of novices are currently struggling with the access to work life. Half of the respondents still do side jobs without any reference to the studies of political science by means of subsistence. Some do subject-related jobs, but without any further career-perspectives. The individual job situation strongly correlates with the appreciation of the academic subject and its title. In the following

a) Relevant jobs for further career and a positive attitude towards the profession

Three female novices, of whom two have a migrant background, are employed in academic institutions - one at university, the other two in a cooperating research institute? research institute. All of them work in migrant affairs and support students, resp. young trainees and pupils to improve their future professional situation. These jobs are organised within special support programmes for disadvantaged. Generally, the three novices feel comfortable with their new life as they share, more or less, an optimistic view on their future career. It is outstanding that the two novices with a migrant background stress the meaning of their academic status concerning the relationship with others: Due to the social enhancement they feel more accepted in their families and in society. There are evidences that the studies have an impact both on personality and on the social standing.

“Now, I see everything from a different angle, not only emotionally but rather objectively and with a distance .. Since I have finished my study they take me more seriously. I make higher demands on others and on myself. In my family and private surrounding I am being perceived differently. I get more respect and I have another appearance. But I am still as I used to be, I am me.” (Ger, PS 3, female)

Additionally, the academic title is seen as a threshold to a scientific career.

“Now, I feel like a professional political scientist. This self-impression is based on my excellent diploma thesis and the resulting draft of project ideas. I feel more accepted due to my academic title. I can imagine to start a scientific career, writing my doctoral thesis and giving seminars later on.” (Ger, PS 1, female)

Furthermore, the Turkish female novice mentioned her negative experiences with religious conflicts due to the stereotypes on Islamic fundamentalism. At the same time, she expresses her optimism to solve cultural problems on the basis of education and intercultural dialogue.

“I had contact to the research institute because I dealt a lot with the *Alevites*-issue during my studies .. After the WTC explosions you got chat up by some silly people who equate you with fundamentalists. There are many stereotypes about the Islamic religion. I think it is possible to cope with those problems by education and by providing the dialogue of cultures.” (Ger, PS 1, female)

Two other male novices are also involved in political work, but they cannot afford to live from these activities so far – one works on a low-paid level for a local social institution in “difficult” migrant districts, the other one plans to become a lobbyist and a counsellor for handicapped people. Therefore, he wants to found a “centre of selfdependent living” while he continues doing his former side job during the long period of preparation and organisation. The problem of a missing quality control in the liberal programme that enables the students to assess themselves correlates with the emotional constitution. Hence, the novices without a relevant job can hardly value the quality of their knowledge and consequently suffer from a lack of self-confidence.

“Everything has to be organised by myself, just like in my student`s life. While I still do my side-job in telephone survey at a research institute (60 hours a month), I plan to establish a centre of independent living with advisory activities. Therefore, I try to solve legal problems, to get valuable contacts and I want to learn how to get along with project acquisition ... No, I don`t feel as a professional political scientist. The studies are like an aquarium, a safed area. I don`t have enough detailed knowledge and I didn`t prove myself in the praxis. I can hardly assess myself. The programme provided the basics to become a political scientist.” (PS 6, male)

While their optimism steps on a narrow path, as they have to cope with an uncertain occupational situation, they tend to a more cynical view on their status quo and on society in general. Nevertheless, both novices believe in the power of communication: They think that they are able to influence other people in conversation. On the basis of rethoric skills the two respondents are convinced to compensate the low-valued image of political science.

“Learning is an obligation in the length of time. Lifelong learning also besides work is a claim of politicians, but at the same time they raise the university fee ... I endure the power of the word and with language you can move a lot. The image of political science is undervalued but not as much as the politicians are. I try to make objection, so to speak: I play the devil’s advocat” (Ger, PS 6, male)

“The status of political scientists is a bad one but this corresponds to our society. Sometimes, I tell people that I have done a mechanical education just to show them I am down-to-earth. I think I have got power at commuciation, I like to influence others to let my ideas become reality.” (Ger, PS 4, male)

b) Irrelevant jobs for further career and a negative attitude towards profession

The labour market is difficult for political scientists as there is only a small offer for graduates. As an example for a rather pessimistic attitude towards the profession a male respondent (37 years) describes the lack of professional identity and the weak image of his subject. Due to the circumstance that his career outlook is not very promising he seems to have lost any kind of professional ethos.

