PlayBook

2

Playful Learning

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Playful Learning

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Preface

In the Playful Learning programme, educators and students on the social education and teacher education programmes in Denmark are experimenting with the arrangement of learning spaces and with new didactic approaches to teaching. The work incorporates experiments with body, mind, moods, feelings and intentions. Materials, forms, technology and nature are used in the work. All for the purpose of creating more playful approaches to children's development, well-being and learning.

The Playful Learning programme is highly innovative, but rests on the shoulders of a long and important educational and pedagogical tradition in Denmark and the rest of the world.

Working with a playful approach to learning and development is not a new element in Danish pedagogy. We have a long tradition of seeing pedagogy and teaching as something creative. Not only when we work with visual arts, music, drama and design, but in relation to all subjects and educational themes. There is always a degree of unpredictability in a pedagogical process if we open our minds to the new and the possible, even when we work with natural sciences, mathematics and foreign languages. A playful approach to learning is completely essential to the pedagogical process.

The early pedagogical sources of inspiration had great focus on this – think, for example, of Froebel's play gifts and Montessori's prepared environment, in which playful approaches have a pedagogical purpose. John Dewey also discusses how play in schools is not just about diversion, but has qualities that promote joy, exploration and creativity in the learning processes. All with the utmost respect for the children's perspective and active participation. It is an important part of the educational and pedagogical tradition that you create your identity and ability to be social – ultimately your personal integrity – through participation and self-expression.

In the Playful Learning programme, educators and students explore how playful approaches to teaching can create opportunities for students to engage actively in the development of their professional competences and identity in new and creative ways. The teaching on the social education and teacher education programmes must be planned and organised so that unpredictability and creativity do not become a problem, but a nurturing and inspiring part – why, a fundamental part of the activities. The teaching must provide room for the students to become immersed, exploratory, participatory and creative together. This is essential for our development as human beings into competent and independent citizens in society.

It is therefore a gift that we have the Playful Learning programme. It provides space and opportunity to develop new approaches and understandings that we may need even more right now. In the coming years, the new methods and approaches will be introduced in many of the schools and day-care centres in Denmark. All ultimately for the benefit of children and young people throughout Denmark.

It is truly exciting to follow this development work closely, and it is a pleasure to be able to present the new approaches and insights in PlayBook2.

I hope you will enjoy PlayBook 2!

Peter Møller Pedersen
Chief Education Officer and member of the steering committee for the Playful Learning programme

Welcome to PlayBook 2

Tobias Heiberg and Mette Lyager, Programme Directors for the Playful Learning programme

PlayBook 1 described how, in the first year of the programme, ambassadors and project managers from the six university colleges worked to establish the three connected initiatives that are to equip educators and students on the social education and teacher education programmes to adopt a more playful approach to learning: PlayLabs, experiments in teaching and competence development of educators.

PlayBook 2 zooms in on the implementation of a playful approach to learning on the social education and teacher education programmes and takes a more analytical and reflective look at the initiatives on which the work in the Playful Learning programme is based. Playbook 2 will also examine the experiences gained by educators and students in the programme with playful approaches to online teaching in a year characterised by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The publication will also offer a research-based view on the learning and development understandings and play qualities that a playful approach to learning seems to bring into play and summarise the experiences gained so far with the design and development methodology of the programme.

PlayBook 2 thus invites the reader inside the ongoing development work and shares specific experiences, new perspectives and provisional insights.

The articles have been written by ambassadors from the six university colleges, the programme research managers and programme directors as well as our partners at Rambøll Management Consulting. They are aimed at the many educators involved in the Playful Learning programme and others who want to follow the programme during its development process.

A shared foundation for a playful approach to learning

Tobias Heiberg and Mette Lyager, Programme Directors for the Playful Learning programme

Over the past two years of development work, all participants in the Playful Learning programme have focused on examining what a playful approach to learning can be, how it occurs and what it can contribute. We have allowed ourselves plenty of time, and we have done the work thoroughly. As a result thereof, we now have a shared foundation, created by countless trials on the social education and teacher education programmes, didactic reflections among colleagues and sharp analyses of patterns across Denmark.

Ambassadors, project managers and programme management have together developed and tested three bases that describe what we work with and how we work with the development of a playful approach to learning on the social education and teacher education programmes in Denmark.

In this section, you will be introduced to a programme basis for the initiatives on which our work is based, a didactic basis for the development of the programme's didactic foundation and a development basis for a joint language for how we approach and discuss the specific development work on the social education and teacher education programmes.

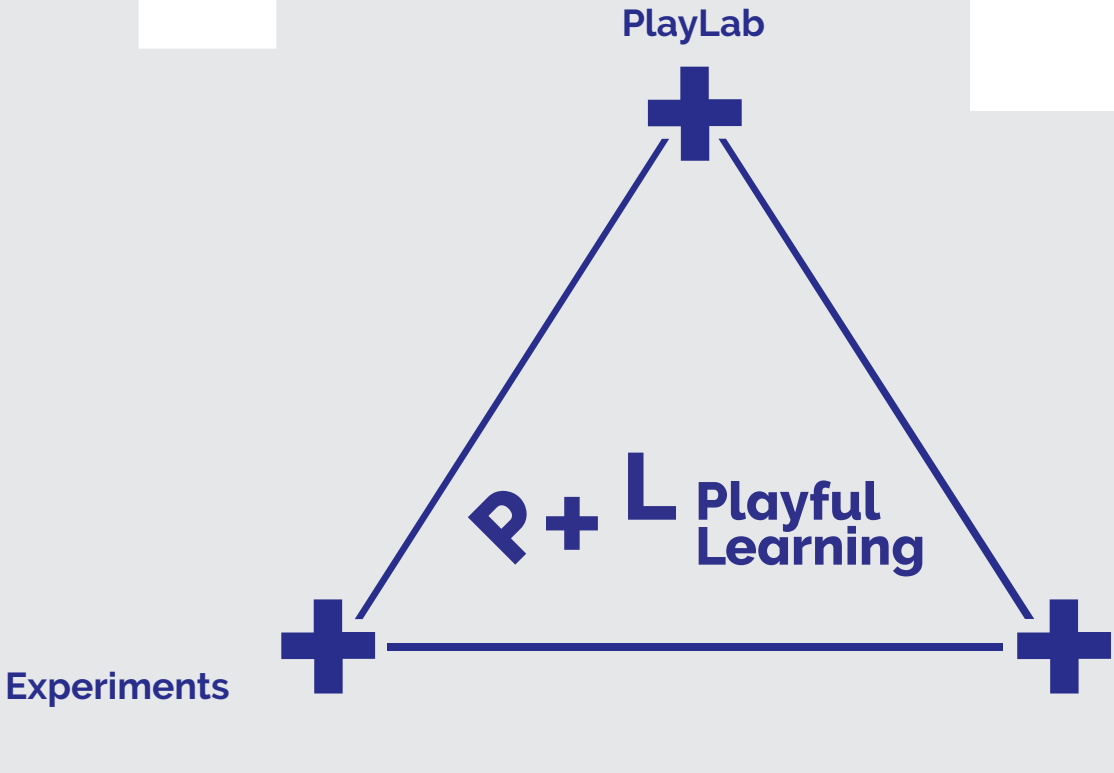
This section also contains references to the articles in which you can read more about how these three bases unfold in the educators' everyday working life in a multitude of ways. In fact, a strong shared foundation creates freedom to move in many directions.

Initiatives in a joint programme basis

In the Playful Learning programme, we work with three connected initiatives which focus on experimenting with a playful approach to teaching together with the students, on examining the opportunities offered by new types of learning environments and on developing the competences needed to engage in teaching that contains play qualities.

PlayLabs

All university colleges in Denmark have at least one PlayLab, which is a learning environment that invites to a more playful approach. The physical settings can contribute to altering existing ways of teaching and inspiring the emergence of new methods. PlayLabs provides a visible framework that supports experiments with teaching methods and contributes to leaving clear footprints in the practices of the social education and teacher education programmes.



Programme basis for Playful Learning

A playful approach to learning is not merely confined to a PlayLab, but this particular learning space can act as an experimentarium and a catalyst for a playful approach to teaching in the other spaces of the education programmes. You can read more about how a PlayLab can break with internalised understandings of what teaching is and invite students to take centre stage in the article 'Free me from the hidden disciplining strategy of the classroom' by Daniel Nørskov from UCL University College.

Experiments with a playful approach to teaching

A fundamental initiative area in the development programme is the educators' experiments in their day-to-day teaching together with the students. The basis for the development of a more playful approach to learning is specific practice experiences with off-the-beaten-track hypotheses and courageous tryouts in teaching situations. Therefore, the ambassadors have experimented with trial actions in their teaching since the start of the programme. Based on these experiences, they have developed and described a wide repertoire of didactic designs with play qualities.

In the article 'With chance as driving force' by Frederik Zeuthen from University College Absalon, you can read about how the non-seriousness of play encourages students to dare to fail. You can gain insight into how a playwheel can connect play categories with an academic content in the article 'Playwheel – a didactic tool for playful learning' by Jakob Ørsted and Maja Laybourn from University College Copenhagen. The article 'Around Iceland' by Per Nygaard Thomsen from VIA University College will provide you with inspiration for how you, as an educator, can create an exploratory spirit in your teaching, exemplified through mathematics teaching on the teacher education programme.

Competence development

For most educators, teaching and engaging students through a more playful approach to learning requires capacity building in relation to playful learning knowledge and competences. In the Playful Learning programme, the competence development takes place through national seminars, where experiences are shared between educators, inspiration is obtained from national and international researchers and local action learning courses that can organised in a multitude of ways are presented.

You can read more about how competence development is approached locally in the articles: 'Playful Learning must be perceived organically and can be weaved forth' by Jakob Fenger from University College of Northern Denmark (UCN), where the concept of organic knowledge weaving is introduced as a special approach to competence development at UCN, and 'Do you want to play?' by Jette Østergaard Andersen and Mette Kristensen Rasmussen from University College South Denmark, where you get an insight into what playful learning communities can offer.

This publication thus provides you with knowledge about a number of specific cases from the social education and teacher education programmes written by some of the ambassadors to the Playful Learning programme. The six cases are all based on one of the three initiatives that form the programme basis of the Playful Learning programme and involve the reader in the experiences and reflections arising from the educators' experiments with a playful approach to learning in teaching, new learning spaces and competence development on the social education and teacher education programmes in Denmark.

The articles reflect the diversity that is one of the special characteristic features of the programme. We have a shared programme basis, but the initiatives may be adjusted to fit the culture and context of the individual university college.

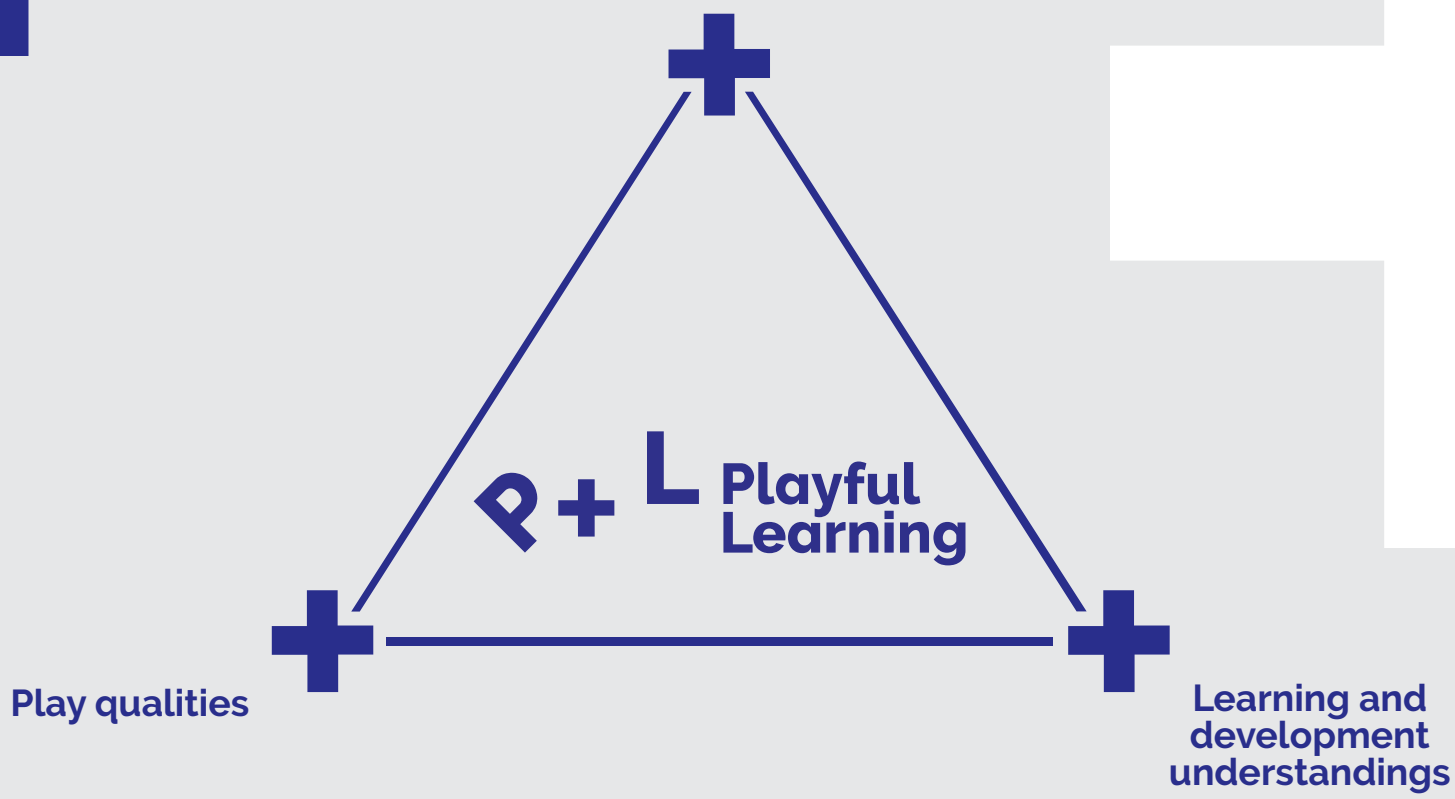
The coronavirus restrictions have been a common condition for all educators and students in 2020, regardless of which of the initiatives they have worked with. In the article 'What are the perspectives for a playful approach to learning in online teaching?', Lasse Lykke Rørbæk and Stine Rauff Bommersholdt from Rambøll Management Consulting have looked at how educators and students in the Playful Learning programme have experienced a playful approach to learning in online teaching. You can also find references to the latest podcast series of the programme, which focuses on involving playful moods and play qualities in the digital classroom.

A didactic basis for playful approaches to learning

The didactic basis of the Playful Learning programme currently consists of a number of principles that can inspire and impact the educators' didactic thinking and practice, the special learning and development understandings that educators in the Playful Learning programme are currently orienting themselves towards and a repertoire of play qualities that pushes the boundaries for the way we traditionally think about teaching.

The didactic basis is continuously being developed by the educators and researchers involved in the Playful Learning programme within a joint development framework. In fact, a large part of the didactic basis is being prepared right now.

The didactic basis for the Playful Learning programme is not intended to evolve into a set of instructions on how a playful approach to learning is to unfold. Instead, the didactic basis is to highlight the experiences gained so far and create a joint framework for ongoing discussions of what didactics for a more playful approach to learning can contain.



Didactic basis for Playful Learning

Principles for Playful Learning

During the first year of the Playful Learning programme, the ambassadors, directors and project managers in the Playful Learning programme formulated three didactic principles for teaching with a playful approach to learning based on the educators' experiments in their everyday practice.

The three principles do not provide answers, but leave room for interpretation and thus require active consideration of how the intention behind a principle can be met. A principle is directional and can thus be adjusted to different educational contexts and different educators' understandings, temperaments and ideas. In autumn 2020, the joint principles are as follows:

+ **Creating shared perceptions**

A playful approach to learning involves various media, materials and moods that function as didactic fellow players and open up for wacky perceptions and creative paths to reflection and learning.

+ **Daring to go for unpredictability**

A playful approach to learning consists of open and unpredictable processes, where it is not possible or desirable to control the new opportunities and surprising insights which emerge along the way.

+ **Insisting on meaningfulness**

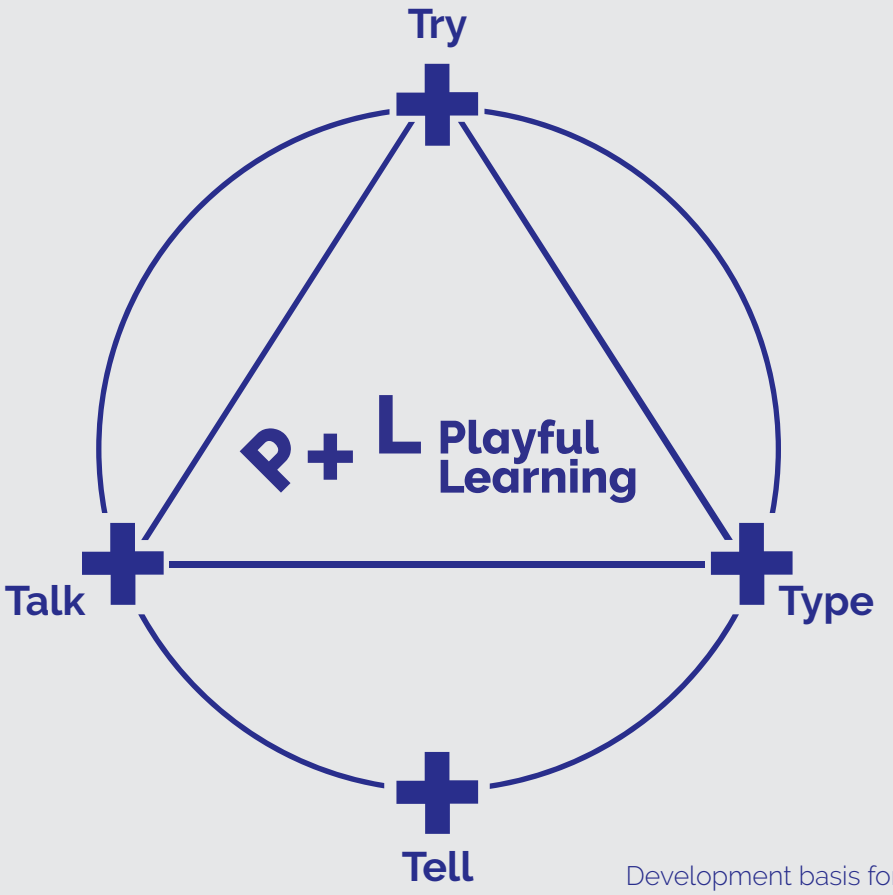
A playful approach to learning unfolds in equal learning communities which allow both educators and students to re-design the process and rethink the contents in order to create professional meaningfulness and ownership of learning.

Play qualities and learning and development understandings

The principles in the didactic basis draw on special learning and development understandings and are oriented towards a range of play qualities. In the first two years of the programme, the educators have especially drawn on learning and development understandings which attach importance to action, experience and knowledge being closely linked, and they have particularly focused on play qualities such as imagination, unpredictability and meaningfulness.

The principles will presumably change over time, and other learning and development understandings and play qualities may thus come into play. The didactic basis is thus a dynamic entity and requires that the space for didactic reflection is kept open and in motion. However, the didactic basis of the Playful Learning programme must also dare put into words what we currently know about the didactics that promote a playful approach to learning. We are fully immersed in this process. In the autumn of 2020, ambassadors and researchers have jointly examined the learning and development understandings and the play qualities present in the many teaching experiments that are continuously being conducted in the programme. We look forward to describing these in greater detail.

You can read more about the learning and development understandings and play qualities that Helle Marie Skovbjerg, head of research in the programme, identified in autumn 2020 through an analysis of 36 didactic designs in the article 'Perspectives on learning in didactic designs with play qualities'.



Development basis for Playful Learning

The development basis has been adjusted

In the Playful Learning programme, we work with the development of teaching in three different development arenas, each with its own modus operandi, which, in short form, can be designated TRY, TYPE and TALK. The joint development basis has been further developed in 2020 based on the educators' experiences and evaluations, thus highlighting the value of a dialogue between colleagues on the development of teaching methods.

