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Teacher as Future Maker – Research-based Teacher Education in Finland

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Introduction

- Orientation
- The basic principles of research-based teacher education
- The intended competencies and qualifications of a future teacher
- The basic structure and contents of research-based class teacher education
- Conclusions



Orientation

The wide international interest towards research-based teacher education among researchers and in public

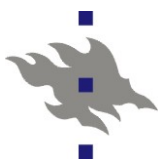
- PISA results
- The specific characteristics of Finnish teacher education
- The huge amount of applicants in teacher education

Teacher's responsibilities and current challenges

- High goals of the national core curriculum
- Size of classes
- Pupils with needs of special educational
- Multicultural issues

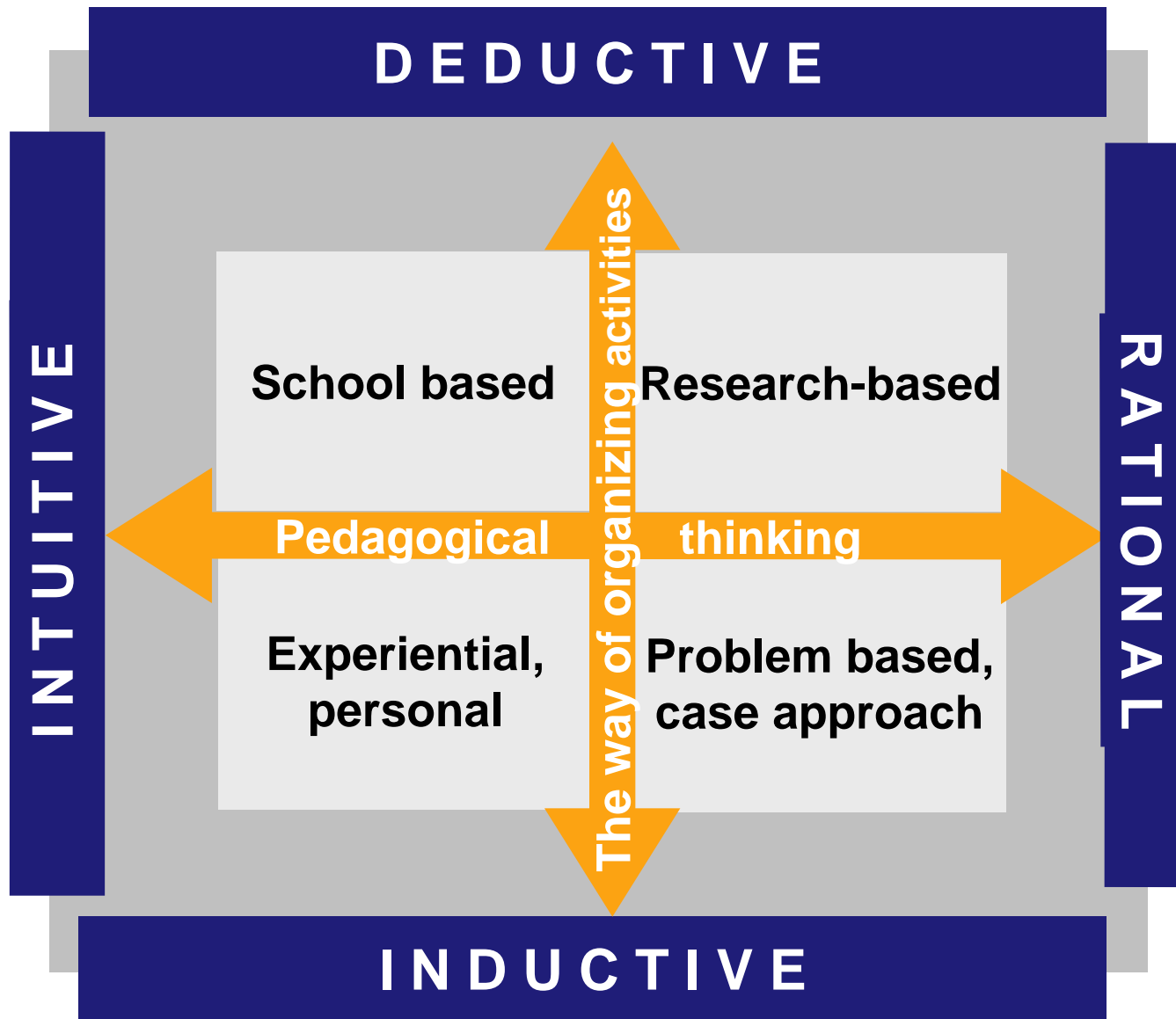
→ The core of teacher's work?