“Political science is not a profession to me, I didn` t perceive any kind of this emotion yet because there was no situation I had to recall any professional identity. Ok, everyone can see the statisticians on tv but that is just a big farce, neutrality doesn` t exist. People think politics is a dirty business, if I studied medicine the people would respect me more. I don` t care about this.” (Ger, PS 2, male)

“I do my job because of the financial necessity. Something is fun, doing nothing would be tedious, I like to work `cause I need activity. The studies have nothing to do with my job. The insurance fund I am employed at doesn` t contain any kind of mental work. I have a fixed job-profile, I don` t have to think much, it is a simple pc job.” (Ger, PS 2, male)

Experiences of violence and xenophobia seem to be rather a part of migrants` than of “non“-migrants` life. According to the other female novice with a Turkish background the male novice (quoted below) also thinks that these conflicts can only be solved by education which is based on human rights and basic values.

“Personally, I used to have conflicts and experiences of violence due to xenophobic attitudes, fighting, running, quarrels as the case maybe. Theoretical, one can cope these conflicts by education, if someone internalises certain values concerning equality and individual rights from the constitutional law” (Ger, PS 2, male)

Social commitment and social or ethnic background

Students and novices with migrant backgrounds are interested in solving problems of integration. Most of them already have been involved in this work area during their studies within various projects inside and outside university. Migrant issues are seen as global topic as they are a part of the political debate in Germany. But regarding ways of direct application, they are predominant on the agenda of local policy as for instance there are some research projects with regard to the career chances and barriers of pupils with a migrant background. Generally, the area of migrant work is very popular among social scientists independent from their individual background. The range of concepts for intercultural competence are increasing and almost inflationary among academic institutes and private consulting services that often cooperate with international enterprises.

The relationship between universalism and particularism

The German students can choose between applied social sciences, sociology, political science, economic sciences, social work and social pedagogy (which appears at German Fachhochschulen). The practical oriented students rather decide to study applied social science or social pedagogy, whereas students who are more interested in theory normally prefer the studies in the political science programme - which is embedded in social science - but also comprises more courses on methodology and theory. Within the liberal political science programme there are different emphases: A strong focus is put on *History of political ideas* which deals with philosophical problems. Courses on administration and on *local policy* are, if any, rare and unpopular as most of the interviewed students described these courses as “not more than obligatory”. They favour courses on *international policy* and on philosophy. Formally, this may be due to their choice of one of the different social science programmes. Otherwise, the German and European history has an impact on universalism and a critical academic tradition after the Second World War. Consequently, the political science students are less devoted to daily problems of policy unless they are members of a political party and, of course, there are some other exceptions.

The transition from higher education to work life. A comparative analysis

In the following summary we like to compare different characteristics of the programme on the basis of students' assessments with the work requirements that were experienced by the novices.

Psychology – Relationship between Higher Education and Work

The psychology students appreciated mostly the acquisition of empiric methodology and generic skills (including didactical knowledge, social and cognitive skills) within their study programme. On the other side, substantive skills and transdisciplinary approaches are required from working life but are missed in the programme offers. Especially young teachers think that they are in a way superior to their colleagues with regard to social conflicts at school due to their psychological competence. Two characteristics that were undervalued in the programme, substantive knowledge and transdisciplinarity, now appear on the agenda of their daily work. There is evidence of the increasing *pragmatism* and *professionalism* in novices' attitudes as aspects of knowledge utilization and application has become a crucial point for dealing successfully with working life.