A joint development basis does not mean that all educators develop their teaching according to uniform and specific procedures. A joint development basis means that we have a common approach to the development of teaching that values tangible experiments and practice experiences as a development engine (TRY), that attaches importance to explicit didactic reasons for the new practice (TYPE) and that understands the framework set for didactic reflection spaces (TALK) as essential to a continued development of the education programmes. Our development basis creates a joint framework and a common language that make knowledge sharing and exchange of experience possible across university colleges.

TRY – Experiments in and with teaching

In this development arena, educators and students work with very specific and delimited experiments in teaching aimed at promoting a playful approach to learning. This is an action arena in which educators and students interact in teaching in new ways. The purpose is to challenge 'inherited' teaching forms and try out new approaches that may result in surprising recognitions and playful practices.

TALK – collegiate reflection spaces

In this 'louder' development arena, colleagues share their experiences, challenges and didactic innovations in a learning community that can be organised in many ways. The important element is that a clear framework is established that allows colleagues to inspire and challenge each other. The purpose is to deprivatise the classroom and create a space for didactic conversations on the development of teaching methods between colleagues.

TYPE – Didactic intentions and justifications

This is the quiet and reflective arena in which the educator describes the intention with and justifications for the newly developed teaching practice in a didactic design. The purpose of the description is to make the design transparent and well founded by highlighting the educator's didactic reflections and linking this to (and supporting it with) theories and research-based knowledge.

You can read more about the educational development assumptions underlying the development basis in the article 'A programme design for Playful Learning – Framed unruliness' by Playful Learning Programme Directors Tobias Heiberg and Mette Lyager.

Case articles on Playful Learning

In this section, you can gain an insight into the educators' reflections on their experiments with a playful approach to teaching, experiences from PlayLab as a learning arena and the organisation of competence development for colleagues on the social education and teacher education programmes in Denmark. You can delve into six different narratives from the educators' everyday working lives.

Around Iceland – on exploratory mood in mathematics teaching on the teacher education programme

Per Nygaard Thomsen, cand.pæd.mat. (Master of Science (Education) in Mathematics) and Associate Professor at VIA University College's Teacher Education programme

This is about Iceland. But not the Iceland of beautiful, stunning natural landscapes or hot springs that we know from the tourist brochures or about how few people actually live on Iceland. This is about the football skills of these few people.

At the European Football Championships in France in 2016, to which Iceland had qualified for the first time, they performed surprisingly well. They reached the knock-out phase for the last 16 countries, where they met the motherland of football, England, beating them 2-1. The repeated 'huh' shouts from the Iceland supporters became known throughout the world in this connection. Iceland was then to meet the host nation France in the quarter-finals – and this is where the situation occurs. Yannick Agnel – a French Olympics swimmer – proclaimed loud and clear on Twitter that if Iceland won the European Championships, he would swim around Iceland.

In the mathematics teaching on the teacher education programme in Nørre Nissum, the students are invited to consider and examine the questions: Is this at all possible? And, if so, how long will it take? The challenge can be solved based on the knowledge that the participants have at their disposal.

"When you ask like that, it must be because he isn't capable of doing it. Or because it's a 'trick question'?"

The question is, in a way, characteristic of many people's view of mathematics as a subject where there are either trick questions that can trip you up or bruise your self-esteem or questions for which the answer is hidden from ordinary persons, whereas it is crystal clear to mathematicians. Or to put it another way: Many people have a complicated relationship with mathematics, often perceived as a subject with one correct answer to each problem and that is exclusively for the chosen few. Which means that you cannot ask questions of the above type!

This article discusses exploration and examination as an example of a playful approach to learning in a specific subject – in this case mathematics on the teacher education programme – and how it looks from the perspective of the students and the educator. In particular, the article describes the educator's special role and responsibility in facilitating playful approaches to learning and creating an involving exploratory mood.

Interest and commitment

In the mathematics classroom, students find pictures of Iceland on their computers and phones. While some connect their computers to big screens, so that Iceland is projected on the wall, others print out photos and hang them up. During the process, the students engage in lively discussions. The room is buzzing with ideas that pop up and are shot down again. Decisions are made that the sea temperature is not of importance and that, for example, it does not make sense to swim along the entire coast as the coastline is 4970 km long, and Iceland is only about 300 x 150 km lengthwise and crosswise. Many, many other aspects are also brought up and discussed. There is no mistaking the students' interest.

When you listen to the students' conversations, they give the impression of interest, absorption, commitment, conversational willingness, risk appetite, courage,

wealth of ideas, responsiveness and many other similar characteristics that could just as well describe a group of children playing.

Students' commitment to their own learning process is a key element in their learning outcomes. This is neither new nor surprising – and learning theories and countless studies also point in this direction. So educators on the Professional Bachelor programmes and primary and lower secondary school teachers must ensure that they create a framework and teaching that allow students and pupils to show commitment. The premise of play – and learning – is that you involve yourself in one way or another, and the characteristic features of play can be seen and felt when you work with problems that are not immediately solvable.

In mathematics didactic terms, reference is made to examination and problem-based mathematics teaching, which is part of a wider focus on exploratory and experimental work forms in the natural sciences.

The perception of mathematics (and science) as natural science subjects that have their origin in an exploratory approach to the world has existed for many years. The exploratory approach to learning dates as far back as to Dewey (1859-1952) and Montesorri (1870-1952) and even further back to Rosseau, Pestalozzi and Froebel in the 18th Century, where waking the child to self-activity was a fundamental thought. So it is not a new concept, but the ideas have nevertheless gained renewed focus in the 21st Century.

What is the circumference of Iceland?

What do we then establish? What do we think that he can do? Can he maintain an average of 5½? I don't know how far you can swim when you're a former professional? The questions bounce back and forth between the group members, and each student spins off the other with new ideas and opinions on how to get to grips with the problem.

Slowly and steadily, the students move towards an initial demarcation of the problem, so that they can now deal specifically with how to arrive at an answer.

A student stands up and points to the map of Iceland:

"What if we simply made a circle around it? It would be more or less correct, but the island is approximately 300 km wide at its widest, and he will then be swimming much too far away from the coast," he says, arguing against his own idea before the others have an opportunity to say anything."

The many questions, hypotheses, confirmations and rejections of their own ideas and those of their fellow students are characteristic of the mood in the classroom and reflect the students' commitment. They are involved in finding possible solutions and new and unknown ways to solve the problem.

A playful approach to learning is characterised precisely by the students being given the opportunity and having the courage to enter unfamiliar territories, do things in new ways and venture into processes with unknown destinations. The belief that precisely the new and unknown situation can provide something good and instructive gives the student the courage to try and to fail and to try again and again.

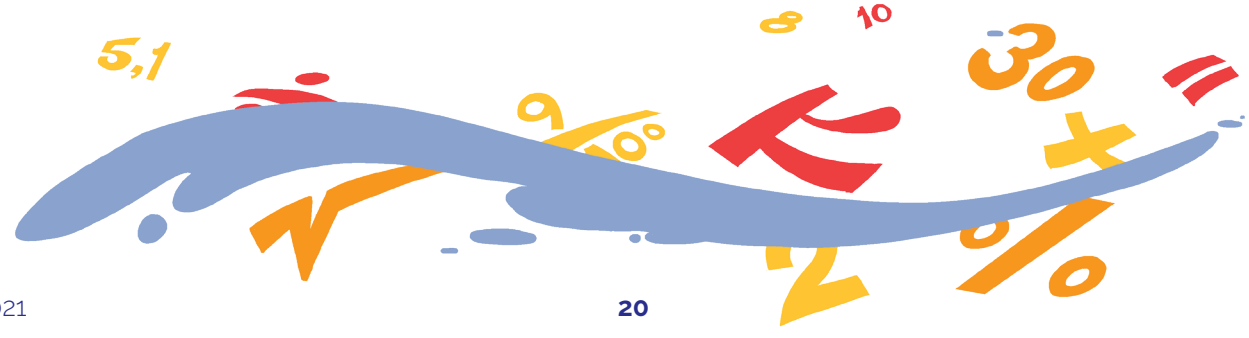
Helle Marie Skovbjerg (2016) sees the concept of mood as a central aspect in a description of play, and perhaps precisely the mood in the particular learning situation among the adult students on the teacher education programme shares characteristic features with play.

To be in a mood is to be present in the moment and to create something of meaning – while also being open to the future. Mood is an intermediate position in which everything has not been defined – and where many things are possible – an openness and a readiness for something to mean something. Mood arises in an interaction with elements outside the subject, where interaction with others often constitutes a key element (ibid.).

Play mood and exploratory mood

The learning student's entry into an arena in which she is willing to let herself be challenged and to attach intrinsic value to the specific narrative in itself is the fulcrum of the teaching on the day in question. Anyone with a rational view could object to the narrative of the possible swim around Iceland. In fact, Iceland did not become European Champions, and Yannick Agnel did not have to swim around Iceland. Some would therefore object that it is a waste of time and uninteresting to engage in answering questions that concern the problem in question.

But what if it were actually the case? What if Iceland had won? If you buy that premise, the situation opens up, and there is room for developing a mood that has many things in common with the moods of play. 'What if' are the key



words here – and many will nod in recognition that these two words are often heard when children are playing.

Based on Helle Marie Skovbjerg's concept of 'play mood', the mood in the classroom can best be described as an 'exploratory mood'. Term 'exploratory mood' will subsequently be used to describe this situation in the learning space.

Play mood and exploratory mood have many elements in common – they come from the same experience of being present in the moment, of creating meaning and being open to what will happen next.

Playful approach to learning is not play

The built-in purpose of play is that there is no other purpose of playing than participating in it (Skovbjerg 2016). In this specific work with calculation of the swim around Iceland, students enter into the learning situation with an examination purpose and an underlying learning purpose, but the learning work can still easily draw on the same elements as those that are central to play.

The exploratory mood in a learning situation clearly differs from the pure play mood when we look at the purpose of the activities. The play mood is its own purpose and even though the examination in a learning situation can be experienced in the present as a state that it is good and nice to be in and that is, as such, almost a purpose in itself – it is not actually so. We move into the exploratory mood to emerge with something on the other side, some 'learning'. However, it does not take anything away from the mood that this 'something' exists in the process, if anything quite the opposite.

While the purpose itself is different for play and a playful approach to learning with adults on a teacher education programme, the moods are similar.

38 or 45 days?

Back in the classroom, the students are still sweating over the Iceland challenge. The examination does not stop with the students' suggestions for how long it will take to swim around Iceland. Their suggestions are just as different as the methods on which their answers are based. So, all depending on time and scope, the examination continues – also well into the interval and lunch break – with considerations about possible ways of finding other and perhaps more detailed and nuanced answers.

Several different answers have been written on the classroom blackboard. The distance varies between 1295 km and 1570 km and the time from 38 days to 44.69 days. None of the answers are wrong and, in a sense, they are all correct in the context in which they have been prepared. But the answer is not the most important thing in this context. The students' learning occur in their exploration of methods, approaches and choices on the way towards finding an answer as well as in their reflections on how accurate the answer can be considered to be.

The educator is responsible for the invitation....

What creates such an exploratory mood? Why does it occur precisely in connection with the work with a hypothetical swim around Iceland?

The educator is very much responsible, based on the educator's planning and way of being present in the classroom, for making the exploratory mood possible by offering a didactic contract in which the question – 'What if?' is the starting point. The educator's own interest, enthusiasm and presence in the classroom are an overlooked element, because enthusiasm is contagious in a positive way – and this also very much applies to academic enthusiasm. The exploratory mood does not arise on its own. It is staged and created among those present. Most often, the exploratory mood is dependent on and initiated by the educator's obvious enthusiasm for precisely this specific aspect of the subject for which she lives and breathes. This enthusiasm is a fundamental element when we want to establish a didactic contract under which exploration is a dominant factor.

In addition, the educator must be open to the fact that she does not know exactly where the teaching is going. The direction has been set from the start, while the students and the educator jointly steer the teaching in the direction that makes the most sense in the given situation. Therefore, the educator cannot know in advance the challenges that will arise among the students, nor what teaching competences she will be required to bring into play as educator. The educator's assurance that she can handle the unforeseen elements that will arise in the course of the teaching is important in order to have the courage to plan and create room for the teaching to be unpredictable.

This creates an invitation to the students that signals that their contribution, interest and commitment are essential to the teaching.

... and students have the responsibility for accepting the invitation

The students' ability and desire to receive the invitation to participate in the exploration is a key element. One or more students can thus easily 'stifle' an incipient mood, while participants who are able to draw on elements described, for example, in musical improvisation are co-creative in relation to creating a basic exploratory mood:

- *Yes, and...*
  – to say yes to most things
- *Don't write the script in your head*
  – to be open about what will happen and where precisely it should lead
- *Listen to the group mind*
  – listening to the others

(Keith Sawyer in Skovbjerg 2016)

When, as a student, you are to practice these elements in class, it requires fundamental aspects such as a sense of security, community and courage, but also academic competences to explore the problem in a relevant way. Or, to put it another way, it is not easy as an educator, or as a student, to engage in a playful approach to learning.

It probably also requires that you get used to the process, before, as a student enrolled in a university college education programme, you can feel comfortable in classrooms characterised by an exploratory mood.

An exploratory mood is not reserved for mathematics teaching on the teacher education programme. It can be established in all subjects at all levels. However, the most significant initiating factor is the person responsible for the didactic contract in the teaching, i.e. the educator.

The didactic methods, which are here inextricably linked to the context of the subject, can thus be naturally transformed and lifted out of the subject of mathematics and into other subjects and contexts. An exploratory mood occurs when the educator and the students become enthusiastic about something together.

So it was thus not a 'trick question', but instead an invitation and an opening of a new didactic potential for creating new exploratory moods in the mathematics classroom.

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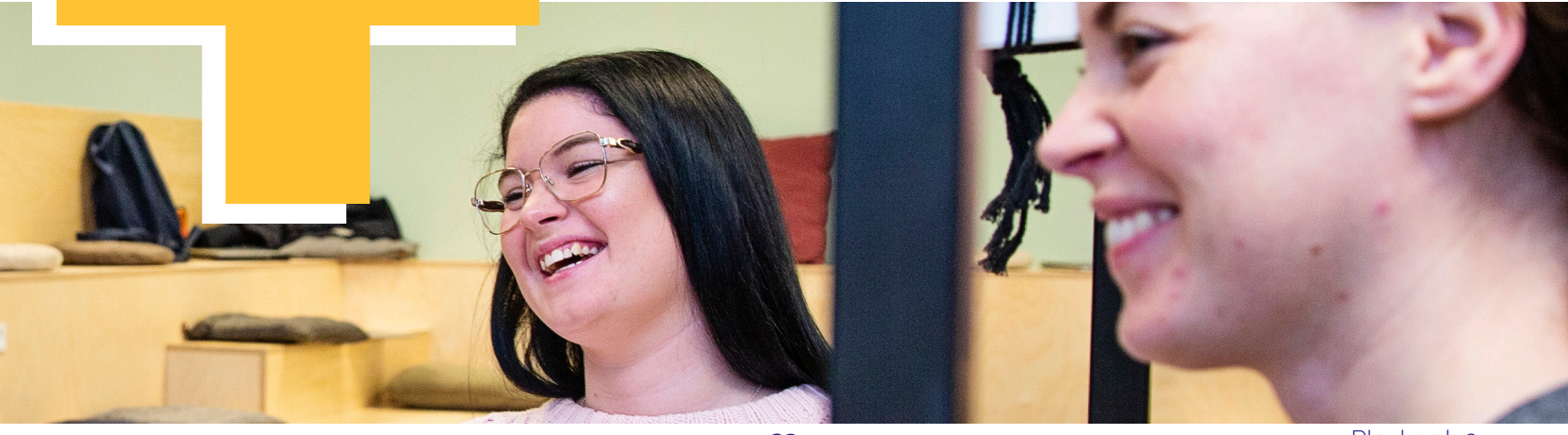

With chance as driving force

Frederik Zeuthen, cand.mag. (Master of Arts) and Associate Professor at Absalon University College's Social Education programme

There is good energy and loads of activity in the classroom. The students have been divided into small groups and are busy finding quotations in their specialist literature that can support their analysis of the problem in a case that has been handed out. It is like laying a puzzle – which piece fits here? The focus is on the play qualities of teaching; it is no longer just about the pedagogical, academic and exam-oriented aspects. Instead, the students are suddenly intrinsically motivated by the activity itself.

In this article, I will try to describe how I have worked with chance in the classroom to create a playful mood, commitment and high motivation among the students. In the example, I test what can happen if you regard chance as a play quality and base your goal-driven process – which typically characterises teaching on a higher education programme – on the principles of chance.

The above mood picture from the teaching describes the third and last activity during a teaching session, where I have focused on three different areas: The subject-related content of the module as defined in the curriculum, academic competences targeted at a particular exam form as well as the creation of a playful mood in the learning space to engage and motivate the students to work actively and in depth with the subject so that they understand and remember it better. I have called the activity 'literature roulette'.

The literature roulette is a three-stage rocket: The first stage is about establishing a playful mood and practicing the use of technical language. The second stage holds on to the playful learning and the technical language, but is also about training academic competences. The third stage has the same structure as the second stage, but the parameter of chance has been replaced by targeted selection of literature. The term 'literature roulette' is used both about the second activity out of three – the roulette itself – and about the three activities regarded as a whole.

Play is characterised by being driven by an inner motivation as opposed to teaching, which is defined by an external goal. The ambition behind using literature roulette in the teaching is to ignore this dichotomy and try to make the students experience that you can be playful in a managed learning process. For me, it is about identifying some characteristic features or qualities of play that can be utilised in discursive learning processes; i.e. in teaching, which is fundamentally non-play. In literature roulette, the most important play feature is that although the game may be serious, it is always also non-serious (Huizinga 1993). This means – hopefully – that all students dare participate actively, because the non-seriousness gives them access to both experiment and fail.

Being playful in a learning situation is about how you approach the task and how it feels to participate in an activity. Therefore, the question is how I, as an educator, can, using small measures, let my students conquer the learning space with a playful attitude (Sicart, 2014) and take ownership of their own learning process? Can I help my students get into a playful mood they can maintain in the discursive learning process with an externally defined goal?

This is first and foremost a question of interaction between form and content. You need to use your playful attitude to take over the learning process. In the Playful Learning programme, the educators have developed three didactic principles, where unpredictability and meaningfulness are central factors in two of them (see the introduction to this PlayBook). These principles will here be regarded both as qualities in a playful approach to teaching and – perhaps even first and foremost – as prominent characteristic features of play. (Huizinga, 1993; Sutton-Smith, 1997)

Why chance?

Roger Caillois (2001) identifies four archetypes of play, one of which is alea. Alea covers all the games and playing in which luck, fate and chance determine the outcome. Playing the Lottery is a good example. You cannot be skilled in picking the numbers, but many people experience excitement in waiting for the result, and they can have a personal success experience if they win. This is one of the two reasons for basing teaching activities on alea: If the students fail due to an aleatory process, it is not their own fault, but if they are instead successful, they can regard themselves as competent. This second reason is linked to the first: The students will hopefully dare bring themselves more into play when a possible 'defeat' is not their own fault, but is due to chance.

Literature roulette is an attempt to use chance constructively to work towards three specific goals at once: A subject-related content, academic competences and preparation for a coming test.

Warm-up for play

The playful mood does not come by itself. In order to engage in playful learning, the student must allow herself/himself to play, and she/he must also feel that playing is allowed in the classroom. Andrew Walsh (2019) calls it permission to play and stresses that such permission must be granted at several levels – do I myself think that it's OK to play; what do my fellow students think of me when I play; formal permission from the study programme and the educator.

The students have discussed today's case and jointly identified pedagogical issues and themes and are now ready to go ahead. The overall theme that we are to work with in the first exercise is communication problems between parents and pedagogical staff. The exercise has the character of a warm-up – it is to kick off the academic discussion, and it must establish a playful mood among the participants in the classroom. I have asked them to stand in a circle in an order based on the colour of their shoes, so that it is random who they talk to. No one knows this, but, already here, they are becoming mentally prepared not to heed the right/wrong dichotomy, as there is not one single correct order. They must be two and two together, and this group formation thus also contains the first minor alea element.

Each group now draws a card from a Pictionary deck, but they are not allowed to look at it yet. Pictionary is a family game in the draw & guess genre. Each card contains five words; for example 'shelter, helicopter, rattling, rabies and motorway'. The idea is now that the participants are to use the words – one at a time – as a metaphor when explaining what it is important for the pedagogue to remember when communication with parents becomes difficult. It is a monologue and, after the first word, the group's other participant takes over the card and presents an explanation based on the next word. I demonstrated the exercise myself by drawing a card and explaining: "I can best describe a difficult collaboration with parents by comparing it to a beaver." This became an explanation of how a beaver is apparently very effective, but, by felling all the trees and damming up the river, it can ruin it for all the other animals. Likewise, well-meaning pedagogues can call in parents to a meeting when their child needs it, but if they only see it from the pedagogical help-a-child perspective, it is not certain that the parents will experience it as support.