→ The correspondence between competence and qualification?



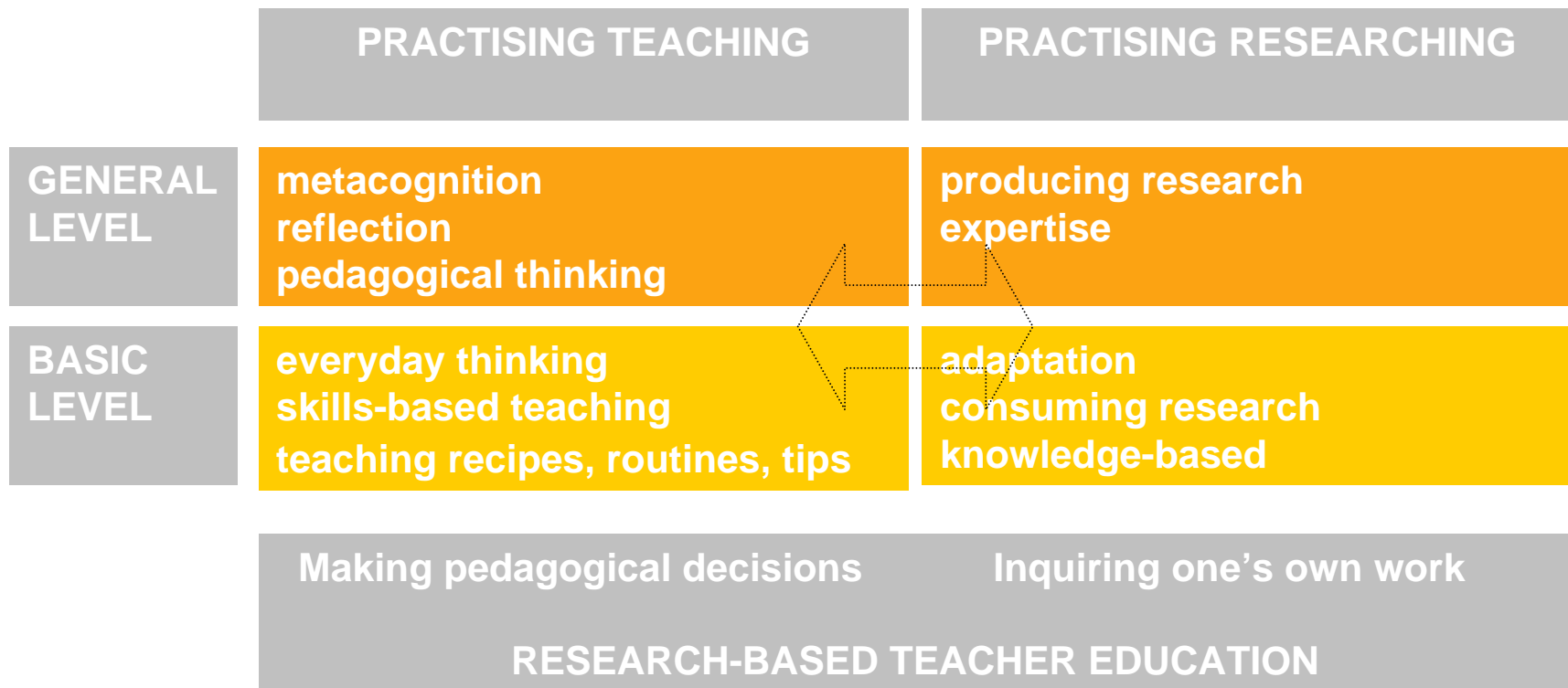
Different teacher education programmes

(Kansanen, 2005)