				<i>Appreciated in the programme</i>
Methodology (empiric)	+			Methodology Generic skills
Theory		0		
Generic skills	+			
General knowledge		0		
Substantive skills			-	
Transdisciplinarity			-	
Work life experiences		0		
				<i>Required for work</i>
Methodology (empiric)		0		Generic skills General knowledge Substantive skills Transdisciplinarity
Theory		0		
Generic skills	+			
General knowledge	+			
Substantive skills	+			
Transdisciplinarity	+			

Political Science – Relationship between Higher Education and Work

The political science students mentioned that their programme places strong emphasis on empiric and textual methods, on theory, and on general knowledge. Since the job specifications among novices are not clearly defined, it is difficult to point out one “most valuable” skill which characteristises the requirements of their work. The range of professions and jobs is too wide to select a valid or common profile. Altogether the notion of a *universalistic academic* with both specialised and general knowledge/skills is predominantly expressed by the novices.

Appreciated in the programme

Methodology (empiric, textual)	+			Methodology Theory General knowledge
Theory	+			
Generic skills		0		
General knowledge	+			
Substantive skills			-	
Transdisciplinary		0		
Work life experiences		0		

Required for work

Methodology (empiric, textual)	+			Methodology Generic skills General knowledge Substantive skills Transdisciplinarity
Theory		0		
Generic skills	+			
General knowledge	+			
Substantive skills	+			
Transdisciplinarity	+			

Educational Science – Relationship between Higher Education and Work

The liberal structure of the pedagogy programme recommends the students to choose different emphases during their studies and to join courses of other programmes, such as psychology, sociology, economy, or media science. Hence, the students appreciate the *compatibility* of their programme with other sciences and the emerging transdisciplinarity provided by the curriculum. In other words, the students can pick various academic and professional contents according to their interests. Moreover, they differ from other students as they normally have more work life experiences than their fellow students. This has a strong impact on the construction of a (parallel) working identity which has already been established during their studies. The novices see themselves as *flexible all-rounders* who benefit from transdisciplinary learning approaches and from generic skills. They seem to be able to adapt to their new professional environment regardless of the particular job specification, e.g. adult education, research, economy, or when being employed in other work areas.

Appreciated in the programme

Methodology (textual, hermeneutic)			-	Generic skills Transdisciplinarity Work life experiences
Theory		0		
Generic skills	+			
General knowledge		0		
Substantive skills		0		
Transdisciplinarity	+			
Work life experiences	+			

Required for work

Methodology (textual, hermeneutic)		0		Generic skills General knowledge Substantive skills Transdisciplinarity
Theory		0		
Generic skills	+			
General knowledge	+			
Substantive skills	+			
Transdisciplinarity	+			

+ = strong emphasis; 0 = medium emphasis; - = small emphasis

In the following, the transition from higher education to work life between the three programmes is analysed according to five dimensions (table X). The areas were chosen to illuminate differences and similarities in how the students relate to their space or area of operation, and how their trajectory through the educational programme and their professional identity could be described. Further, we describe the characteristics of the professional role and the nature of the transition process. Finally, we make a comparison of the relationships between the education and work.

Table X. Aspects of transition from education to work: A comparison between programmes			
	Political Scientists	Psychologists	Pedagogues
Relation to areas of occupation	Research associate: Research institutes, University, public welfare	Teacher: Vocational schools, grammar schools, university	Research associate, adult pedagogue, worker in self-initiated projects, software consultant: Research institutes, Mid-size and larger private enterprises, public institutions
Identity/Trajectory	'Communicator', 'Global Thinker'	'Methodologist', 'Human Technologist'	'Individualist', 'Parallel Identities', 'All-rounder'
Professional role characteristics	Mediator of knowledge: 'Migrant Lobbyists', 'Democratic Values'	Socially skilled teacher: 'Pragmatist'	Universalist, All-rounder: 'Pragmatist', 'Flexible and Creative Worker'
Transition Process	Transformation of theoretical, philosophical and partly specialised knowledge. Vagueness of identity and collectiveness.	Continuity in focus on methodological knowledge, psychological competence. Turning-away from psychologist. Change to pragmatistic attitudes, professional teacher identity	Growing into professional role; benefit from work life experiences during studies and from the openness of the curriculum.
Relationships between education and work	Methodological and academic	Generic and didactical	Generic and transdisciplinary

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