We see in the case how Amalie-Sofie keeps taking the other children's toys, despite the pedagogues first reminding her in a friendly manner, and then in more rebuking terms, that it is not OK. The reason why she nevertheless persists is that she cannot find an inner calm, and therefore cannot resist, due the chaotic way she was handed over to the pedagogues at the day-care centre and her situation at home. "The conditions are [not] favourable", as Saint-Exupéry (1943) has the King say about making unreasonable demands. It is pointless to make these demands that cannot be met and still expect them to be met. The Little Prince wants the King to order the sun to go down in the middle of the day, and to demand this from the sun is just as fruitless as demanding that Amalie-Sofie – in her current state – can simply act appropriately in the social space. In both cases, however, there is a reasonable expectation about the correct behaviour (the sun will set at some point; Amalie-Sofie must refrain from taking the other children's toys). So the point is precisely that the pedagogues need to consider how they can help establish 'favourable conditions' for Amalie-Sofie.

Fun, serious and non-serious

Three things are merged in this exercise: 1) One of the didactic principles of the Playful Learning programme that concerns the creation of shared perceptions. By getting the students to use metaphors, word images and symbol languages, we establish a consensus on what the day's pedagogical-educational theme is actually about, and we acquire a joint idea of what we are to work with. 2) In addition, it is about *permission to play.* By the educator taking the lead and demonstrating the harmlessness of the activity, the students should dare allow themselves to show a playful attitude and approach to the teaching. I try to show that, on the one hand, it is legitimate to play this game and, on the other hand, to show how to express actual pedagogical and academic competences based on the random word. It is all an attempt to get the students to engage wholeheartedly in the activity because they like it. 'Delightful' as Ben Mardell (2016) and the International School in Billund call it. In addition, I support the harmlessness by the exercise being conducted in groups of two students. No one will be skating on thin ice in front of the whole class. 3) The third element is about the students working towards learning, understanding or being able to do something specific. By the exercise being conducted in pairs, everyone gets to say something about the pedagogical-educational theme and thus practice using the technical language. We have reviewed the case and written catchwords, so that no one feels lost. I have also stressed that we need to continue to work with the theme and that this exercise is merely a warm-up for this, so if you regard the day as a space rocket, they know that this exercise is only the first engine to help with lift-off. We will exit the atmosphere and head towards the infinite universe later on.

With chance as driving force

The students are now 'warmed up' to be both playful and to work consciously with a technical language. The next thing that happens is that they draw a quotation from a work of fiction from a hat, and they must now regard this quotation as specialist literature and use it in their analysis of the case. I demonstrate the intention by showing them an example of a case I have made up myself and analysed with a quotation from The Little Prince (see text box).

After a brief review of my intention with the example, we revisit the real case from the day's class as well as the problems we agreed on earlier in the day.

I have produced a number of small notes in advance containing quotations from fiction; primarily children's fiction. I have prepared a quotation for about one in three students in the class. To support the element of chance and help the students dare, they must pick a quotation from a hat.

The groups now try to analyse the case in writing, as in my example. After 20 minutes, we share their suggestions on the big screen so that everyone can see what the others have been doing. This allows me to summarise and explain the extent to which the students have answered the assignment according to my intention, which is a preparation for the next round, in which they perform analyses based on the right literature. It is also the intention that we are to have fun together. What is good will usually also be fun. Everyone approaches the assignment as if it were a challenge in a game or a riddle. There is great enthusiasm about performing the assignment in itself, and what especially drives the students forward is that it takes place in the borderland between riddle solving and serious academic exercise. They are immersed in the assignment, both because they want to and because they have to. As Huizinga (1993) tells us, play is non-serious, but it can easily also be serious at the same time.

#permissiontofail

Part of the purpose of this exercise is to be able to look at a case from new and unknown angles and to develop technical language. The fact that it takes place in a playful setting is to support the students' desire to participate even if they would normally hold back for fear of saying something decidedly wrong. Here, the right/wrong dichotomy has been cancelled, so to speak, as there is actually no correct answer to the assignment. It is never a good idea to make a pedagogical-educational decision based on pocket philosophy from a book of fiction; however much it is regarded as a classic and as a great book. However, what *is* correct – i.e. is linked to the education programme and the profession – in this exercise is the students' work on themes and methods. Finding a solution in a challenging situation is not the focus here, but this will be unfolded in the third round of the literature roulette.

Ready to play

The activity described at the start of this article was performed in the third semester of the social education programme; the module is called The Pedagogue as a Person of Authority and is about persons who need pedagogues more than most people. Neglect, bullying, mentally or physically impaired persons who constitute a risk to themselves etc. The theme of today's teaching session – four lessons – is an analysis of problems raised by a case. A case in this module usually contains an ethical dilemma, so it is not too easy to solve the problem presented by the case, and the subsequent examination is precisely a written assignment based on a case. We have been working with the same case all day and, as one of the first things, we have jointly identified relevant problems.

We have tested a less 'risky' version of the activity immediately prior to this, so that the students have become aware that this is an activity of a playful nature. It has given them the courage to try something, even if they are not sure whether it is correct – it is 'only a game'.

One of the objects of the exercise is to dare use the technical language actively, so that it become a language of the first order rather than of the second. At exams and in pedagogical practice, you must necessarily be precise and correct in your use of references and concepts, but the approach is completely appropriate in a learning and teaching situation: Better to fail than not to try at all.

Chance and the courage to fail

As can be seen from the example above, you can be playful even when you are not playing. Or rather: It is irrelevant whether you call it playful teaching if the learners are genuinely engaged in the activities that take place in the learning space and their motivation for participating comes from within. The above teaching activities all contain play qualities, and I would argue that it is precisely these qualities that make my teaching better than it would otherwise have been. The students understand and remember the subject-related content better because they experience that the teaching process is actually cooler if they actively participate and try something they may not be quite sure is correct.

I have worked with chance as the driving force for learning processes and with the playful mood as two sides of the same coin to explore how the play principle of alea can support the targeted learning. It has proven to be extremely fruitful and has contributed to motivating and engaging the participants. Chance is a useful lever that can be pulled to make the subject-related discussions less risky to participate in, and if the concept of chance is used judiciously, it can be a stepping stone towards creating a genuine play mood in the discursive classroom.

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Playwheel – a didactic tool for playful teaching

Jakob Ørsted, visual artist and Associate Professor at University College Copenhagen's Early Childhood and Social Education programme & Maja Laybourn, cand.mag. (Master of Arts) and Associate Professor at University College Copenhagen's Teacher Education programme

How do you make the teaching more playful, creative and experimental without losing focus on the curriculum that the students need to learn? The group of ambassadors at University College Copenhagen have developed Playwheel – a didactic tool that can inspire educators on the teacher education and social education programmes to initiate learning processes that are playful, investigative and creative, without compromising on the content of the subjects taught.

Spinning of Playwheel in PlayLab

Enthusiastic outbursts are heard in the new PlayLab at University College Copenhagen. Several student pedagogues are trying the roller coaster, while others are curiously examining the materials in the room. Suddenly, a frisbee flies through the air, followed by several balls.

This is what it looks like when a class of student pedagogues enthusiastically try out PlayLab, some of them in an almost euphoric mood. However, this does not apply to the educator, for whom the situation is unfamiliar. She is also part of a didactic experiment in which she will let go of her control and give the students room and opportunity to (re)train their play competences. After 15 minutes of free play, the class gathers at the wall in front of a large rotating version of Playwheel.

Playful teaching – how do you ensure educational standards?

In this article, we present Playwheel as a didactic tool and examine how it can contribute to the initiation of experiments and provide a framework for playful teaching.

Engaging in playful, creative and experimental learning processes with students can sound both enticing and discouraging. For what didactic principles can you apply to teaching that favour the freedom of play and unpredictability while ensuring educational standards and that you meet learning outcomes? Playful qualities in the teaching can contribute to activating and motivating the students in connection with the teaching, and give them didactic and pedagogical perspectives on the relationship between play and learning.

In the following, we describe what Playwheel is and how educators from the Early Childhood and Social Education programme and the Teacher Education programme, respectively, use it in different ways to experiment with their teaching. In the article, we examine how didactics are challenged by playful approaches, but also how the curriculum can be learnt in connection with the teaching through the use of teaching methods containing playful qualities. The article is based on the educator's organisation of a playful teaching practice and how Playwheel can be used in this context.

Playwheel – a tool for playful professional didactics

Playwheel is a form of material visualisation of the ideas about playful approaches to learning that educators at University College Copenhagen (KP) have had under the Playful Learning programme. From the beginning of the project, we have focused on gathering and systematising our knowledge about and reflections on the relationship between play and learning in different teaching contexts, and how we can translate this into specific practice.

The wheel consists of four rings, each containing six categories, and an empty field, which can be rotated and combined indefinitely... Or at least for as many as 2496 combinations!

Teaching and study activities (red ring) contains typical teaching and working methods on the Professional Bachelor programmes.

Play types (yellow ring) provides suggestions for the games or play elements that can be integrated into the teaching.

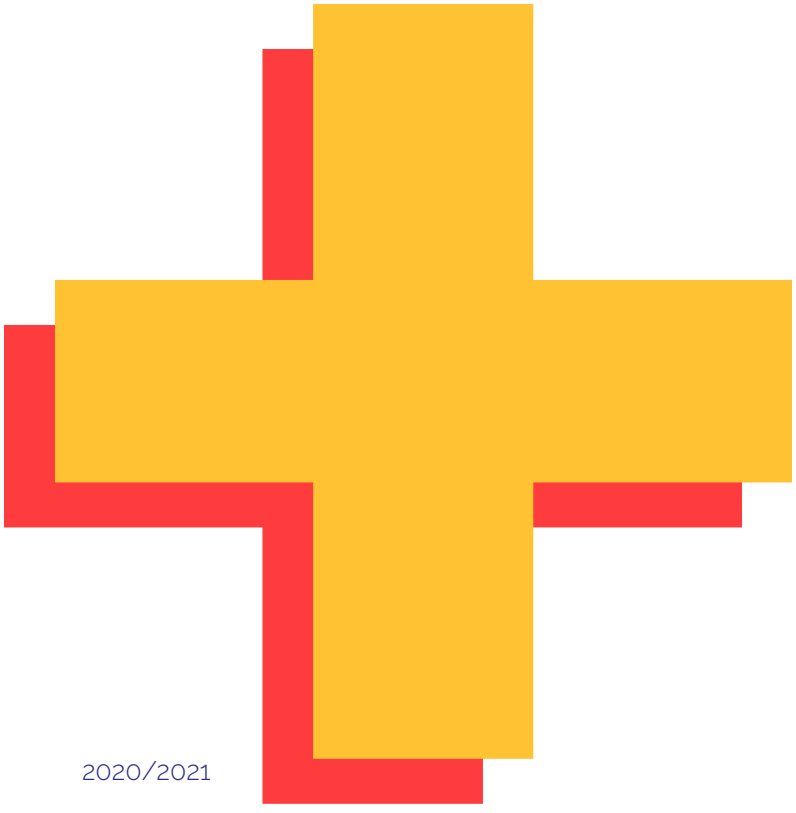
Play media (green ring) provides suggestions for which media and materials can be integrated into the teaching.

Play spaces (purple ring) provides suggestions for where the teaching can take place.

The categories in the yellow and green rings are inspired both by French sociologist Roger Callois' (1958) systematic divisions of play types and by Danish play researcher Jørgen Martin Steenholdt's (2011) thoughts on the different creative categories of play.

Playwheel can be used in the work with all skills – the teaching outcomes and specific contents are taken from the programme descriptions of the individual subjects. In this way, the wheel can be used by educators from both the Early Childhood and Social Education programme and the Teacher Education programme regardless of the subject area or outcomes being taught. The students can correspondingly use the wheel in connection with the development of learning activities in their practice.

Each ring contains an open field which is not categorised in advance, and here the intention is that the educator or the students themselves can insert a new teaching activity, play type, play media and/or play space if they wish to develop the model.



Case 1: To (re)train own play competences

Let us for a moment return to the scene in KP's PlayLab at the beginning of the article. Educator on the Early Childhood and Social Education programme Jane Hooge's intention with the teaching is to retrain the students' play competences, as both theoretical insights and bodily experiences are key to pedagogues being able to participate in and contribute to children's playing. Jane has deliberately chosen that the day's teaching will be held in KP's PlayLab, and the first 15 minutes have been organised as 'free play', where the students examine the space and its materialities on their own. Jane subsequently assembles the team and introduces them to Playwheel with special focus on play types and play media in the yellow and green rings. Precisely these categories will form the springboard for the students to develop new games that another group must try out. Some groups are sitting at the special sensory tables, while another group occupies the space around the roller coaster, and a third group has chosen the area around the 'String Forest'. "It was clear that the students sitting at the tables who had, for example, drawn rule-based games really started to negotiate. The two groups who were standing up got started more quickly with the actual playing. Movement and good laughs occurred more quickly here". The new games are tested across the groups, and the students thus gain both experience with developing new games and trying them out themselves.

In conclusion, Jane Hooge reflects on the overall teaching process:

"As often happens, I want to do too much as an educator, and the students are disappointed when they find that they will not have time to try all the developed games. The playful mood that arises puts pressure on the time available for reflection, and I think it's important that, as an educator, you make room for what the game can do. It was, in fact, my goal that the students were to (re)train their play competences and be brave."

Case 2: Mathematics with toys, learning tools and play places

Signe Gottchau Malm and Stine Gerster Johansen both teach mathematics on the Teacher Education programme and have used Playwheel in the organisation of a playful teaching sequence. Together, they have developed an activity for the students where they have used the playwheel during the planning phase: "We used it to get ideas" says Stine and continues: "We wanted to create some games, and then see if we moved in a different direction if we brought the wheel into play." Signe adds: "We were actually just playing around with it. We spun it around and talked about what the different categories and combinations might look like in the mathematics teaching."

The organisation of the teaching turned out to take shape with inspiration from the playwheel. The mathematics students had to choose in groups a random object from three piles; a toy (chalk, centricubes, dice, teddy bear etc), a learning tool (Geogebra, Excel, blackboard ruler, measuring tape, stopwatch, calculator) and a place (library, classroom, schoolyard etc). The random combination of a toy, a learning tool and a place became mandatory obstructions to a mathematics teaching activity which the students had to organise and test on their fellow students. Signe explains about the organisation of the process:

"Our tracks [the playwheel categories] provided the framework for what we made the students do. But we were also inspired in relation to activities that students could try out with pupils. In this way, the playwheel functioned as a kind of didactic framework for the process – even though our mathematics teaching categories were not identical to those in the playwheel."

When planning playful approaches to teaching, a dilemma often arises about how to organise teaching activities that provide room for free and sometimes chaotic dimensions, which often characterise play, while ensuring that the students learn what they are supposed to learn. And Stine concludes: "The playwheel can help provide a framework for and facilitate open learning processes so that I can stay focused on the mathematics content".

Case 3: Child view and role playing

Anne Sofie Swane Lund, educator on the Early Childhood and Social Education programme, experiments with playwheel in the organisation of her teaching. The aim is that the students are to acquire new views on the concept of child view through role playing and dilemmas. The groups of the class each draw a 'child view' : the 'evil child', the 'malleable child', the 'innocent child' etc. and, from the assigned child view, the group must argue for how they will consider various pedagogical dilemmas, which are presented to the whole class on an ongoing basis. The playful approach of the role playing allows the students to take up different positions representing different child views. The role playing offers a fictional context in which the students reflect on how different normative views of children affect a pedagogical practice. Anne Sofie Swane Lund says the following about the experiment:

"Where I think the playful approach worked best was where the groups were allocated a child view and a dilemma and had to talk about how the specific child view related to the given dilemma. I had some didactic consideration in relation to using Playwheel. Should it be somewhere else, another game? It made me more certain that the elements I had chosen would play well together. That is language and role playing. That you develop your technical language through role playing."

Anne Sofie uses the playwheel to link the teaching form Plenum with the play type of role playing, the play medium of language, which unfolds around different child views and pedagogical dilemmas, and the place (an ordinary classroom).

"If I were to go back to Playwheel, I should probably have chosen a different group type than Plenum; many of the participants became a little shy".

Playful learning

Creating shared perceptions Daring to go for unpredictability Insisting on meaningfulness. These are the current three principles of the Playful Learning programme, and they form part of the didactic basis for the understanding of a playful approach to learning under the programme. The principles have been developed through the first year of the programme and are based on the many experiences the participants have gained and the discussions about playful teaching that have been conducted across the teacher education and social education programmes at all the university colleges of Denmark.

A playful approach to learning requires that both students and educators dare the unpredictable and break with conventional teaching forms to insist on creating meaningfulness together.

Teaching based on playful approaches to learning is often connected with images of chaos, joy and fun – but perhaps also with the notion that the original academic focus of the teaching risks disappearing, or at least becoming obscured, by the wide scope that play offers.

In this article, we describe teaching episodes where something is at stake. The learning processes are opened up and everyone is invited to contribute. This can be an ambivalent experience for both students and educators, and be both exciting and unsecure. As we have presented in the above case descriptions, Playwheel can be used as an inspiration and as a planning tool in the organisation of learning processes with playful approaches to learning, where conventional teaching and study activities are supplemented with play types and play media as well as learning environments.

Playful approaches to learning give rise to reflections on general formation and education, and on the relationship between learning processes and learning outcomes. Can the students learn exactly the same thing through a playful, experimental and creative approach to learning as through a more conventional scholastic approach? Or are they simply learning something else that is just as important? Can we ensure that the students meet the learning outcomes and objectives of the education programme through a playful approach to learning?

Developing playful professional didactics requires a continuous pedagogical and didactic discussion of the relationship between creativity and play, outcomes and objectives, process and learning.

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Free me from the hidden disciplining strategy of the classroom

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Why are by far the majority of classrooms at higher education level architecturally designed as closed boxes consisting of four walls and lined with rows of chairs and tables that all face a blackboard? In some cases, the chairs have even been fixed to the floor to make sure that the students do not face the wrong way. This is an architectural strategy. A disciplining strategy that has created an internalised narrative about what the teaching in the education programmes should look like and how you learn best. Fortunately, however, there are alternative learning environments offering other exploration opportunities. Learning environments that are inspiring and support a playful approach to learning, where the interaction between the environment, the educator and the students opens up for a multitude of learning scenarios.

"I'm so uncomfortable," exclaims one of the students, who is trying to find a comfortable position on the hard amphitheatre stage in the PlayLab square.

"Yes, you're sitting on a board – you're supposed to be uncomfortable," I reply to the student.

We are in the alternative learning environment PlayLab in Odense. This is the students' first experience of a teaching session in PlayLab. The article uses this as its starting point.

The purpose of the article is to nuance and qualify the understanding of the importance of the surroundings to the students' commitment, expression opportunities and learning on higher education programmes. The intention of this nuancing is to qualify educators' didactic reflections on the beneficial value of the surroundings when working with a playful approach to learning.

The surroundings play a central didactic role in teaching contexts, because materialities form part of a close dialectical relationship between educator and students. A dialectical relationship is understood in the sense that we are influenced by the materialities we surround ourselves with and that we also influence our surroundings. We not only influence our surroundings by shaping or manipulating objects, but also by attaching specific cultural meanings to our surroundings. This didactic relationship creates a specific learning environment, depending on where we are, when and with whom we are there (Biesta, 2014; Dewey, 2009; Gulløw & Højlund, 2017).

When I use the concept of materiality in this article, I refer both to the physical objects available in the surroundings in the form of tools, decorations and plants and to the architectural organisation and setting of the premises.