Two levels of research-based teacher education - the characteristics of twofold practice





Research-based approach in teacher education

- Every study unit connected with research
 - The conceptualization of practice

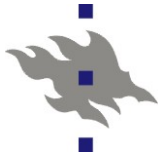
- Continuous courses of research methods
 - Quantitative methods – qualitative methods

- Overall competence of research methods
 - “All are known generally, one is known specifically.”

- Master’s thesis

- Teachers as practitioner researchers
 - **Producer** of the research: ability to conduct the research
 - **Consumer** of the research: ability to understand and use research results and information in own work

- Direct access to doctoral studies



The principles of teaching practice periods

- Continuous teaching practice periods during the studies
 - Relation between practice and theory of teaching
- Every practice period has aims of its own
- Teacher training schools and field schools
- Supervision of teaching practice
 - Continuous interaction with mentors
 - Recipes and tips vs. rational argumentation
 - Reflection with the means of portfolio
- Assessment of teaching practice



Teacher's pedagogical thinking

– What, how and why?

What?

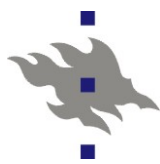
- Teacher's intentional thinking, that is focused both on the matters of teaching-studying-learning –process, and on conscious educational decisions and the reasons behind them

How?

- The structures and processes of student teachers' personal theory of education are emphasized and considered consciously during the teacher education
- The student teacher is seen as an active processor of knowledge

Why?

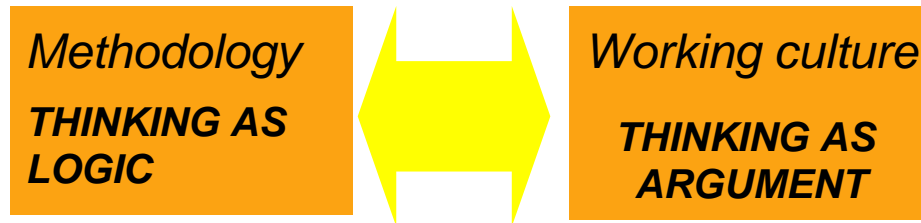
- To see pedagogical elements and to ask pedagogically meaningful questions in educational situations are among the most important skills a future teacher needs