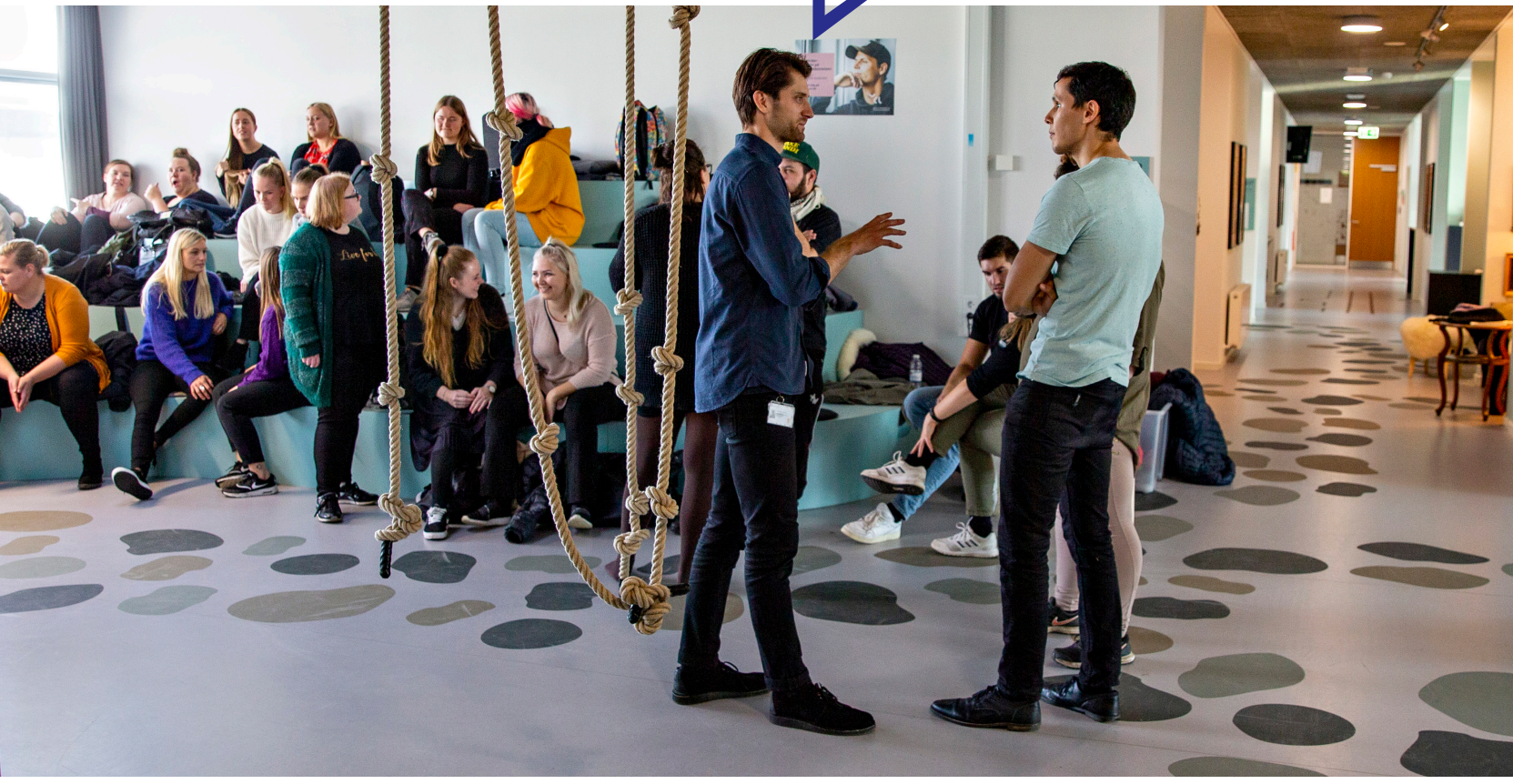
The didactic meaning of the materialities is supported by many didacticists (Gulløw & Højlund, 2017). It is therefore important that we, as educators and communicators, carefully consider the importance of materialities in the specific teaching practice. In some cases, we have to let go of years of internalised understandings of what a fruitful learning environment looks like and how it is used.

In addition, educators and students must dare surrender themselves to the moment and let themselves be inspired. We need to surrender ourselves to the space

PlayLab at UCL

As part of the Playful Learning programme, physical learning environments known as PlayLabs have been established at all six university colleges. All PlayLabs have been designed differently together with the people who use the premises on a daily basis.

At UCL in Odense, you enter a colourful and dynamic environment that spreads over two rooms, a hallway and a square. The PlayLab has been designed with large surfaces on which you can draw, mobile boxes, a small theatre stage drawn with chalk varnish and transparent glass walls with associated felt tip pens. The tables and chairs of the PlayLab environment are fitted with wheels, making the space very dynamic. The square has an amphitheatre stage. Climbing ropes hang down from the ceiling, and on the floor there are large stickers in different colours and soft abstract shapes. The bookcases are filled with different materials, containing everything from pipe cleaners, ice cream sticks, modelling wax to crayons in many variants. In the hallway, a 'grandma's corner' has been arranged in an alcove with a velour sofa, an old classic floor lamp with soft lighting and pictures in gilded frames.



and explore potential expression opportunities that more alternative and dynamic learning environments can offer. If we are lucky, this presence and being in the moment can support a playful approach to learning.

Without chairs, the body is set free

We are at the beginning of a lesson and the students have started to arrive at PlayLab. They find a seat on the hard and uncomfortable benches of the amphitheatre stage, balancing their computers on their thighs, and they are ready to be taught.

The students naturally have their eyes turned towards the large whiteboard, where I have drawn some models next to the big picture that I have projected onto the wall. Just like in a theatre, the spotlights are on the place where I am standing. But the 'stage' will soon be invaded by the students.

I invite the whole class to join me on the floor. Out into the spotlight. From there, I can explore the possibilities of the space together with the students. Together, we will be trying out 'Single Mum from the Sticks', which is an activity that requires everyone's attention and active commitment if the didactic intention is to succeed.

While standing in one large circle around one person who stands in the middle, the students are to make figures of, for example, Christmas trees with gifts and dancing children around them. Another figure portrays the single mother, who is stirring a pot with two crying children clutching to her legs.

I first show the activity by being the single mother. I stand in the middle, and my tasks is now to get out of the circle if those at whom I point fail to make the figures as instructed or do not manage to do so before I have counted to ten. After a trial run with me in the middle, the activity starts for real. The students compete intensely to avoid having to stand in the centre of the circle. After a couple of rounds, it is the students' turn to develop new characters and instruct their fellow students. The activity continues, and the room is filled with a loud positive atmosphere, where smiles are mixed with the battle to avoid ending up in the centre of the circle. The activity continues like this for some time.

Quite naturally and without necessarily being aware of it, the students lend themselves to the community and the moment. This is an investment that gives them a concrete and sensory experience, which the teaching theme of play can use as a springboard in the subsequent teaching activity.

Drawing on the windows is permitted

The students are given the assignment of examining the day's theme of play individually. They must then be creative together by using mindmaps, creating models and drawing figures using the materials available in PlayLab.

"But, Daniel, are we also allowed to draw on the windows," exclaims a student, when I tell them that they may use all vertical surfaces for knowledge sharing.

"Yes", I reply.

The student's puzzlement is a good example of her internalised expectations of the expression opportunities that the teaching environment can offer. Through cultural practice, she has learned that it is highly improbable that you draw on windows in teaching contexts. But, actually, why shouldn't you?

Embedded in the student's puzzlement is also an underlying meaning negotiation which is formed in a dialectical relationship between the student, her fellow students, me and the surroundings. The students experience that they have entered a learning environment with other expectations and didactic qualities. The didactic qualities arise, for example, in the exploratory, creative and playful learning processes that cater for widespread creative pleasure and the need for *learning* by doing (Brinkmann & Tanggaard, 2010).

The learning environment invites to action

Based on the students' actions, a picture begins to emerge that students experience PlayLab as an inspiring learning arena. A learning arena that invites introspective immersion while sitting on the floor under a high table or in the sofa in 'grandma's corner' and also provides space for extroverted and more explicit creative work forms and with use of the many different materialities that the surroundings offer.

In the teaching, a high degree of variation emerges in the way in which the individual groups focus on and share knowledge. The different actions represent a wide spectrum of expression opportunities to work with knowledge, all depending on which spaces and materials the students are 'invited' to use. Different individual invitations that evolve when you experience that other students use other materials for the same assignment or the same materials in other ways.

Didactically, such variation and inspiration are a quality when students learn that materialities can have many applications. Firstly, because it creates a unique situational context that makes it easier for the learner to remember back and link her or his knowledge to a particular memory trail, and secondly because the source of inspiration that materialities can constitute can be used in a pedagogical and didactic practice.

Gibson refers to the 'invitations' of the surroundings as *materialities' affordance* (Gibson, 1979). *Affordance* is the qualities which we read directly from the physical environment and which say something about our relationship with them. We are part of our surroundings. In the same way that part of our consciousness is formed in the interaction with other people, another part is also formed in our interaction with physical surroundings.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Understanding your surroundings and understanding yourself are therefore two sides of the same coin. As we move through the world, we perceive what it can do.

The students thus observe the surroundings selectively and classify them culturally as a possible stage for certain types of activity (Gulløw & Højlund, 2017). Therefore, as an educator, I cannot predefine how the affordance of objects is read by the individual student. However, I can have an open approach to the ambiguity with which the surroundings are decoded. The selective observation becomes a didactic springboard where the students are invited to act in different ways.

Learning environments where the surroundings force educators and students to reinterpret the materialities that are present are therefore didactically interesting as they support a playful and creative approach to learning. The surroundings push the internalised understandings of what actions one can afford in a teaching situation. This is a disturbance that forces educators and students to relate to their surroundings, as part of a learning process and not just as a passive framework. I find that this attention to the surroundings supports the students' commitment and makes them participate actively with different forms of expression in a very natural way. Forms of expression that supplement or nuance the written and oral forms that often have high priority in the education programmes.

The conducive setting for a playful and creative learning environment can obviously also be established in more conventional classrooms by actively reorganising or adding materials that are normally not present. The challenge in this is simply that many barriers arise to educators actually managing to do this once the everyday teaching practices are up and running.

The pedagogical force of architecture

There is no doubt that a special learning environment arises when the teaching takes place in surroundings with

many and surprising expression opportunities. Insights from interviews with students who have participated in teaching activities in PlayLab highlight that they have discovered the valuable importance of their surroundings. A student expresses it as follows:

"What we do leaves a different imprint on us [...] For example, I remember when we drew on the windows when we worked with the theme of play".

Another student mentions that "it's also a form of teaching that I can take with me into my own practice".

The surroundings and the teaching context have a positive impact on the student's attention and memory, and the learning is experienced as being physically anchored in a useful way.

Meaningful, playful, creative and bodily sensory learning approaches cannot be forced with simple didactic methods regarding content and context. It is not enough that I plan the teaching and that it takes place in PlayLab. The approach presupposes that we dare forget ourselves for a moment and be inspired by the place instead and by the *moment* in which we are actually there.

Lene Tanggaard, who is a creativity researcher, describes this being in the present as a prerequisite for creativity to flourish. She describes creativity as a significant relational being in the moment, which means that one becomes less self-absorbed and more ready to be inspired by what the outside world may offer (Tanggaard, 2018).

In this connection, a student pedagogue emphasises that the space does something to her perception of the teaching situation: "You have different expectations for what will happen in PlayLab. Some expectations that we will do something together."

A fellow student concurs: "the teaching requires me to be present and actively involved" and that it is also: "more difficult to switch off mentally".

In this interview, the students referred both to the teaching form and to the affordances that the surroundings represent to them. They also expressed that digital disturbances become less of a problem than in connection with teaching that entails greater physical passivity. Digital media are often a distracting element with irrelevant communication flows that vibrate and flash and do everything to catch the student's attention.

In PlayLab, I do not experience digital disturbances as a problem. On the contrary, the students are actively involved in creative and creating processes in which there is high transparency and where the students dare surrender themselves to the moment. For example, when they are actively participating in activities like 'Single Mum in the Sticks' or when they develop mindmaps on the small theatre stage or design sketches in sand.

In this way, the abstract can become concrete, and understandings of the potentials of theories can be nuanced, which can open up for new recognitions in the students.

The elephant mother's nudge

PlayLab makes me think of an elephant mother's loving nudge of her elephant cub as she gently nudges the cub towards new expanses and out into the world. In the same way, I find that PlayLab can nudge you towards an internalised practice which is reflected in the design of the surroundings and the materials available as well as in the teaching didactics and the students' expectations for the teaching. Here PlayLab can help push the boundaries of some habits and expectations in favour of a playful approach to learning.

Therefore, teaching in PlayLab seems to call for active choices regarding the importance of the surroundings. It is experienced as standing at a crossroads because the PlayLab affects the stability of our habits and insists on other alternatives, where creativity acquires a didactic

value and awakens a budding learning potential based on basic human joy in creating things (Tanggaard, 2018).

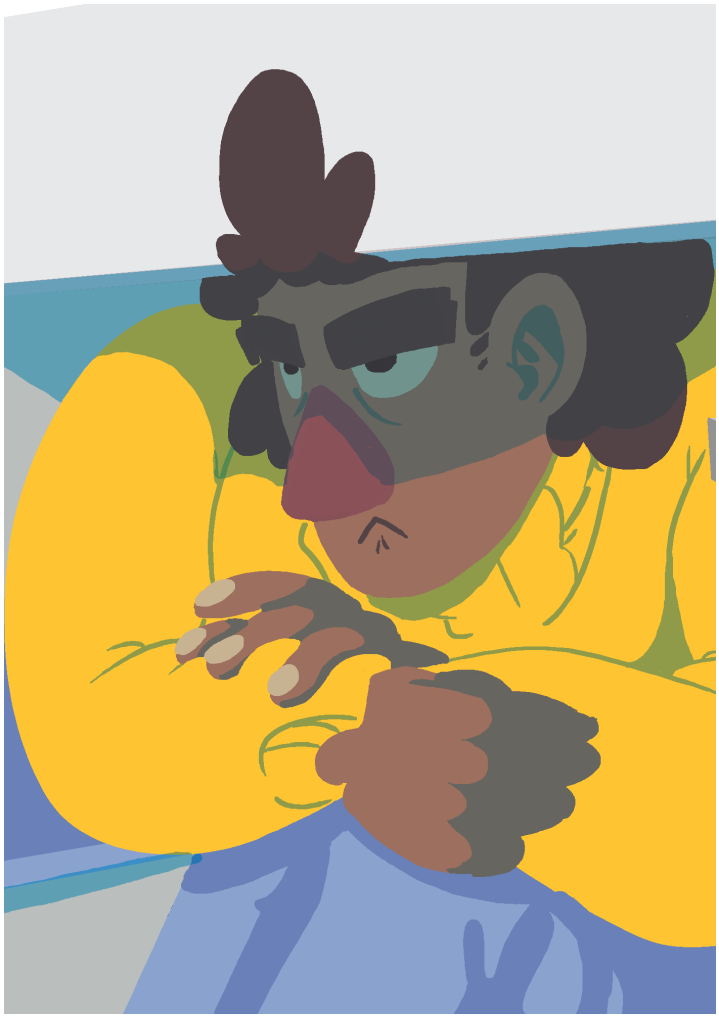
The environment provides a fertile ground for creative actions in which the dialectical relationship between body, surroundings and consciousness becomes explicit. This dialogue between action and reflection is woven into the social and contextual aspects in which the teaching is situated, and where the educator and the students dare surrender themselves to the moment and be inspired by what happens in the moment.

The learning takes form through action, attention and participation, and this is precisely what alternative learning environments can support.

A culture begins to germinate

I will round off this article with the hope and recommendation that we will create more teaching environments that take into consideration the didactic and pedagogical power of materialities. Increased awareness of this will presumably be of importance both to the individual educator's teaching practice and to the structure of higher education programmes. A structure that supports exploratory, playful and creative teaching. In specific terms, this may involve readily available materials, alternative premises and arrangements thereof, diverse environments and changed test descriptions, to name but a few areas in which a supporting structure could support a playful approach to learning.

Awareness of the didactic potentials of the surroundings seems to be growing in higher education programmes these years. Perhaps we are even in the process of a cultural change and a paradigm shift. PlayLabs and other alternative learning environments are a good place to start if educators and students want to nuance their understandings of the potentials offered by their surroundings. I hope that many people will take up this challenge because it is a gift.



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Do you want to play?

On competence development in a playful and narrative collegiate learning community.

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"This is precisely what I hoped would happen when I was employed. That we work in teams to develop the teaching. It's so great and developing that we can talk, discuss and develop our teaching in this space."

Or as another colleague puts it:

"The professional learning community is of great importance to me as an assistant professor. There is time and space for using each other as didactic sounding boards and for expression of creativity, both of which contribute positively to my formative path as an educator".

As ambassadors in the Playful Learning programme, we have had the special task of organising and participating in competence development with our colleagues. The purpose of this competence development is to develop and test a more playful approach to teaching and education.

In this article, we will share our experiences in organising competence development in a learning community together with our colleagues. Through playful and narrative processes, we have had the opportunity to get close to each other's teaching with an experimental and playful approach. The collegiate learning community has provided opportunities for mutual inspiration, curious feedback processes and reflections that both contribute to competence development for the individual educator and develops the academic environment of the education programme.

Trial actions and collegiate learning communities at University College South Denmark

It is essential for the process that the participants themselves have a desire to participate and a curiosity in relation to experimenting with and qualifying a playful approach in their teaching. The competence development is about improving your competences and qualifying your own teaching. It is also about sharing experiences and inspiring colleagues through the joint didactic reflections. When a playful approach to teaching spreads like ripples in the water among university college educators, we build an academic and professional environment in which multiple teaching forms can come into play. This means more varied teaching for the students and thus several different paths to becoming a professional pedagogue.

It is fundamental to our organisation of competence development that the foundation is the individual colleagues' specific experiences with and from their own teaching. Therefore, we build our work on elements of the action learning-inspired development methodology TRY, TYPE and TALK, developed in the Playful Learning programme (see the introduction to this PlayBook).

Collegiate learning communities at University College South Denmark

The article is based on the two independent collegiate learning communities at the Social Education programmes in Kolding and Aabenraa, University College South Denmark, respectively. In both places, the learning communities consist of colleagues who are all interested and who have themselves signed up to be part of the competence development in the Playful Learning programme. The composition is widely founded and consists of about 10 people in both places.

There are representatives from all areas of the social education programme right from the basic educational standards to the three specialisations and the elective modules. This means that all students enrolled in the Social Education programme meet a playful approach to teaching.

In our competence development process, we work with so-called trial actions in the same way as we do in the Playful Learning programme at national level. The intension behind working with trial actions is to reduce the threshold for getting started. "We are just trying it out, so we aren't obligated by it" (Duval & Kirkegaard, 2014, 55). This means that you are not obliged to stick to a pre-conceived practice that will then have to be implemented. Through trial actions, a possible practice is found through trial and error.

We and our colleagues experiment and prepare our teaching as trial actions with play qualities. We implement these, we discuss the teaching with the students, and we share our findings in the collegiate learning community and reflect together on our trial actions or our ideas for coming trial actions. This approach is comparable to the creative process that Resnick describes as the creative learning spiral (Resnick (Resnick ,2019, 21-22): To imagine, create, play, share, reflect and imagine again. The thinking is that when it happens repeatedly, the creative learning spiral becomes a driving force and an opportunity to develop new ideas and creative thinking.

Another cornerstone in our competence development is that it takes place in a collegiate community. Our work to establish competence development as learning communities draws on knowledge about professional learning communities (Albrectsen, 2013) and knowledge about play communities (Thorsted, 2013).

"A professional learning community can thus be described as an inclusive group of people motivated by a shared learning vision, who support and cooperate with each other and find ways, both within and outside their immediate community, to explore their own practices and together learn new and better approaches that will enhance the learning of all pupils and students" (Albrechtsen, 2013, 15).

We can discuss whether we work from a joint learning vision in our learning community, but we have a shared commitment to and curiosity about developing a teaching practice with a playful approach. Albrechtsen also highlights the deprivatisation of practice as a key element of the professional learning community (2013). We experience that there is a deprivatisation of our teaching practice at our workshops or meetings, as we share and reflect on narratives from our specific trial actions and together test some of the playful approaches from the trial actions.

There is consequently also inspiration to be found in what Thorsted describes as a play community. The play community is a secure and trusting community of colleagues in which the individual members dare put themselves at risk and break habitual thinking (2013). This requires joint efforts based on an atmosphere of empathy and respect, as it takes courage to challenge the familiar

and be creative. Courage to plunge into the unknown and into the field of non-knowledge (Thorsted, 2013, p. 99).

In the following, we will provide a glimpse of how we, together with our colleagues, seek to create competence development through playful and narrative processes.

How do we play?

We are 12 people gathered who move around in a room where there is free floor space between the long conference table and the scattered tables and chairs placed around the room. We say sounds, different sounds, out loud. A participant starts laughing, loudly and sincerely, persists, tries to control it, but does not quite succeed. Some laugh along with the participant, others continue purposefully to move around and make their noises.

We are engaged in competence development on the Social Education programme at Campus Kolding, University College South Denmark. We receive a gift from one of our colleagues in the group, which is about developing attention and presence to strengthen improvisation: We are to move around to find or recover a colleague, make eye contact and communicate with our special sound. This is an exercise that our colleague has developed for teaching in improvisation on the day-care specialisation, and it forms part of a trial action.

All participants have prepared a gift for the workshop which strengthens a playful approach to teaching. It is completely open how the gift is to be presented and given. This means that individual educators choose exactly the form with which they are comfortable. Giving gifts helps us establish a relationship with each other in our collegiate learning community. Gifts are traditionally given on special occasions, so the intention of the gift is also to give value to the collegiate community and our joint competence development. Finally, the giving of gifts is to illustrate that there are many different interpretations of what can strengthen a playful approach to teaching. The gifts have different aesthetic expressions, and the giving of the gift can mean that the participants and their senses are put into play. Giving gifts becomes a playful activity with learning potential in itself.

Whitton (2018) has analysed pedagogical approaches in higher education programmes. She identifies playful learning as a practice that involves a positive attitude towards making mistakes, an experimental and exploratory approach and an improvement of inner motivation. Playful learning includes three categories: Tools, techniques, and tactics that can develop playful learning (Whitton, 2018, p. 5 – p. 6). Our gifts contain an embedded presentation and involvement of various tools, techniques and strategies, and this offers an opportunity for inspiration and a learning potential for all participants.

Through the giving of gifts, we create a space that is in the nature of a social space with play as fulcrum. Thorsted describes a social space as an opportunity for gaining experience that enables us to pinpoint what is worth striving for in a given situation (Thorsted, 2013, 30). In this space, we create a joint play community, where we gain experience through opportunities for observing and testing playful approaches. We can take this experience with us because it gives meaning and value to our own teaching with a playful approach.

A colleague expresses the following about our workshops and competence development:

"... it's an inspiring opportunity to unfold and explore pedagogy, together with colleagues, and not end up in structural planning too quickly... And it's great with the organisation of workshops that both give us an opportunity to share experiences and also to experience them on our own bodies when we play together – it's so important that, in this way, we really feel some of the initiatives we put into play with the students."

Another colleague says:

"Being part of a professional AND playful community has, for me, resulted in a chain of inspiration for my teaching with the students. In our SE&TE team, we have played, experimented and had time to discuss specific trial actions with each other. This combination has, for me ... given energy and inspiration for playful initiatives together with the students..."

The competence development thus takes place through play processes as gift giving – and this is done in our narratives about teaching with a playful approach.

The power of narrative

The time is spring 2020, and all teaching takes place virtually. So does this meeting in the learning community. We are six colleagues from the Social Education programme at Aabenraa University College South Denmark who participate in this virtual meeting. A colleague tells us about a Pippi universe he has built up as a teaching framework. Pippi has been coronavirus quarantined and must stay home for 14 days... and what will she then need? Students must initially imagine this by laying on their beds, as Pippi does with their feet on the pillow. In their study groups, they will subsequently collaborate in the Tinkercad program, which functions as an online makerspace. They must work with a 3D modelling of what Pippi might need. The purpose of the fictional Pippi setting is to remove focus from the participants' self-understandings and preconceived understandings about limitations in relation to technology and instead open a possibility space where the technology can manifest itself and be learned through play and experiments in the programme.

We all listen intensively to the narrative, and afterwards we ask curiously about the teaching. This dialogue leads to a discussion of, in particular, the didactic principle about daring to go for unpredictability. This principle is one of three didactic principles for a playful approach to learning developed by ambassadors and programme management in the Programme for Playful Learning (see the introduction to this PlayBook). In this discussion, we find that daring to go for unpredictability is challenging in relation to daring to let go and believe that the students will learn what they are supposed to learn.

Narratives like these and the subsequent didactic reflections are a large part of our collegiate learning community and our competence development. As Bruner (1998) writes, we understand and explain our reality based on narratives. Through narratives, we reflect, we understand ourselves, each other and the culture we are part of, while we develop our ability to act (Bruner, 1998, 153 – 161). Our narratives of own trial actions with playful approaches to teaching are in the nature of practice narratives. Practice narratives are narratives about the professional work in a teaching context (Jørgensen, Rothuizen & Togsverd, 2019, 40). Practice narratives pave the way for dialogue and discussions as well as interpretations of own experiences, but also co-interpretations of what we hear (ibid).

"The practice narrative does not seek conceptual or theoretical truth (...). The discussion and interpretation of the practice narrative make it possible, in a collegiate context, to discuss the central themes of the narrative and perhaps arrive at a new and, above all, broader reasoned scope for action."

(Mors, 2004, 50).

Narratives of our trial actions from the teaching are one of the regular and central items when we meet in our collegiate learning community. We share both the trial actions that have been a success, but also those where we have been challenged. The subsequent discussions are always based on equal parts curiosity, sparring and

feedback. At the same time, there is another track inside your head that is constantly thinking: That was a good idea, could I re-think it and try out something similar in my teaching?

Rounding off

We have been working with the collegiate learning communities for well over a year, and this has produced many different trial actions and didactic reflections. The trial actions leave specific footprints in the educational environment. It is clear to other educators that we work with varying teaching forms, use many different types of materials and examine movement and play with moods. Across the lunch table in the staff room, there are also conversations about trial actions and playful approaches to teaching.

The strength of building competence development on trial action learning is that we get started with what it is all about right away: Namely to develop and qualify our teaching with playful approaches. We are part of the collegiate learning community because of a desire to explore and experiment with playful approaches to teaching. It will therefore be both meaningful and involve presence.

We can see that interest in playful approaches to teaching are slowly beginning to spread like ripples in water. Therefore, we find that competence development with playful and narrative processes in collegiate learning communities has great future value in relation to creating a culture on the Social Education programme for a playful approach to teaching.

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YONEX

Playful Learning must be perceived organically and can be weaved forth!

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At University College of Northern Denmark (UCN), the Playful Learning programme is an open invitation to explore and examine what a playful approach to teaching, learning and development can contain on the teacher education and social education programmes.

With this article, I want to provide an insight into how we work with development of playful professional didactics at UCN by focusing on practical actions in workshops and organic knowledge weaving between colleagues. This is how we work with the competence development of participants in the project. The article starts by identifying the organic gaze and concludes with a graphic orientation that summarises the article's perspectives and the perspectives we are working with at UCN.

The organic element – we do not share knowledge, we weave knowledge

Since the beginning of the Playful Learning programme, we at UCN have been working with a concept we call *organic knowledge weaving.* This concept is still being developed, but the starting point is that the development of a playful approach to learning is closely linked to the interaction between theory and practice, similar to the approach in Design-Based Research (DBR) (Christensen & Petersen, 2012, Barab & Squire, 2004).

The following practice narrative sets a scene that can provide an insight into what we mean by organic knowledge weaving. The scene takes place at a meeting where coordinators on the project work with educators who participate in the competence development process in the programme.

We are four educators sitting in our newly established PlayLab and discussing Ditte's and Poul's experience in conducting a trial action about how students can use coloured post-its in connection with the structuring of their bachelor project. We have cookies and coffee on the table to create a cosy atmosphere while Ditte and Poul make their presentation. At one point, I mention that it is a common feature in several trial actions that the students are to build something, in order to create an understanding of the material they are working with. Ditte mentions that this approach is also used in the subject of Danish, but more in the form that recognition can be created through expression in different modalities. Jette, who teaches natural sciences, adds that they focus more on creation of recognition through the development of different models of reality.

This practice narrative provides an insight into how the participants in the Playful Learning programme at UCN work with competence development as a social process, where the participants' contributions and exchanges form the basis for the further development of the individual participant's own experience and knowledge. The process is organic, which is in great contrast to a conceptual approach.

We are of the opinion that we cannot 'share our knowledge' with others because our perceptions of a situation will always be different. Lars-Henrik Schmidt puts it this way: "We cannot create identity between us and something else" (Schmidt, 2005, 8). As we cannot share knowledge, we instead talk about "weaving knowledge". The different experiences with students' acquisition of knowledge through a model, or a change of modality, which was described in the practice narrative, are an example of how we can "weave our knowledge" organically. The organic element indicates that it is unpredictable how a group will arrive at knowledge weaving and whether it contributes to actual knowledge development. The organic concept contains an advanced balance between theory, practice and empirical methods (Hagen & Gudmundsen, 2011). I have played with an image that can explain the organic approach in relation to understanding the elements of a playful approach.

Our weaving of theories, practices and empirical methods may perhaps also be understood as when we look at a rainbow where water droplets break the rays of the sun. You cannot get completely close to the rainbow and see where its colours start and end, but, at a distance, from the ground, the colours seem like demarcated colour tracks.

Just like the drops of the rainbow, our weavings between theory, practice and empirical methods are hard to distinguish from each other. The appearance of the rainbow cannot be planned, and organic and playful approaches likewise contain an element of unpredictability. At times, clear views or moods occur where you can experience that you are dealing with something playful. The knowledge that occurs is contextual, which means that it may be difficult in our work processes to arrive at definitive definitions and understandings of what learning and knowledge are.

We occasionally experience this need for clarity when our participants in the project want us to give a presentation on what a playful approach to learning is. The question is obviously relevant, but it is also somewhat paradoxical, because, in a sense, it must remain open. If the argument is closed too much, the project can quickly be transformed into a concept that can be further developed through formulas and methods, thus excluding unpredictable and organic elements. The Playful Learning programme at UCN can therefore be seen as an open invitation to explore and examine what a playful approach to teaching, learning and development can contain.

Workshop idea provides a framework for the organic

Since the start of the Playful Learning programme, we have been working on two knowledge weaving levels:

A level at which the Playful Learning ambassadors are connected to a small group of educators whom we call players. The introductory practice narrative is a glimpse from such a meeting. To ensure an organic approach, it has been important to us that the players were not to hold the view that they 'had been called in' for a meeting, but that they were part of a joint study and development of a playful practice. Therefore, the agenda and content were only established at the start of the meeting.

The second level is two annual Knowledge Cafés per semester, where all project participants meet, present their own work in different ways and test each other's trial actions – in the best organic knowledge weaving style. We try to strengthen the organic approach by regarding our meetings as workshops. The workshop concept precisely entails invitations to both explore and examine how the educator's own practice unfolds and ideas on how the practice can be developed jointly with other educators. One player has the following comment on this:

"It's exciting to test and see how other colleagues work with Playful Learning in their practice – it's not that often in the ordinary everyday working life that you get an insight into your colleagues' approaches to teaching."

It is essential that we transcend engrained notions

However, organic knowledge weaving does not occur simply because we bring the educators together in a working workshop. It is a challenge to establish a dialogue that contributes to questioning our notions about teaching, and we only have provisional answers as to how such a dialogue can be supported.

As university college educators, we are good at thinking, but perhaps we think too much and act too little. This may be the fundamental challenge in developing a playful approach to learning and teaching. In this context, it has become clear to us at UCN that the very act of transcending familiar notions is of very central importance when we talk about organic knowledge weaving (Schmidt, 2005). The playful approach itself may be found precisely 'in the gap' between the known and the unknown – the playful approach is the actual transcension.

We often weave knowledge with others in the form of 'parallel weaving', where we exchange perspectives without these perspectives creating significant changes (Illeris 2008). In the development of the playful approach, we focus precisely on the act of transgression where organic weaving may occur and result in changes to the educator's practice. The perspective on learning and development in our work is included in the next section via the TRY, TYPE and TALK arenas.

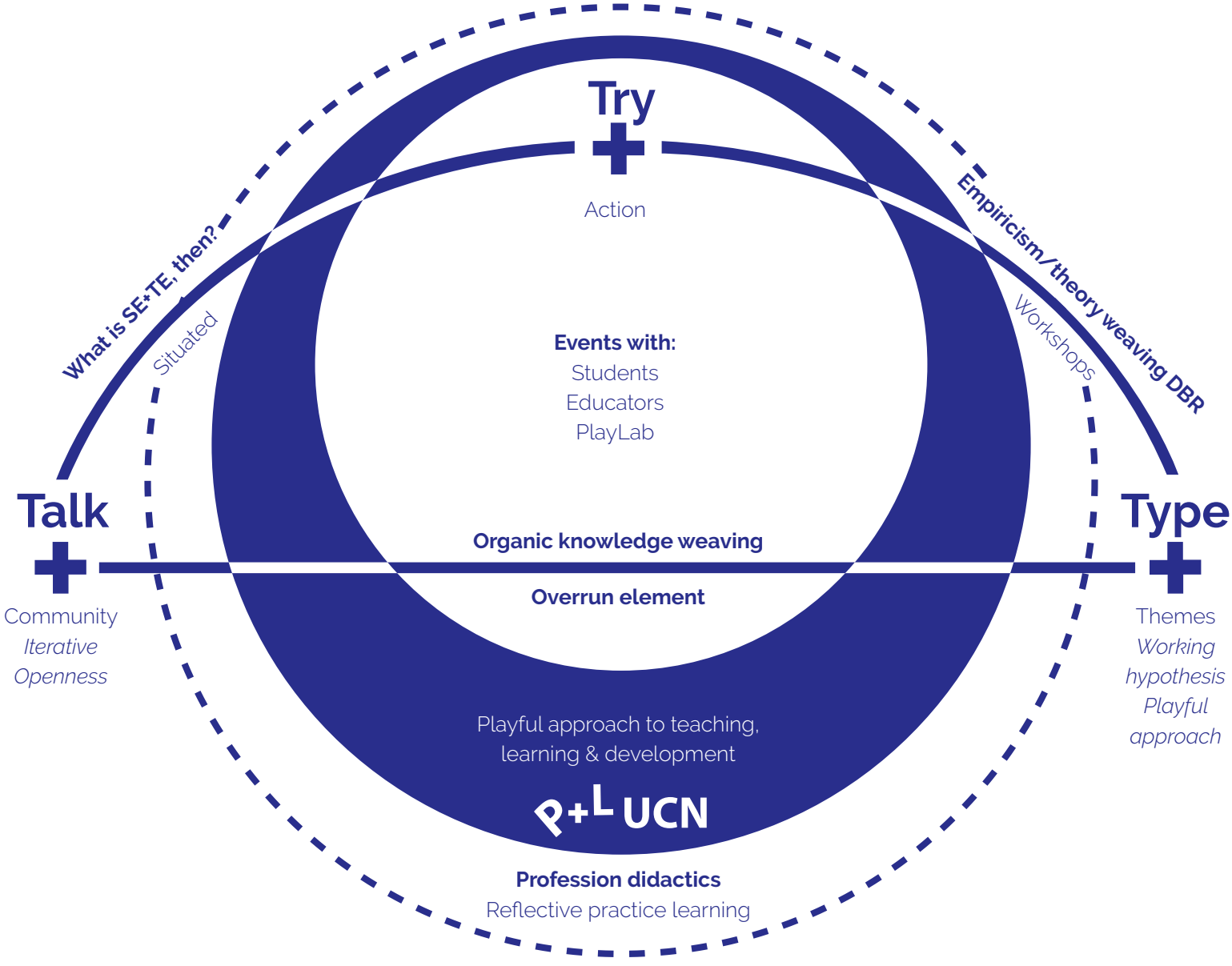
TRY, TYPE and TALK

The concepts of TRY, TYPE and TALK are one of the fulcrums of the provisional development basis of the Playful Learning programme (see the introduction to this PlayBook). The three concepts are to be understood as three development arenas which provide a joint framework for the development work at the various university colleges. At UCN, we experience that the TRY arena and the practical actions play an increasingly important role in our Knowledge Cafés and workshops with our players. It is as if valuable transgression elements arise via the practical action – we need to do something together. You could consequently say that a playful approach to learning should be less theorised about, and instead be tested via events, with the focus being on practice-related actions and reflections.

An approach we also know from Dewey. Brinkmann (2006) quotes Dewey as saying: "Dewey finds that events are more fundamental than objects, and that practical action is more fundamental than theoretical reflection. To him, recognition is a practical activity and not passive observation. "Knowing means doing" (Brinkmann 2006, 40-41). We have embraced this view of action at UCN.

Is a playful approach to learning a novelty at UCN?

With the above reference to Dewey, this article should also be read as an expression that a playful approach to learning is a new approach, while also not being something new. An exploratory and sometimes also playful and experimental approach to teaching and learning already exists at our university colleges. Like other projects, the Playful Learning programme forms part of a sector with many experiences with and witnessing of pedagogy and teaching. What is new about the Playful Learning programme can therefore be said to be that we now have 'a platform' where the educators on the teacher education and social education programmes may reinforce and develop their interest in developing and testing new approaches to teaching together with the students, and thus contribute to future teachers and pedagogues continuing an expanded understanding of a playful approach to learning.


Try
Action
What is SE+TE, then?
Situated
Empiricism/theory weaving DBR
Workshops
Events with:
Students
Educators
PlayLab
Talk
Type
Organic knowledge weaving
Overrun element
Community
Iterative
Openness
Themes
Working
hypothesis
Playful
approach
Playful approach to teaching,
learning & development
P+L UCN
Profession didactics
Reflective practice learning

Organic knowledge weaving – A graphic presentation

This leads me to a graphic presentation in which I have toyed with placing the three development arenas, TRY, TYPE and TALK, in a triangular set-up that is surrounded by a view of the outside world to give an analytical presentation in relation to understanding how we work with the development of playful approaches to learning at UCN. The point of the triangular set-up is to show that all three arenas are interconnected.

TRY comprises trying something new in your own teaching practice through what we call trial actions. Each player develops many different trial actions together with students and colleagues in our PlayLab or in other classrooms. This is marked in the purple circle with the TRY arena. On several occasions, our players have mentioned the value in seeing and experiencing what others are up to, see Dewey.

The organic knowledge weaving occurs at our joint meetings where we exchange and weave our experiences in a social community with others. We thematise our ideas, experiences and knowledge, and this is highlighted by TYPE. This takes place in particular at our Knowledge Cafés, where all players from both education programmes and all three UCN campuses participate. Here, TRY, TALK and TELL are highlighted, but the actual development of the playful approach especially occurs in the axis between TALK <-> TYPE, which holds the key to our competence development thinking.

We are very focused on developing an environment that helps our educators see the workshops as arenas where they do not have to come up with 'ready-made teaching programmes', but that the workshops contribute to a process in which the participants weave and share their experiences rather than presenting finished models. We must share our knowledge and experiences from the start, and not only when we think a process is finished – this also contains an important organic element. The bearing element in the TALK <-> COMPETENCE development is the conversation and the communicative exchange of our own experiences and thoughts. TALK is crucial to the project because the educators' thoughts and themes are tested with others. It is precisely in this process that there is a possibility for the occurrence of transgression elements that can contribute to our development of new teaching perspectives.

The transgression element and the playful approach are not just about trying something new – the transgression element also entails that you can achieve a distance to your own practice via discussions and actions in communities with others. A distance we are trying to achieve by offering playful and experimental spaces that can make the known unknown – that is that one can take a step back from the experiences of your own practice and understand and 'see your practice from a different angle'. For example, we have tested this by the participants assuming specific play personalities or by joint reading aloud of a text. In this way, a playful approach can also be said to be an expression of a degree of re-recognition of your own practice.

The Playful Learning programme has been put into a special context at UCN, where we also work with a learning approach called Reflective Practice Learning. In the graphic presentation, this context is marked with the outermost ring. Reflective Practice Learning is an approach to learning in which there is also attention to practice and practice implementation. The Playful Learning programme thus co-exists with this and other ongoing projects focusing on the development of teaching.

Contribution of the research part to the Playful Learning programme

The Playful Learning programme has been extended with a research programme which holds a central position in our work at UCN. The research can precisely help make the known unknown by involving new perspectives which can create transgressions in the participants' recognition. Our PhD students and senior researchers have played a key role in the planning and implementation of our workshops. In other words, we have worked to reinforce and strengthen the development of a playful approach in the best organic knowledge weaving style.

Here the organic knowledge weaving stops for now – but it can continue!

I hope that this article has motivated you to explore and describe your perspectives on how to continue to develop a playful approach to teaching, learning and development on the teacher education and social education programmes. A playful approach to learning is not something that can be implemented in a competence development course. Our proposal at UCN is that it can be weaved forth via playful organic knowledge weaving processes that include an open invitation to a perpetual, circular pedagogical didactic reflection on what good teaching can be when the focus is on a playful approach to learning.