The core of research-based teacher education

DEVELOPING THINKING SKILLS

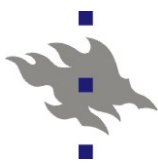
Pedagogical thinking skills



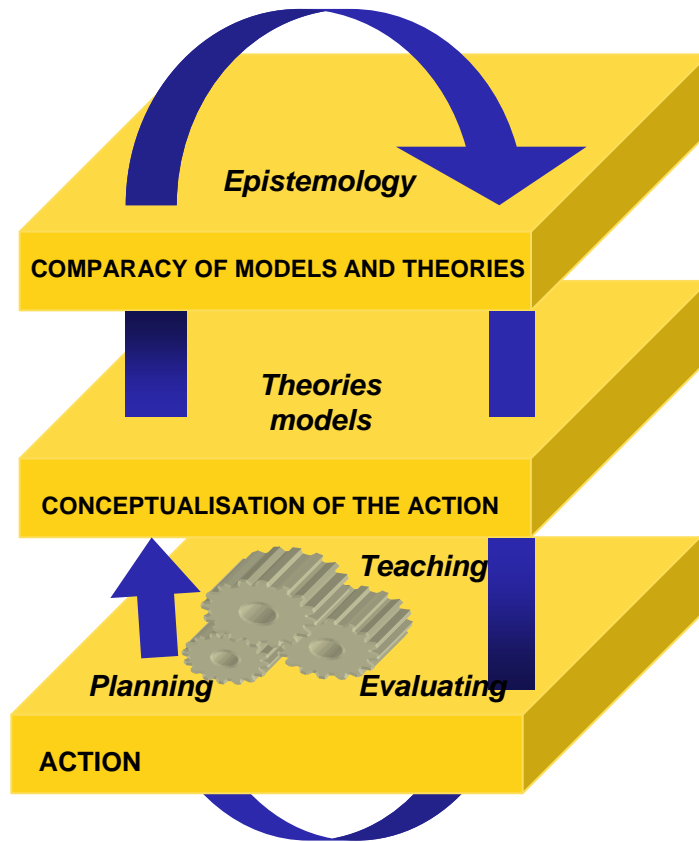
Methodological thinking skills

Argumentative skills

- General cognitive structures and processes grow while methodological and argumentative thinking skills are developing.
- Theoretical and methodological thinking skills are best developed by promoting student teachers' knowledge of methodology as well as their know-how about research methods.
- Argumentative thinking skills are developed through working methods which allow active and interactive approaches to teaching and studying.



The development of expertise in academic teacher education



SCIENCE
THEORETICAL
BASE
EXPERTISE

**THEORY – PRACTICE
INTERACTION**

PROFESSIONAL
SKILLS

(Kansanen, 1994; Krokfors, 2005)



Teacher educators' understanding of the research-based approach (Toom et al., 2008)

Four dimensions

- I The context – Academic teacher education
- II The approach – Main organising theme of teacher education
- III The content – Curriculum of teacher education
- IV The aim – Teacher's pedagogical thinking