In this context, it is important that you establish events that make you act in a practice that involves conversations and transgression elements in a community with others.

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SENNHEISER

Perspectives on online teaching

In the following section, you can learn about how educators and students have worked with a playful approach to learning in the online teaching necessitated by the COVID-19 situation. You can also find references to a podcast series in which there is special focus on involving playful moods and play qualities in the digital classroom.

What are the perspectives of a playful approach to learning in online teaching?

Lasse Lykke Rørbæk & Stine Rauff Bommersholdt, Rambøll Management Consulting

The coronavirus crisis and the emergency conversion to online teaching have given us an opportunity to learn more about the perspectives of working with a playful approach to learning in a virtual space. What does the lack of physical togetherness mean to the possibilities of integrating playful learning in our teaching? And how is it possible to plan and implement online teaching so that it becomes as motivational as possible?

As part of the evaluation of the Playful Learning programme, we have taken a first step towards answering these questions by interviewing educators from the teacher education and social education programmes who have experimented with playful approaches to learning in connection with virtual teaching in spring 2020. We have also interviewed their students and asked how they have experienced the online teaching and when they have experienced it as most motivational. Based on this study, we have identified five barriers to and five tips for inclusion of playful learning in online teaching.

Evaluation of the Playful Learning Programme

Rambøll continuously evaluates the Playful Learning programme on behalf of the LEGO Foundation. One evaluation purpose is to acquire knowledge about how the teaching on the teacher education and social education programmes can be made even better by supporting the students' learning processes with playful approaches to learning. Every year, Rambøll collects quantitative and qualitative data across the university colleges in the form of questionnaire surveys and interviews with educators and students across the six university colleges.

Five barriers to a playful approach to learning in online teaching

The general view expressed in the interviews is that the absence of physical contact creates poorer conditions for using playful approaches to learning in the teaching. The educators and students especially highlight five barriers:

1. **Lack of physical interaction** is a general challenge for many educators' and students' motivation and also poses a specific challenge to the inclusion of playful learning in the teaching. In the virtual space, it is harder to sense each other and read each other's body language and signals, thus limiting the possibility of jointly establishing a creative and imaginative teaching process. For example, one student says: "I miss being able to see my fellow students and being with my colleagues. It's difficult to be playful on your own." Likewise, an educator says that "the spontaneity of catching a ball from the students and passing it on is the hardest part. It's difficult to create an atmosphere at an online meeting."

2. **The students' confusion and uncertainty** about the conversion to online teaching make it difficult to get them 'to join the play', according to several educators. When you break with the usual teaching structures, many students become less open to experimentation and demand more teaching that focuses on learning outcomes and exams. Many students have an experience of "something that goes over our heads. We would've found it much easier to take everything in if we had been there physically." This feeling of uncertainty among the students may explain why several educators experience a resistance to their attempts to experiment with the digital teaching. As one educator describes it: "We've tried to take the students out into the deep end, and we haven't had very good feedback on this. We've tried to leave it up to them and make it more free, but they want more help, more guidance etc."

1. **Lack of physical teaching aids** makes it difficult to perform the same playful activities in the virtual space as in the normal teaching situation. At the university colleges, there are facilities, tools and equipment that support a playful approach to learning, including PlayLabs, which are physical learning spaces that encourage playful learning. As one student observes, the online teaching "doesn't offer the same tools as, for example, PlayLab at the university college. I have creative things at home, but I don't have that many. You need to be extremely creative when you're at home, and it's been an educational challenge."

3. **Poor Internet connections, webcams and headsets** contribute to limiting the students' participation, which is necessary for a playful approach to learning in the synchronous online teaching. For example, both educators and students report that many students do not have their webcams switched on, either because of equipment problems or unstable Internet connections or because they prefer to attend classes passively. Many educators therefore feel that they are 'talking to themselves' and that it is significantly more difficult to get the students to participate actively in the virtual space. For example, one educator says that "the students become more passive online. They don't know when to contribute, and they feel more cut off."

2. **For many educators, the time used to prepare online teaching** can set natural limits to the possibility of developing and including playful activities. Especially for educators who do not have much experience with digital teaching, the time used for preparation may constitute a insurmountable barrier. One of the educators who has actually succeeded in experimenting with a playful approach to learning in the online teaching says:

> "I've spent an enormous amount of time preparing. I have, as a minimum, used 1:1 to prepare the classes. ... Planning four days of teaching has involved long hours."

The survey was conducted during the coronavirus lockdown, which means that the educators' and students' views of online teaching are not only influenced by their own experience with the digital teaching format itself, but also by the sudden, and too many of them, chaotic emergency conversion of the teaching. This is, for example, reflected in the fact that some of the challenges described by the students and educators in the interviews are more related to the specific situation in spring 2020 than to online teaching in general.

Five tips for inclusion of playful learning in online teaching

There is much variation in how online teaching has been conducted. The students report that a significant part of the online teaching has been characterised by presentations made by the educator based on the curriculum that the students have had to prepare. However, a number of teaching activities involving playful learning have also been planned and implemented, and they have made the teaching more motivating, according to several of the students. For example, one student says that the online teaching has been most motivating "when we've had playful activities where you could show something and contribute, instead of just sitting there listening." Another student observes that the teaching has been most motivating when "you can think out of the box and do something you haven't done before. It captures your interest much quicker."

Based on the educators' and students' descriptions, we here present five tips for how to include playful learning in online teaching:

1. **Add a moment of excitement to the teaching activity**
   A good mechanism for capturing and maintaining the students' interest in and commitment to the online teaching is to incorporate an element of unpredictability. This can, for example, be done by planning activities where a roll of the dice determines the direction in which an activity is to unfold. According to one educator, "there is something unpredictable and exciting about creating something that you have an influence on yourself, but where there's still an element of excitement in what happens next. If I roll a five, what then?"

2. **Involve everyday objects at home**
   Although there are not the same physical aids available at home as at the university colleges , the student's home still makes it possible to engage in playful activities involving everyday objects. For example, you can examine houseplants in natural

sciences, the contents of different food products in home economics or washing powder if you are teaching a class on enzymes.
If study design is being taught, you can also, as exemplified by an educator, ask the students to find objects at home that "they think have something to do with scientific practice in pedagogy."

3. **Exploit technological aids**
   Creative use of technological aids may be a great help in including playful learning in online teaching. Apps, computer programming media and various web portals thus provide good opportunities for letting the students be co-creators of the teaching. For example, a student teacher states that she and her fellow students in physical education have made their own orienteering routes using the *Mapop app.*

4. **Plan group work and make summaries in the virtual space**
   Because many students tend to be more passive in the virtual space, it is even more important than normally to plan group work when you want to perform playful teaching activities. Both educators and students describe 'breakout rooms' in *Zoom* as a good tool for group work. At the same time, students say that the fact that the students take the group work seriously may necessitate that summaries are subsequently held with the educator in the virtual space.

5. **Ask students to create a product, but focuson the pleasurable elements in the** process
   Another good mechanism for keeping the students' motivation high during the online teaching is to ask them to make a product. This can be anything from a poster to a self-programmed computer game. As one student says, "If there's nothing we have to hand in or show that we've done, then you'll approach it with less energy and your motivation will plummet." Avoid concurrently limiting the students' creativity and interest in the process by setting too many rules. The activities are often most engaging "when you're given a free rein, when not many demands have been made, when you just have to get started with something that you find fun and find out how you get the most out of it yourself."

It should be mentioned that we have only interviewed a minor cross-section of educators and students (12 educators and 8 students), and their experiences do not necessarily represent the wider group of educators and students on the teacher education and social education programmes. More knowledge is therefore still needed in this area.

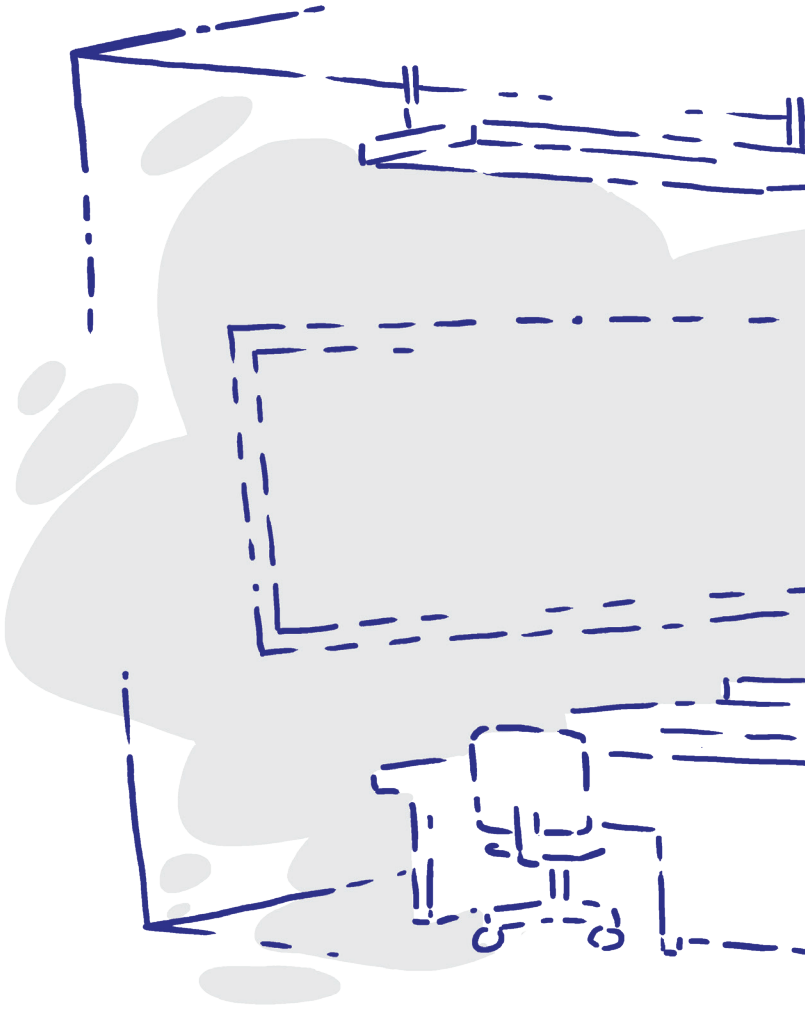
Can the Playful Learning programme lead to increased adaptability?

As mentioned above, this early survey indicates that the inclusion of playful approaches to learning in online teaching can strengthen student motivation. The survey also suggests that the Playful Learning programme can contribute to improving educators' adaptability.

In the interviews, several of the educators thus state that their involvement in the programme has equipped them to enter the, to many of them, unknown virtual teaching world with an insistence that the process and experimentation with new activities and tools in the teaching have a value in themselves. For example, one educator describes how "it's a mindset that it's playful and experimental, and that you have professional authority to engage in it. So it hasn't been so risky for me to enter this room."

Other educators involved in the programme also describe how they have not had the same nervousness about the conversion to online teaching as some of their colleagues, and that they have felt less paralysed in relation to developing teaching activities that are meaningful online. They also report that the Playful Learning programme has served as a continuous reminder to reflect on teaching choices, which has been a strength during the lockdown, where the conditions and expectations for the teaching have been very changeable.

As part of the evaluation of the Playful Learning programme, we will, in the coming period, follow up on the survey results and try to clarify, among other issues, whether, more generally, the programme has a positive effect on the students' motivation and the educators' adaptability.



Podcast series on playful approaches in online teaching

If you want to learn more about working with playful approaches to online teaching, you can listen to a Playful Learning Podcast miniseries that focuses on how to include playful moods and play qualities in the digital classroom.

Episode 1: How do you include play qualities in online teaching?

In this episode, we are visited by our two ambassadors, Mary Anne Kristiansen and Frederik Zeuthen, who have experimented with including play qualities in online teaching during the lockdown period when students on the social education programme were sent home.

Episode 2: Bridging the gap between playful approaches and subjects in online teaching

In this episode, we are visited by Nanna Filt Christensen, a primary and lower secondary teacher who won the Politiken Special Educator Prize in 2020 for her unique handling of distance teaching during the lockdown period when the pupils were sent home.

Episode 3: About creative processes in online teaching

In this episode, we are visited by Stine Ejsing-Duun, Associate Professor of Design, Technology and Learning, for a conversation about why playfulness is a key part of a good way of learning – also online.

Episode 4: Online teaching seen from a student perspective

In this episode, we focus on school pupils. We have invited three pupils to join us in a conversation about what they want digital teaching to look like in the future based on their experiences during the lockdown period.

Reflections

In the following section, you will find two articles on the learning and development understandings and play qualities, respectively, which emerge in an analysis of 36 didactic designs and on the assumptions about educational development that form the basis of the design and management of the Playful Learning programme.

Perspectives on learning in 'didactic designs with play qualities'

- a study of 36 didactic designs in the Playful Learning programme

Helle Marie Skovbjerg, Head of Research and Professor at Design School Kolding

How is it possible to characterise learning perspectives in the 'didactic designs with play qualities' that have been created in the first year of the Playful Learning programme? That is the focal point of this article. In the past few years, experiments have been conducted with a wide range of practices with the qualities of play as a source of inspiration. Experiments that have resulted in three design principles for teaching that have playful qualities (see the introduction to this Playbook): Creating shared perceptions; Daring to go for unpredictability; Insisting on meaningfulness. This article is an attempt to present a preliminary situation report on the 'didactic designs with play qualities' that have already been created. These are precisely preliminary, as the development is continuing and is now also being conducted in a close dialogue with the research project Playful Learning Research Extension.

In this article, I have examined 36 'didactic designs with play qualities' created in connection with the first year of the Playful Learning programme. My purpose has been to get closer to the learning understandings, perspectives and practices that form the basis of the 'didactic designs with play qualities'. Basically, we need to learn more about what types of learning understandings and perspectives can be themed in the creation of designs with play qualities.

The article is based on four central themes that have been directional for the study.

1) The first focal point concerns the question of what the concept of didactic design is about. This means that this focal point aims to clarify how knowledge, content and experience are thematised in the 'didactic designs with play qualities'.

2) The second focal point concerns the interaction between practice and design, i.e. what practice types these 'didactic design with play qualities' will enable the students to use, create situations for and catch. This dimension of the analysis thus focuses on the principle of daring to go for unpredictability.

3) The third focal point concerns with whom, i.e. how the 'didactic designs with play qualities' view the students' forms of participation and social relations. Here, the focus is especially on the principle of creating shared perceptions.

(4) The fourth and final focal point concerns the question of what, and zooms in on the materials, tools and media included in the 'didactic designs with play qualities'.

The third principle of insisting on meaningfulness is relevant to and runs through all four dimensions in the analysis. Insisting on meaningfulness is, among other things, about the correlation between the matter at hand and how it is approached: That the participants experience cohesion between all the dimensions of the didactic design with play qualities. This point will become clearer below.

Each theme is framed through empirical examples from the 'didactic designs with play qualities', and different

theoretical perspectives elaborate further on the points. The interaction between empirical and theoretical ideas in the article are thus a key approach in the article.

The hope with the article is that we can have fruitful discussions in the Playful Learning programme and Playful Learning Research Extension about which learning perspectives playful teaching seems to be able to draw on, and also, in the longer term, whether there are learning understandings and perspectives that it is not possible to use, and what these perspectives more specifically entail when didactic designs work with play qualities. In addition, the hope is that these learning perspectives can also function as design principles in the future, which future didactic designs with play qualities can use to create new proposals for playful learning. In conclusion, I will present a number of points of attention which I see as central to the future work with didactic designs with play qualities.

See a video interview with Helle Marie Skovbjerg about her study.

Theme 1: About what – knowledge, action and experience

The didactic designs are designed by educators for students on the social education and teacher education programmes, and they are designed with a view to specific academic and professional goals. The fulcrum of the didactic designs is therefore obviously of professional relevance to the education programmes in question. There are didactic designs that concern 'theoretical concepts connected with 'citizenship', 'about the narrative', 'mathematics', 'texts of fiction' or 'Danish history'.

It is interesting in this context that the didactic designs contain a close interaction between the academic and professional knowledge that the didactic designs concern and action with this 'about what'. The professional knowledge is thus staged in a way that enables the students to apply it in practice. A design stages situations in which student teachers play basketball, and these situations make it possible to discuss mathematics while experiments are conducted in what mathematics can be. In another design, situations are staged that allow the students to argue as pedagogical philosophers to gain insight into theories of pedagogy. And in a third design, student pedagogues can experience how it physically feels to be a child in inclusion and exclusion processes. The aim is to give the students experience with children's perspectives and theories on this.

For the 36 didactic designs, learning processes are thus first and foremost seen as designs that are staged for actions which then lead to experience with a field

of study. In other words, knowledge and experience are deeply interlinked. We acquire knowledge when we do something, and when we do something, we gain experience with it, to put it briefly.

This understanding of learning processes is rooted in, for example, pragmatism, and is especially inspired by the American philosopher John Dewey. Dewey understands learning processes as an experience of a shared world, where it is important that the individual person must go through this course of experience to say that you have experience, despite others having gained similar experiences. The didactic designs presented in the Playful Learning programme are precisely examples of how situations are staged that enable individuals to act in order to gain experiences, their own experiences.

In other words, it is not only a question of 'transferring' knowledge from educator to student, but that the students' connection to knowledge goes through action, whether this concerns theoretical concepts, Danish history or mathematics. And that this knowledge can continue to be acted upon in ever-new versions and interpretations in interaction with the outside world. The understanding of knowledge in the didactic designs with play qualities is not, in that sense, a well-defined, pre-determined entity, as knowledge is always already moving. And the development of knowledge occurs in all the types of knowledge actions that are unfolded.

This point may seem obvious to late-modern approaches to pedagogy and learning, as we know that knowledge development is constant, just as few people believe in petrol station attendant pedagogy. But it is very interesting that several descriptions of the didactic designs and the students' reaction to the didactic designs also include a concern about the 'lack' of knowledge, for is 'the playing worth it'? This means a concern about whether students really experience that they 'acquire' the knowledge that they are supposed to have. Together with this concern from some quarters, the students are also enthusiastic

about the close connection between knowing and acting. In other words, this could indicate that there are some frictions and shifts in the understanding of what knowledge is and how to get 'hold' of it, or become a co-creator of it.

Theme 2:
How is the interaction with knowledge, action and experience?

A connection is established between knowledge, action and experience in the 36 designs, i.e. as an interaction with knowledge through what could be called enactment (Smith, 2005) inspired by theory of dramaturgy, sociology and play therapy. This means that action, experience and knowledge are staged in ways that enable the students to 'enact' the connection between action, experience and knowledge and the consequences between the three. Here action knowledge is staged with use of the senses.

Based on the concept and the idea of enactment, it also becomes clear that the didactic designs in the interaction with knowledge draw on the quality of imagination and playing as 'what if...' questions. Especially the first design principle created in the Playful Learning programme that concerns the creation of shared perceptions supports this point. When the students are to imagine that they are nursery school children, they have to enact 'what if..." you were children, with such and such bodies, what would then happen? This also applies in the imagined debate between pedagogical philosophers or when the students have play groups aimed at gaining experience with the unfolding of play. This enactment of knowledge thus enables the connection to the actions and thus the possibilities for gaining experiences. When the actions are not only imagined cognitively, but are actually enacted in time and space, it also turns out that the didactic designs connect actions and experiences to a bodily experience.

The British philosopher Kathleen Lennon emphasises exactly this close connection between body, experience and perception in her book Imagination and the Imaginary, drawing on, among others, the French philosopher Merleau-Ponty (2009). Lennon shows that it is through our sensual interaction with and enactment of this 'as if..'" that our perceptions of what it could be manifest themselves. Precisely this point seems to be crucial to the didactic designs: That the experiences are made possible through the bodily stagings and enactments of action knowledge. As Lennon formulates it: "What becomes central to his account in the later work is not simply our bodily manipulations as giving shape to the world, but the fact that we can bring the world to expression, which we need our bodies to do so" (Lennon 2009, 48)

Through these enactments, the didactic designs thus create the opportunity for students to imagine this 'as if...' through bodily manipulations, and acquire experience through this enactment of these bodily manipulations. Knowledge is not about being presented to something or about being able to represent something. It is about being able to create situations in which action can take place.

Theme 3: With whom do educator and students enact?