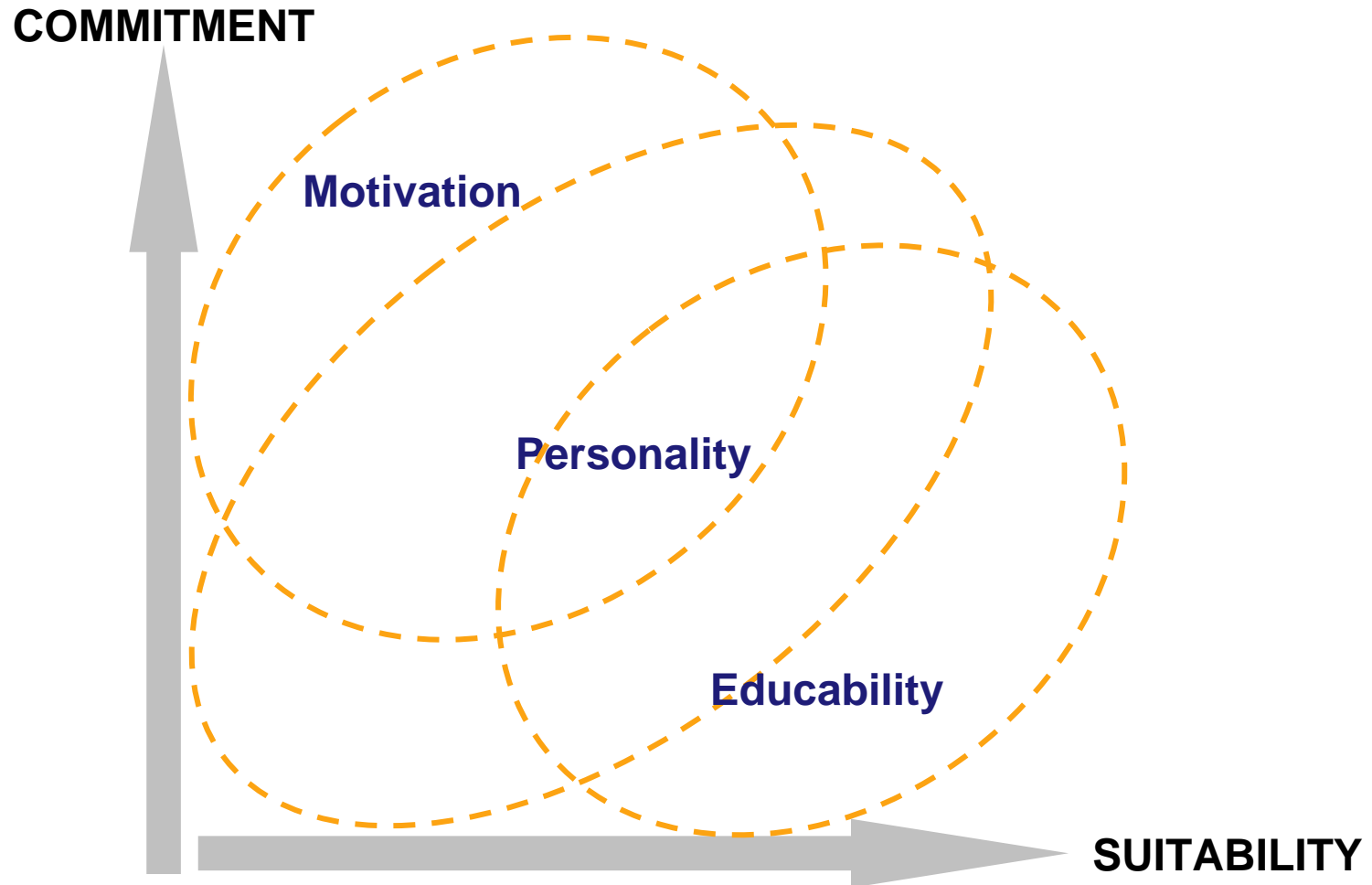


The relevance of the research-based approach to the teacher's work (Toom et al., 2008)

- The research-based approach is seen clearly relevant to the teacher's work.
- Teachers are actively involved in curriculum development and different evaluation processes.
- Teacher's work includes multi-professional collaboration.
- The school is no longer a static workplace for which the teacher education prepares students: future teachers need dynamic competencies.



The qualities of a future teacher?





The core competencies of a future teacher?

- Self-confidence
- Interaction skills
- Pedagogical skills for creating relevant teaching-studying-learning environments
- Ability to tolerate uncertainty
- Metacognitive skills



The challenge of academic teacher education





The main idea of class teacher education

- The central idea is to support the students' professional development by evolving
 - collective working and action culture
 - different working methods
 - students' argumentation skills

- The graduated class teacher's expertise is based on
 - pedagogical thinking
 - active and wide knowledge base
 - ability to work as a researching teacher

- The class teacher education guides the students
 - to think on the ethical issues of education
 - to be active agents of change in school community, teacher education, and society.

INTERACTION

EXPERTISE

SOCIETY



The main idea of class teacher education

S O C I E T Y

INTERACTION

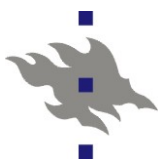
EXPERTISE

Collegiality

*working and action culture
different working methods
argumentation skills*

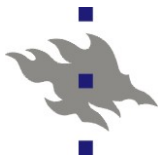
Teacher as researcher

*pedagogical thinking
mastery of methodological skills
personal practical theory*