These situations, which are staged with a view to acquiring experiences through interaction with academic and professional knowledge through action, are basically regarded as social in the didactic designs with play qualities. This means that specific action performance aimed at acquiring experiences is something that occurs in relation to other students. This happens when the students are to create playful learning activities in new spaces like PlayLabs, or narrate everyday stories through visual aids or discuss dilemma-filled situations that you may face as a teacher. The experiences are staged in interaction with others, and this means that the didactic designs are deeply anchored in learning understandings that regard learning processes as social processes.

These social learning processes and their connection to social relations are stated in several ways in the didactic designs: Experiences are shared, experiences are shown and experiences are created that others can acquire.

First and foremost, these stagings aimed at enacting actions to gain experience are an activity performed with others. In other words, no one ever enacts something alone. This applies, for example, in the didactic design, where students play different roles corresponding to the stakeholders that a pedagogue meets when the child is to progress from day-care centre to school. The students must imagine meeting parents, the principal, the psychologist from the Pedagogical Psychological Counselling Service (PPR) and the parental board. The students jointly play through these scenarios for meetings between the pedagogue and the collaborators she or he faces in the child's transition from day-care centre to school.

The imagined thus does not become something in the individual student's mind, but, through a social process, it becomes an imagined situation of how something could unfold, just like the 'what if...' of playing, a social creation process in which the students jointly imagine how something could be. When the students share actions and thus also experiences staged by the didactic designs, this also means that they are creative together, and what they create are possible futures for action and thus experiences. Such joint enactment and thus creation are also supported by the first and third design principles of the Playful Learning programme: It is precisely through such shared perceptions and the joint creation of meaningfulness that the processes acquire the quality that we hope they will have. The practice – that imagination is enhanced through performance with others – is also pointed out by Lennon (2015). And the performance is shared and created using body, senses and place.

This type of performance is also supported by the second design principle – daring to go for unpredictability: The learning processes initiated through the didactic designs with play qualities obviously become unpredictable, as the educator is not the only one who has an influence on what is going to happen. The participants in enactments with others all have influence and agency. Those who are ready to draft possible answers to the what-if questions are consequently those who can help define the direction in which the processes will go. Management and control of these processes are neither possible nor desirable.

This means precisely that the third principle of insisting on meaningfulness becomes possible, as those involved will

seek the enactment possibilities that they find relevant to their interests, preferences and the contexts of which they are part.

Not only are shared actions, and thus experiences, staged and created, the didactic designs also work with the possibility that the creation processes can be 'told' to others, or that they can be shown to others. This is, for example, true in a design in which the students tell each other about how they have reinterpreted an imagined situation into other imagined situations. Also in the didactic design of literature, the narrative becomes a way to share and show the perceived enactments to others. In another didactic design, the students on the teacher education programme build robots for use in the natural science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects, and a key element of this didactic design is the 'steal and share phase', where the groups, by showing each other their robots, can 'steal' good construction ideas from others. Telling others about your own creation processes, 'stealing them' and showing them consequently also become a re-enactment of them, thus strengthening the experience that students are in the process of acquiring.

The repetition of the exercise becomes both a way of strengthening your own experiences and of passing on ideas to others, who can then make experiences on their own. This practice is supported by, among others, Svend Brinkmann and Lene Tanggaard (2010), who, in their article Epistemology of the hand, emphasise the importance of repetition and imitation with reference to Richard Sennett's ideas about the acquisition of skills through repetition of work by hand. In the repetitiveness of the body and in the practicing, a long-term physical interaction with a specific activity is established, and this interaction helps expand and support the students' experiences. The didactic designs with play qualities support this long-term practice by providing a setting for the repetition through different types of involvement of fellow students. The students create, narrate and pass on experience together with and to other students.

Theme 4: Materials and media are tools

The didactic designs with play qualities thus have as a general characteristic feature that they provide a setting for situations in which the students, together with others, can enact action knowledge and thus gain experience with something passed on to them. This enactment occurs with other students in at least three different ways, as I have shown above. Materials are always involved in these situations in which the students practice and perform knowledge through enactment.

When students enact various didactic designs by using the stations in PlayLab, they both explore the possibilities of the materials to be included in the didactic designs and use the materials to enable the didactic designs. What can you actually use the glass pane in PlayLab for when you need to create a didactic design with play qualities in mathematics? And can the face board be used when other students need to create a didactic design with play qualities in physical education? Where this didactic design takes place in PlayLab with PlayLab materials, the students bring something from home of a different design that they can build something with jointly. Here, paper, cardboard, yarn, glue and fabric become materials that are put into play in connection with the didactic design with play qualities. In a third design, students put on moustaches when they play, dress up to look like philosophers and use props to frame the philosophical discussion. Digital technologies are also involved in the

work with enactment of the experiences of the didactic designs with play qualities. The Ozobot forms part of a design in the teaching of literature, story and narratives, and LEGO Mindstorm is also used in a didactic design for programming and examination. Yet other designs make use of paint, magazines, maps, boxes, blocks, carpets, natural materials, building materials etc.

The materials play at least two roles in the didactic designs with play qualities: The materials are tools for the following notion: When the students build caves in a didactic design, laths, natural materials, signs and frames around the house are used to materialise abstract concepts such as identity, values and communities. The students jointly materialise what they understand by, for example, identity. In this way, they illustrate together the thoughts and pre-conceptions they have about these abstract concepts. In this way, the materials will conjure up the ideas they have about something given and become tools that the idea uses to make itself clear.

And not just to the student themselves, but also in relation to the groupings in which the students work. The other role played by the materials is thus that they become tools that enable the students to discuss and clarify what they mean. The materials consequently also become ways of sharing concrete thoughts with each other about abstract concepts. In other words, they become 'boundary objects', to quote Susan Leigh Start and James Griesemer (Start & Griesemer, 1989). A boundary object can actually be anything, but the point is that these objects will function as facilitators and channels of communication between something abstract and something very concrete. When students make signs in front of their caves with descriptions of the value of the cave, the name of the cave or a large heart, these signs become boundary objects that are used to connect the cave owners with each other, but also with outside visitors. Through these objects, it is possible to discuss and share understandings, and this is done through a joint third element, which can be called boundary objects.

In the didactic designs with play qualities, the materials, which thus include tools, which the students use to enable the actions and interactions hat the enactments in which they participate, will involve them in. As shown, the material tools play a role both in relation to the students' own experiences and in relation to experiences in interaction with others.

Summary and further work

In the above sections, the article has thematised learning perspectives and practices in the didactic designs with play qualities which have been created in the first year of the Playful Learning programme. The study shows diversity and commitment, courage and drive. Below, I will first draw an overall conclusion to the four themes, and I will then highlight a number of points of attention that should be the object of focus in the ongoing Playful Learning programme and in Playful Learning Research:

1) In the didactic designs with play qualities, knowledge and content are understood as action aimed at acquiring experience. This means that in order to acquire knowledge about something, I must do something, and the didactic designs with play qualities provide a framework for situations in which it is possible to act and gain experience through what the article calls enactment. This understanding of knowledge emphasises that knowledge is not something static and something that 'is' and that you simply 'have'. We are in constant motion, and the didactic designs with play qualities invite the students to take part in this process of creation. This raises important questions about how subject and academic standards relate to these shifts, and it also raises questions about whether the didactic designs with play qualities serve the experience and use the production of knowledge for this, or whether the experience should serve the production of knowledge.

2) Interactions with action and experience in the didactic designs with play qualities are characterised by being testing, exploratory and guided by questions about 'what if'. The interaction is staged through what this article calls enactments, and these enactments support, and are supported by, the above understanding of knowledge.

3) The didactic designs with play qualities frame enactments, in which social participation forms play a crucial role in allowing the students to repeat the actions through re-enactments. This is done through exercise with others, presentation to others and creation for others.

4) Materials and media are included in the didactic designs with play qualities. The materials act as mental tools where abstract themes are clarified and emerge, just as the materials act as a third space in which the students can meet to share their experiences with each other. These social enactments make it possible to put the materials into play in these ways.

Finally, I will highlight a number of points of attention which should be considered in the future development of the didactic designs with play qualities:

A number of didactic designs with play qualities relate directly to problem solving as a goal for the learning processes. This means that the design begins with a problem to which the enactments being staged are intended to provide answers. The solution to the problem thus becomes the driving force for what happens in the design, and the key focus will therefore be on the answer. Problem solving can be reconciled with playful qualities, but orientation towards problem solving can also stand in the way of diversity in the performance types, and it can put pressure on flexibility in the creation of knowledge. A point of attention is therefore how the constant testing that the question 'what if..' entails is continued and does not settle for specific answers, but continues to be creative and inquiring.

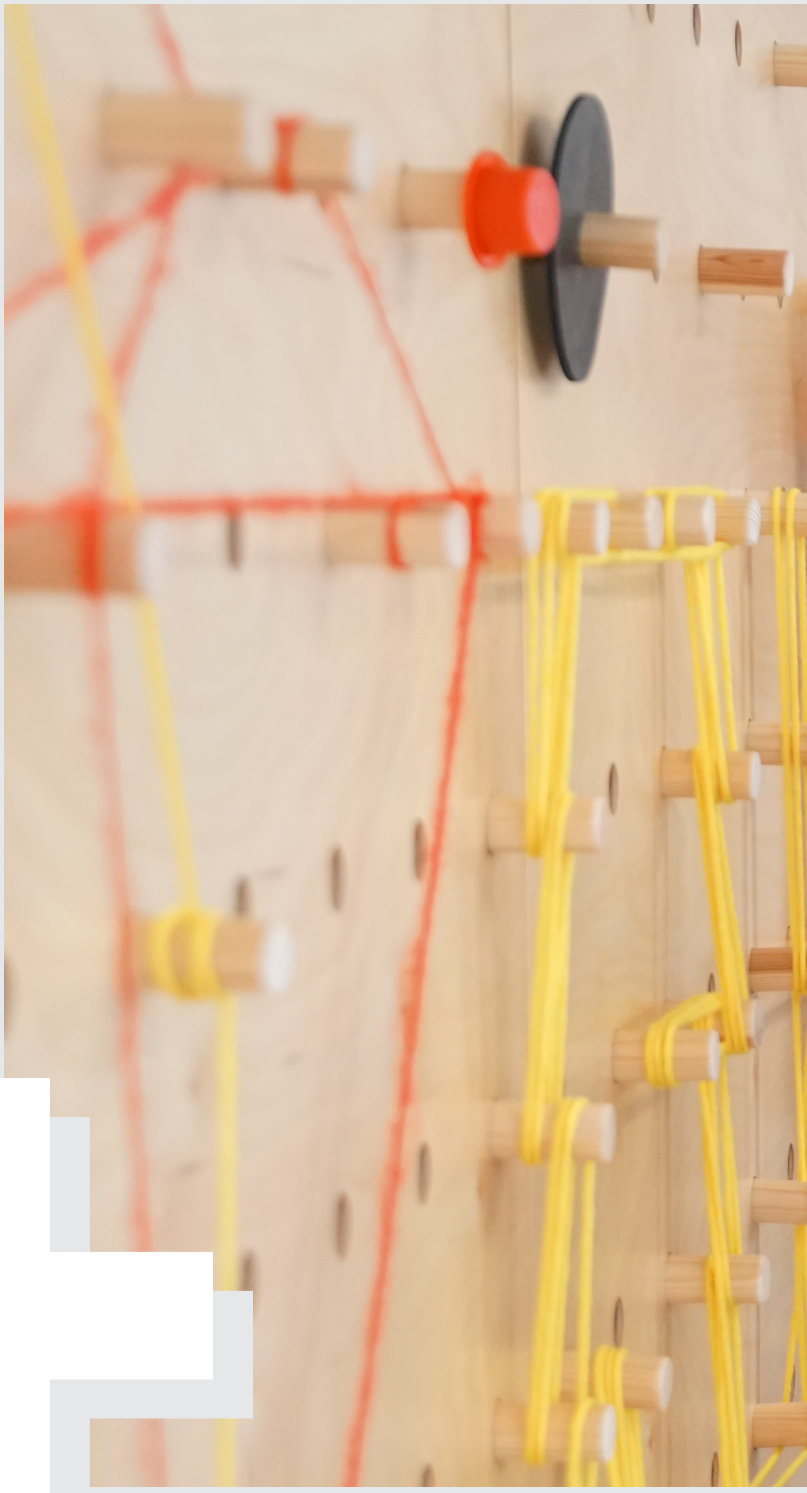
In several of the didactic designs with play qualities, it seems that the qualities come more from games rather than from play. This especially applies to qualities like competition and victory, and it means that the object of the enactment is to compete against other enactors. We know from research into learning and into playful processes that competition and focus on victory and battle are not solely motivating, but can cause some students to opt out and not wish to participate. We also know that the production of knowledge takes a backseat to victory, detached from action knowledge. In my opinion, it is crucial that the didactic designs with playful qualities focus on diversity in qualities and therefore do not only weight a few elements.

One final point that we should be aware of in the work ahead is the tendency still to make the playful approach a 'fun' element of the teaching, without it necessarily having any direct connection to the content of the subject in question.

This means that the playful element is included as a bit of fun that makes it possible to stand the rest of the teaching, simplistically put. The challenge is that the play is polarised as the fun and crazy element, while the subject-related content becomes 'the right' knowledge and the serious element. The part that the students really get something out of. The dilemma with this polarisation may be that the play qualities become superficial and that central elements of the playful approach such as immersion, exertion and practice are demarcated and are solely connected in relation to learning processes or other activities associated with great seriousness. And, conversely, we may risk overlooking how subjects and academic standards can grow in students when the practice types like the wacky, the crazy and funny, the experimental and all the what-if questions are brought into play. In this context, the point is that a polarisation in which a playful approach never gets close to the subjects and the subjects never get close to a playful approach will not benefit either play or learning.

In my conclusion, I have outlined four characteristics of learning perspectives for the didactic designs with play qualities, and I have also highlighted a number of points of attention in the coming work with the didactic designs with play qualities. The points of attention show the need to create a language for and discuss what the playful approach and the playful qualities of the didactic designs specifically consist of, and what happens when they encounter learning understandings and learning perspectives.

The 'didactic designs with play qualities' can be found on the Playful Learning programme's website: **www.playful-learning.dk/inspiration**.



Programme design for Playful Learning

- Framed unruliness

Tobias Heiberg and Mette Lyager, Programme Directors for Playful Learning

This article is about the design of the Playful Learning programme. Or, rather, about some of the reflections that the programme management has had in connection with the design and management of a development programme for which the ambition is a paradigm shift in didactics for the social education and teacher education programmes in Denmark.

Before you read on, you might as well drop all your notions that the development of teaching takes place through conceptualisation and implementation of new and better practices. You can also abandon the idea that new didactics will spread on the education programmes as long as it is based on a clear understanding of learning and unambiguous criteria for good teaching. Finally, it will facilitate your further reading if you forget the ambition that the development of teaching can be target and detail managed.

Conceptual, instructional and management approaches fundamentally spring from the notion that someone knows what others need to do to develop their practice in a given direction. We do not subscribe to this one-sided and linear notion when it comes to the development of a more playful approach to learning on the Profession Bachelor programmes in Denmark.

Highly successful educational development is already being conducted on the Profession Bachelor programmes, but most employees in the university college sector have also participated in development initiatives that have been completely off the mark in relation to meeting the needs of these education programmes or that have never left other traces than evaluation reports and final reports.

In the Playful Learning programme, our ambition is to develop a programme design that can support a more playful approach to learning on the social education and teacher education programmes across the university colleges in Denmark and thus create a positive and permanent change in the didactics of the social education and teacher education programmes. No less.

Curriculum development is a relatively well-established research field, but management and design of didactic development programmes in educational contexts are less well described, so we are a little off the beaten track. However, this should not prevent us from venturing into a description of what we think is needed and the notions of educational development that we must abandon altogether.

Design of an educational development programme

In our programme design, we are inspired by Educational Design Research (Reeves, 2012). Educational Design Research is a research genre with a collaborative and practice-intervening approach that we share. However, the design of the Playful Learning programme is not a research design, but a development design, and it would therefore be more correct to say that what we

are developing is a programme design for educational development.

A programme design for educational development differs from a research design by being focused on developing the educators' and students' everyday practice through trials and exchanges of experience between the practitioners involved. In Educational Design Research, the researchers also work with practice intervention, but here the primary interest of study is the development of theoretical understanding through the design and implementation of interventions in practice. A design for educational development is more oriented towards local impact and didactic breakthroughs than theoretical enunciation strength and generalisable, robust knowledge.

A design for educational development thus focuses on the development of everyday practices through support for educators' didactical courage and reflexivity and with the target being permanent changes in the local context.

This does not mean that a development design cannot be based on and involve research knowledge. It is an established practice for educators in higher education programmes that they teach and develop their teaching based on both experience and research knowledge about both subjects and didactics.

A research expansion has been initiated in the Playful Learning programme, and it is being implemented with the participation of both experienced senior researchers and twelve PhD study programmes that all deal with different aspects of the programme.

The research expansion contributes, among other things, to qualifying the educators' reflections, challenging the developed practice forms and putting them into perspective as well as generating knowledge about a more playful approach to learning, which will be disseminated via different types of research publications. In addition, the research expansion will link the developed didactical principles with knowledge about the underlying learning and development understandings and play qualities, thus qualifying and clarifying the theoretical starting point of the principles.

It is an enormous privilege that the development programme is now being enriched by a research expansion, and we are in the full process of gaining the first experiences with weaving development programme and research expansion together. However, this article focuses on the design of the development programme, as it is an important point that educational development is also an independent genre and a central concern for all educators and managers on the social education and teacher education programmes.

A design for educational development cannot be described as a manual that education programme developers can blindly follow. Instead, in this article, we will describe the underlying assumptions about educational development behind the design of the Playful Learning programme and refer to some of the levers and approaches that we have been successful with so far. We do not yet know whether the programme design will manage to meet our ambitions in the long term. Therefore, this article has been written in the hope that our assumptions about and design of educational development can inspire others, but also with a certain sense of humility. We are still undergoing a process.

Educators and students make the teaching move

An important assumption behind the design of the Playful Learning programme is that the educators are experts in development of the teaching that they are engaged in planning, conducting or reflecting about every day. This obviously does not mean that educators cannot need inspiration, new knowledge, provocations or obstructions to develop their teaching further, but the educator is

fundamentally the party who makes the teaching move together with the students. If the teaching is to be developed, this will therefore require a development of the educators' pedagogical professionality (Dale, 2008). It therefore makes no sense to understand Playful Learning as a ready-made concept that educators must take over and implement in their own teaching. Put a little simplistically, implementation-ready concepts precisely disable pedagogical professionality.

Most education programme developers have, in fact, abandoned the more simple and linear conceptions that a teaching measure can be moved unchanged from one context to another. Recent implementation researchers use concepts such as translation or conversion to counter reductionist conceptions and signal that the 'object of implementation' undergoes a change in the implementation process (Lund et al. 2016).

However, in social, complex and unpredictable contexts such as teaching, it makes no sense whatsoever to maintain a conception in which a new practice is first developed and described and then, at a later stage, applied or translated smoothly by others. We need to let go completely of the notion that this is how meaningful educational development takes place.

The design of the Playful Learning programme turns the educators into players in the development process through insistence on the absence of concepts and ready-made answers. The educators, together with the students, develop new practice forms through play, and they are thus fully involved in the process of changing the practice of which they form part from day one.

Development and implementation have here imploded and continuously challenge each other in a dynamic process in which new ideas and old practices meet and challenge each other (Van de Ven, 1999).

The educators' status of players and the absence of joint concepts do not mean that the Playful Learning programme develops through the individualised practices of autonomous educators. Educators have always been engaged in developing their teaching, but if we are to meet the ambition to develop the didactics on the social education and teacher education programmes, this must be regarded as a joint project. To maintain the player-oriented development perspective while providing the opportunity for establishing a joint development space, the educators in the Playful Learning programme work with a shared development methodology that creates a language and a framework for joint action and exchange of experience across education programmes and university colleges.

In the Playful Learning programme, we have worked with Try, Type and Talk as action learning-inspired development methodology in which practices are developed in iterative processes through trial actions involving educators and students. The developed teaching measures are described and justified in a didactic design and are qualified along the way with colleagues in a didactic reflection process. The development methodology is still being developed and will presumably be published in new versions, depending on the experiences of the ambassadors and educators with putting these methods into play. Read more about Try, Type and Talk in the introduction to this PlayBook.

Development through wild hypotheses and courageous testing

Another crucial assumption behind the design of the Playful Learning programme is that educational development will always be embedded in a context that is of decisive importance to what can and must be developed right here and now, and how a more playful approach to learning can become part of the local teaching culture.

A context-sensitive educational development seeks to take into account local characteristics and conditions at all levels, ranging from institutional strategies, demographic composition of classes and educator staff to the atmosphere that developed in classroom B.3 on that Tuesday afternoon when everything came together and formed a synthesis.

Teaching is best developed where it is to function and with those with whom it is to function. This means that playful approaches to teaching take on many different expressions and presuppose diversity and elasticity in conceptions and approaches. And it can be challenging to work with this openness and elasticity in the understanding of what a playful approach to learning can be.

It may be tempting to pre-define what Playful Learning is and establish which specific learning and play theories we subscribe to. Such clarity could also point us in the direction of which models, methods and tools we can use. It is just not the way we want to go. It is not the theoretical basis that defines what a more playful approach to learning should look like. Our development methodology encourages a more abductive study process in which new knowledge of how a more playful approach unfolds in teaching practices arises through the educators' wild hypotheses and courageous testing of how this can occur.

That does not mean that a playful approach to learning can be just anything. In the Playful Learning programme, we work to extract didactic principles based on our ambassadors' and educators' experiences from teaching across Denmark.

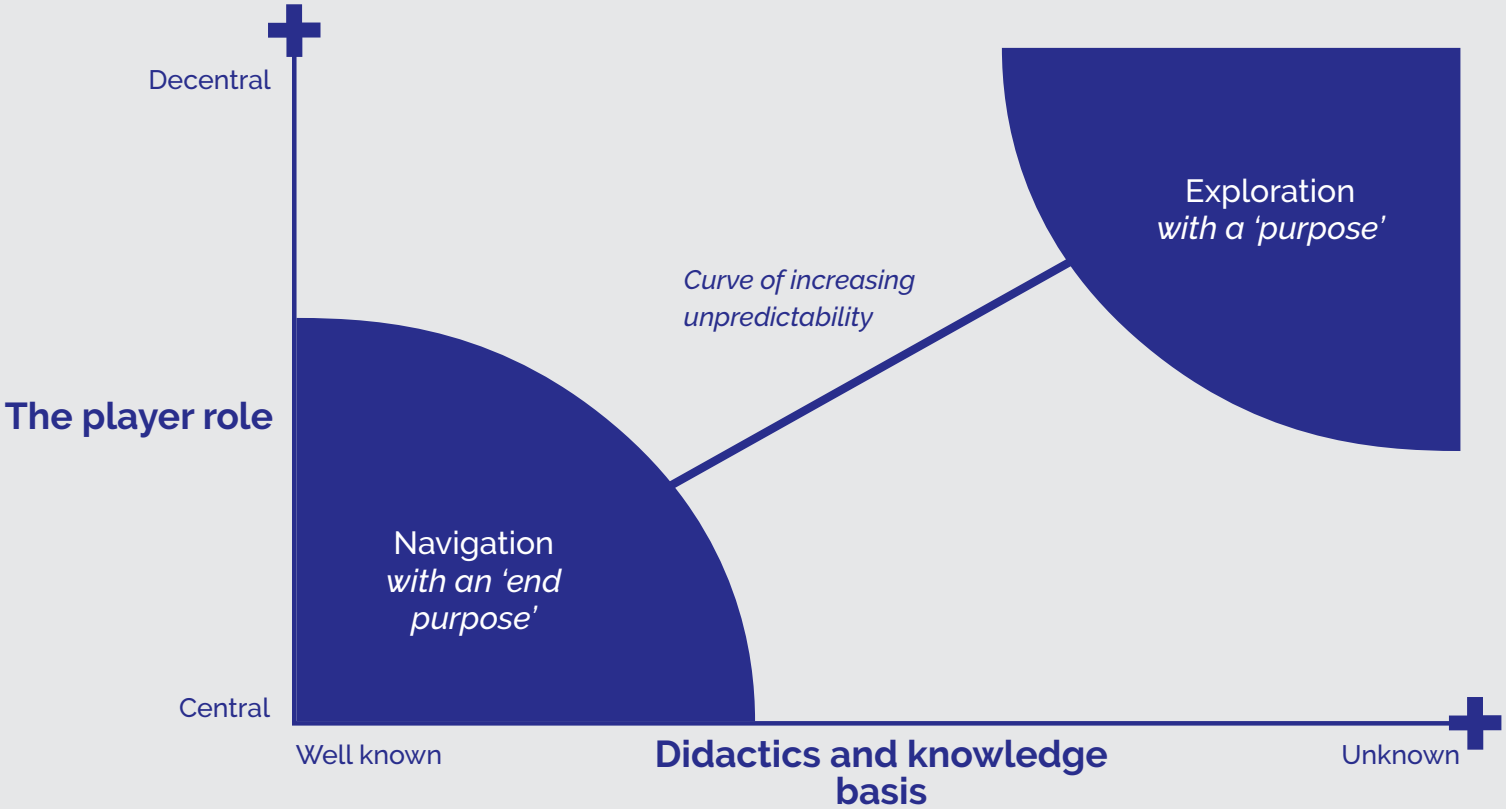
A principle-based approach to teaching development differs from a more model-based or theory-based approach by leaving more room for interpretation. Here it is not possible simply to follow regulations. Principles require an active assessment of how the intention behind the individual principle can be met. A principle specifies a direction, but does not contain instructions and can therefore be adapted to different contexts. Principles are thus a tool for navigating didactically in complex, dynamic systems (Patton, 2011).

The principle-based approach does not mean that educators cannot, to their mutual advantage, share hands-

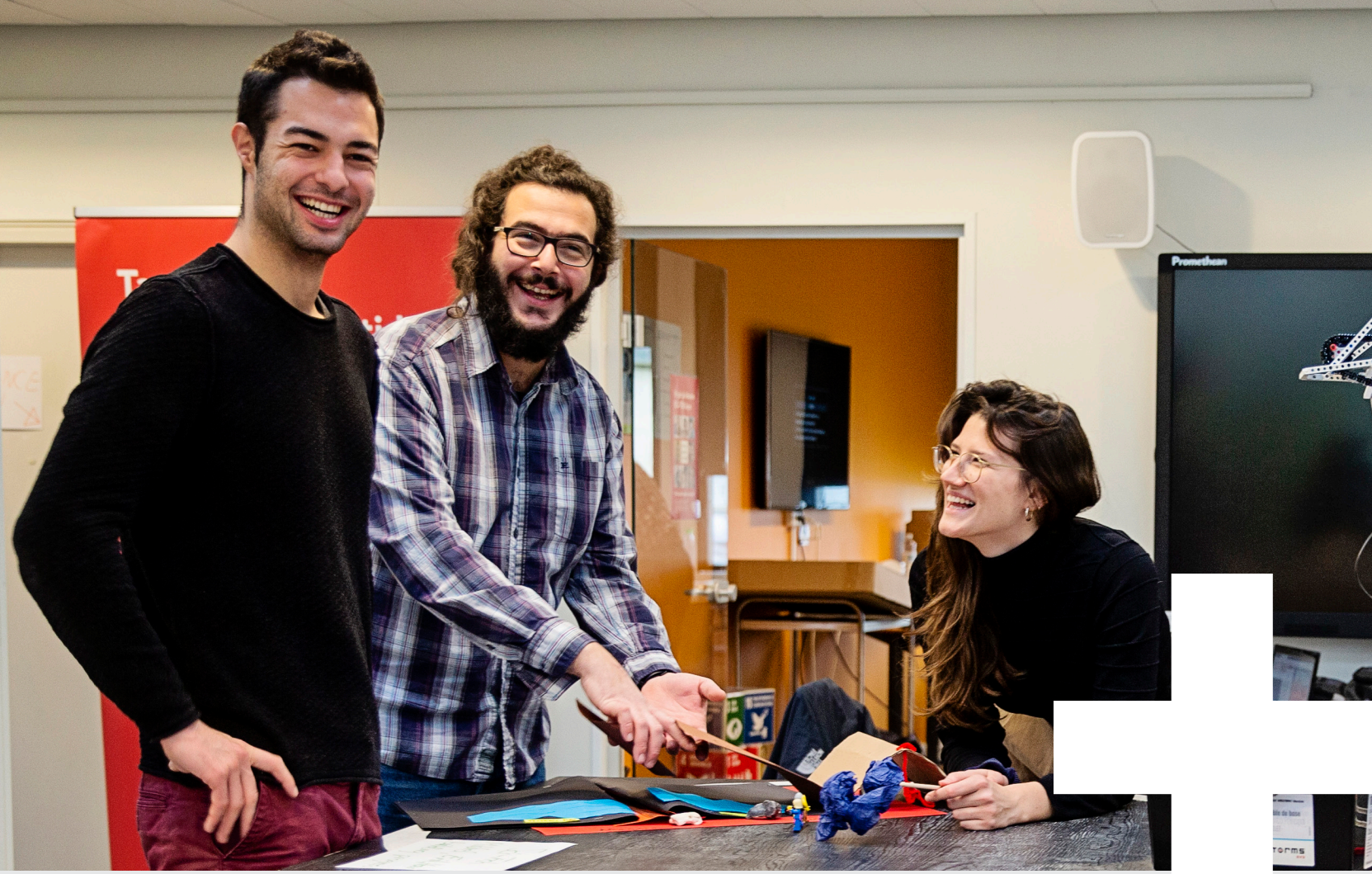
on descriptions of how playful approaches to teaching can be organised and implemented in educational communities. Research shows that the new teaching initiatives that are most successfully disseminated among educators are the designs that are clear, immediately compatible and value-adding for the individual educator (Reeves, 2012). However, research from our own sector also shows that sharing teaching formats is a difficult strategy in the development of the didactics of the education programmes if the approach to such sharing is a key element in the development strategy (see, for example, Iskov et al. 2020).

When as an educator, you instead work with didactic principles, you do not just take over or share a new form of practice. Didactic principles activate and challenge the educator's implicit understanding of what teaching is and what role an educator plays in it, which thus entails a slight change in the direction of the culture and social interactions in which the teaching is embedded.

During the first year of the Playful Learning programme, the ambassadors have extracted principles for a playful approach to teaching based on their own trial actions in practice. During 2019, ten principles were reduced to three, which try to capture how the qualities of play can challenge our understanding of what teaching can be. The principles are currently being used and challenged by the many new educators who have become involved in the programme in 2020, and the programme will presumably develop continuously. Read about the principles in the introduction to this PlayBook.



Model 1: Management of educational development – from steering towards a goal to exploration with a purpose



Management in an unruly set-up

Unpredictability is a condition for all those involved in the Playful Learning programme, including the programme management. The joint, open exploration of playful approaches to learning is the crucial element of the engine that drives the development of the programme and a major driving force for the commitment of the educators involved.

A player-based, experimental, contextually sensitive and principle-based development programme cannot be managed through target and detail management. It is therefore necessary to abandon known management logics and orient the management focus in other directions. The below model provides a simple illustration of the correlation between different development conditions and possible accesses to management.

The model has been further developed based on a model from UKON, developed with inspiration from Ralph Stacey's theory of strategy development.

The vertical y axis illustrates a continuum from a development situation in which the player role, and thus the definition and initiative rights in development projects, is placed centrally in the system, for example with the head of the education programme or the programme management, to a situation in which the player role is placed decentrally with educators and students.

The horizontal x axis illustrates a continuum from a development situation in which didactics and knowledge basis are well defined and well known to a situation in which didactics and knowledge basis are not yet known.

When educational development takes place on a well-known basis and with a high degree of central control, the management task will very much be to navigate the staff towards the desired goal. In a development situation in which educators and students are assigned player status and the end goal is unknown, the management task will be oriented towards setting a framework for an exploratory process with a shared purpose. For most people, research is a more demanding and unaccustomed management discipline than simply following action plans and checking milestones because uncertainty and loss of control will be conditions that you should be able to handle as a manager.

One of the most important management tasks in the Playful Learning programme is to maintain the open development space and accept the uncertainty and ambiguity that follow with it.

We do this best by creating spaces for conversations across and at all levels where dilemmas, pressures of expectation and new insights can be shared.

The programme management is responsible for ensuring that this openness does not turn into destructive boundlessness. The framework, processes and insightful friends of the programme must contribute to ensuring that a playful approach to learning becomes more and more evident. Open and honest communication is essential to the programme management's possibility of gathering experiences and being responsive to the participants' changing needs and new insights. In this way, we try to create a management style that is more concerned with engaging in responsive dialogical processes than in preparing detailed plans for an unpredictable future (Solsø, 2015). A significant lever in handling the unpredictability of the future is thus to respond wisely to what is already happening.

Another important management task is to support and qualify the educators' player status and concurrently create joint points of interaction between those involved. This is done through strong confidence in the educators' courage, judgment and professionalism within a clear and joint framework for their development work. Everyone works with the same three programme initiatives within the framework of a joint progression plan, so that the programme can develop with a common pulse. The educators are those who, together with the students, create the content. However, through the joint framework, we try to challenge the private-practising educator and create the basis for the development of a collaborative professionalism between the educators involved (Hargreaves, 2019).

As the programme management, we must obviously also be able to document progression and results. We may even have a special task in terms of reassuring the outside world that an open and exploratory programme design can also deliver the goods. We do this through formative and productive documentation forms, which means that documentation of process considerations in local programme foundations must continuously contribute to qualifying joint discussions and ensuring that documentation of new teaching measures is continuously shared as inspiration for educators. In other words, the documentation types chosen must be productive in the process, so that we avoid heavy and worthless reporting. Together with the programme website, PlayBooks 1 and 2 are intended as a 'reporting form' that will hopefully be of value to the reader.

The experimental development methodology, principle-based didactics and the framework-setting and responsive management form described above are designed to create room for the educators' drive and energy and activate their professional judgment in relation to finding ways to develop a more playful approach to learning. Without the educators' professional drive, energy and judgment, no progress will be made.

This means that it is demanding to participate in a development design like this one. It also means that we can only succeed in educating pedagogues and teachers who can strengthen all Danish children's creative and experimental approach to the world and their lifelong motivation for playful learning if it is meaningful to the university college educators and if they choose to participate in the programme.

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Playful Learning Programme 2021

The Playful Learning programme develops continuously in terms of both width and depth, and, in 2021, you can look forward to:

Development and research as each other's prerequisites

The Playful Learning programme insists on letting development and research enrich each other. Playful Learning's research extension, which is now the most extensive initiative in its field in Denmark, progresses, develops and expands in its own right and for its own purpose. So does the Playful Learning development track, which incorporates play qualities into, for example, competence development, didactic experiments and new interpretations of learning spaces. The two parallel currents are continuously intertwined, so that brand-new research results become a natural part of the didactic development, and innovative development initiatives become the object of research into playful approaches to education and teaching. In this way, the Playful Learning programme is at the same time practice informed and research anchored, and the ambition is to arrive at new recognitions, definitions and questions in relation to what it means to have a playful approach to learning.

Additional nuance and depth in the didactic basis

As stated, the Playful Learning programme does not subscribe to one particular definition of play. As you have read in this PlayBook, it is more about teaching that allows itself to be challenged and inspired by play qualities. The whole point of the Playful Learning programme is to create an attractive development framework in which we can explore in a national community what it means to work with playful approaches to development and learning. In the coming year, we will therefore see further participant-driven qualification of the didactic basis of the Playful Learning programme. We will thus be clarifying and enriching the joint language on principles, learning and development understandings as well as play qualities.

Courage to grow...

The Playful Learning programme is based on Denmark's social education and teacher education programmes. The idea is that the movement starts with the teachers and pedagogues of tomorrow. This development track will be continued, and, in 2021, the Playful Learning programme will also extend its field of practice and involve pedagogues, teachers, pedagogical managers and administrations in interpreting how play qualities can play a meaningful role in the professional work with children's development, well-being and learning.

Synergies between education and profession

When the Playful Learning programme invites the practice fields to be part of a national movement, opportunities for obvious synergies arise. SE+TE will seek out the potentials of crossing the boundaries between education and profession. In down-to-earth terms, this means that the social education and teacher education programmes collaborate with schools and day-care centres within the framework of the Playful Learning programme – on a small scale to begin with, and with increasing expansion as the programme progresses. The idea is inherently that structured interactions between education and profession can qualify the current development for both students and graduates on the social education and teacher education programmes.

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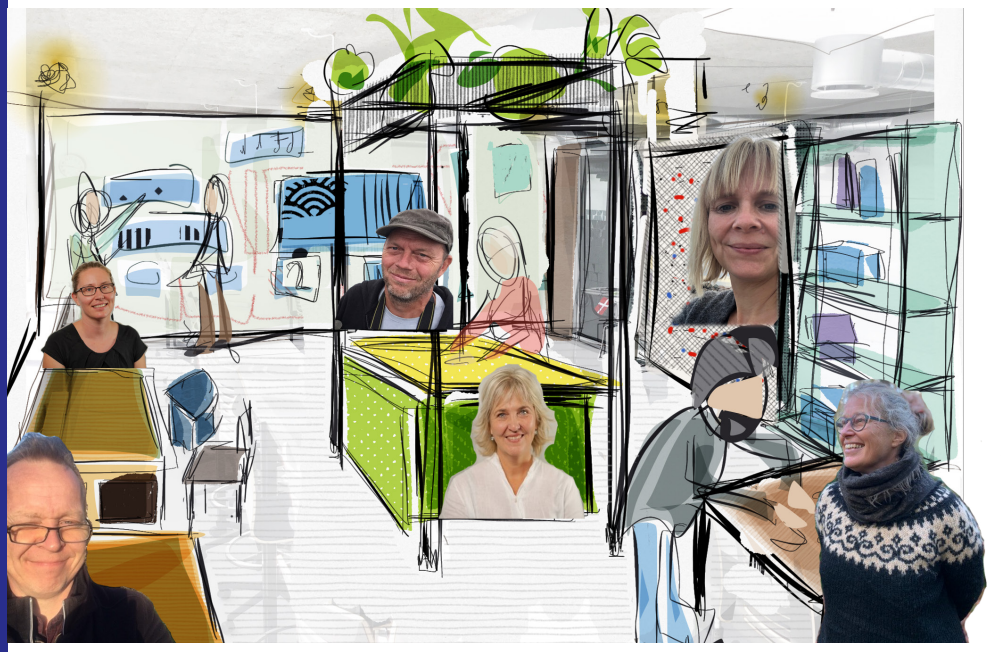

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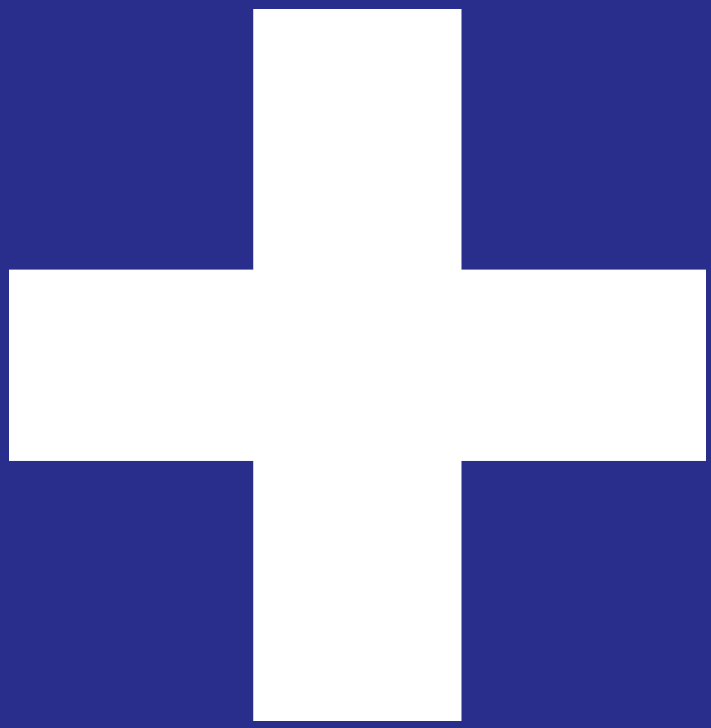

If you want to learn more

Read more about the Playful Learning programme on our website **www.playful-learning.dk**

Keep up to date on **Facebook**, **LinkedIn** and **Twitter**
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Listen to Playful Learning Podcast, where we invite relevant persons to present their own individual perspectives on the relationship between play and learning and explore how we create a more playful educational culture.

Find us on **SoundCloud**,, **Spotify**, or **iTunes**.

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