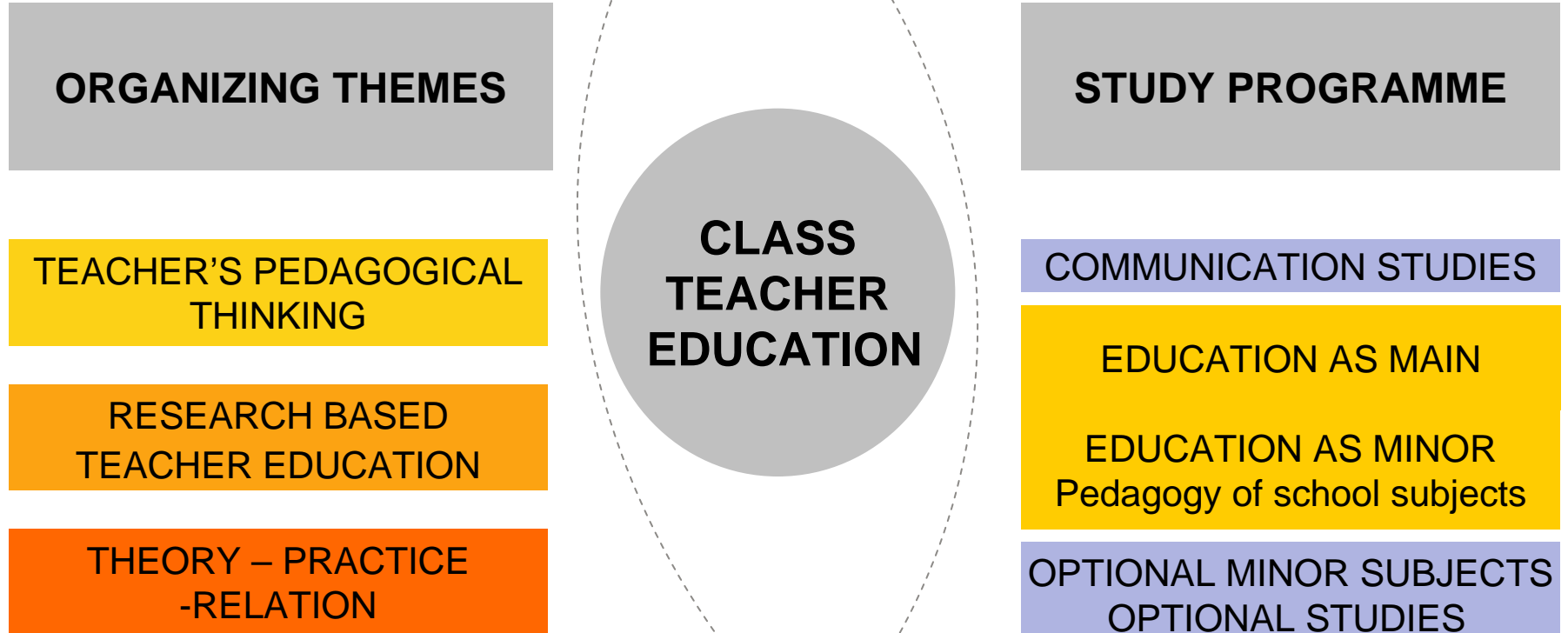


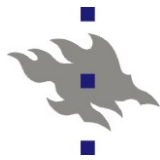
The contents of class teacher education

MASTER'S DEGREE 300 ECTS	COMMUNICATION AND ORIENTING STUDIES	25 ECTS
	MAIN SUBJECT STUDIES Education 140 ECTS	CULTURAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL BASES OF EDUCATION 50 ECTS
		RESEARCH STUDIES IN EDUCATION Research methods Bachelor's thesis Master's thesis 70 ECTS
		TEACHING PRACTICE 20 ECTS
	MINOR SUBJECT STUDIES 120 ECTS	MULTIDISCIPLINARY STUDIES IN SUBJECTS TAUGHT IN SCHOOL 60 ECTS
		OPTIONAL MINOR SUBJECT STUDIES 60 ECTS
	OPTIONAL STUDIES	15 ECTS



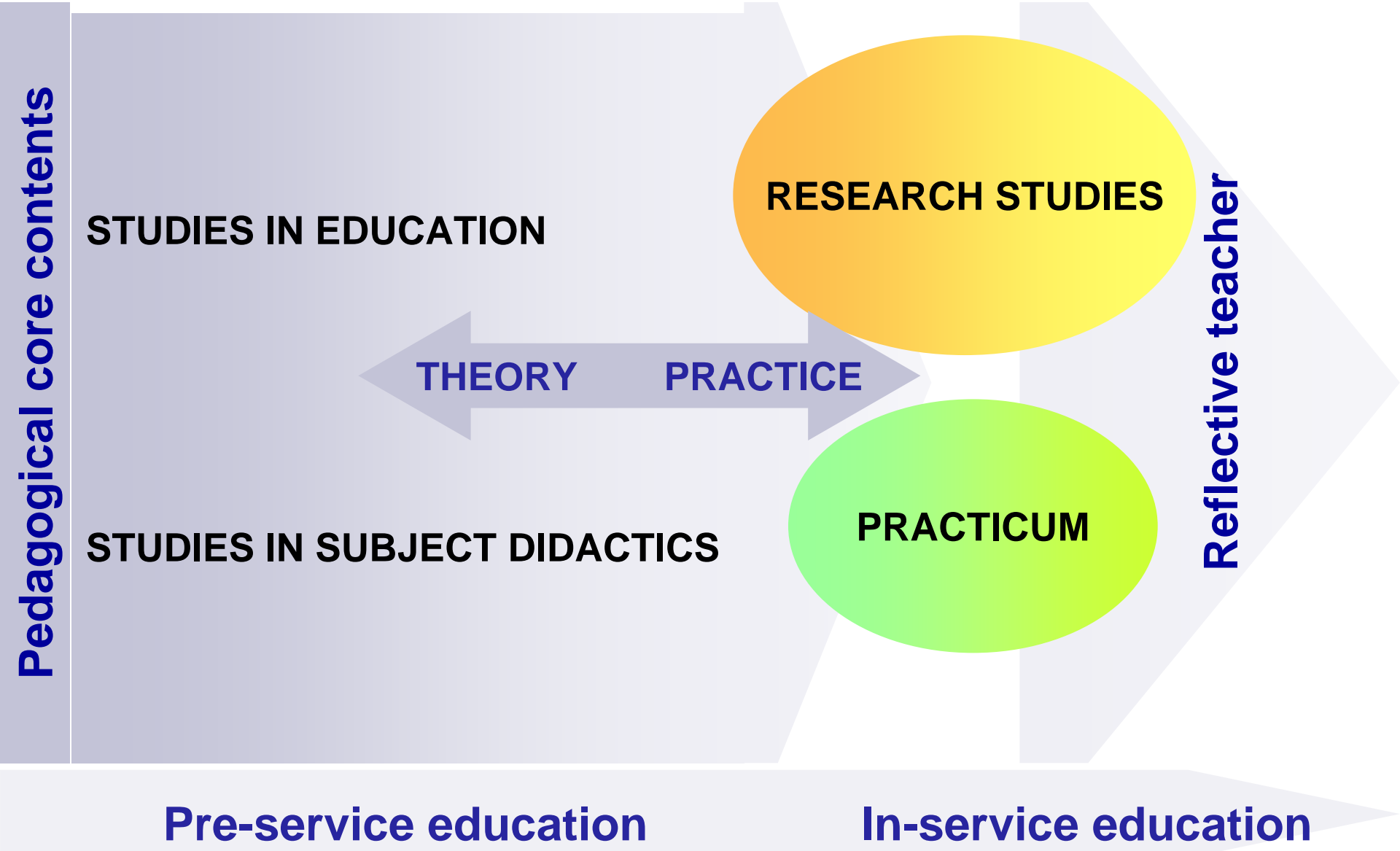
Theoretical structures defining the class teacher education





How to become a reflective teacher?

(Krokfors 2005)





Conclusions

- The inquiry-oriented teachers produced by research-based teacher education are needed in the near future.
- Teaching in today's world requires dynamic competencies and a high level practice calls for this kind of approach.
- The research-based approach in teacher education is considered to have a significant relevance to teaching practice in present and future conditions.



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THANK YOU!

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