

SYMP - (18621) - SHOULD WE TALK ABOUT TRAINING OR EDUCATING ACADEMICS?

Johanna Annala (Finland)¹

1 - Tampere University

Short Abstract

Today there is ongoing debate about how much teachers' freedom in pedagogy should be guided (Finn, 2020; Macfarlane, 2021). Pedagogical development initiatives originate from European or national education policy and local universities implement those in their strategic moves (Fremstad et al. 2020). These initiatives offer new roles for the pedagogical educators and developers (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2017). In this situation, it is important to have critical discussion among those who have a role to be involved in the education of academics; for instance, should we talk about training or educating?

In Finland, universities recommend or require pedagogical studies (10 ECTS) from teaching staff, but usually academics join these courses voluntarily (Annala et al. 2019). The pedagogical approach has similarities but also differences across the institutions. In case the pedagogical development focuses only on the pedagogical skills of individual teachers, the aim is to train the academics (*objects*) to follow the current pedagogical trends and strategic priorities. Yet many pedagogical educators have an identity of an academic with more holistic approach to professional development (Sutherland 2018). This means analytical approach together with the academics (*subjects*). In this case, the broader goal of the pedagogical development is to provide opportunities to participate in cross-disciplinary pedagogical discussions in the community and to support the agency of both individuals and academic communities. The educational approaches as well as the tensions between the individual and shared expertise, strategically valued competences and academic agency, will be reflected and discussed.

References

- Annala, J. et al. 2019. Professional Development in Higher Education (Finland). In W. J. Jacob and W. Xiong (Eds), *Bloomsbury Education and Childhood Studies*. London.
- Finn, S. 2020. Academic Freedom and the Choice of Teaching Methods. *Teaching in Higher Education* 25(1),116–123.
- Fremstad, E. et al. 2020. Deliberative academic development: the potential and challenge of agency. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 25(2),107-120.
- Macfarlane, B. 2021. Why choice of teaching method is essential to academic freedom: a dialogue with Finn, *Teaching in Higher Education*.
- Roxå, T. & Mårtensson, K. 2017. Agency and structure in academic development practices: Are we liberating academic teachers or are we part of a machinery suppressing them? *International Journal for Academic Development*, 22(2),95–105.
- Sutherland, K. A. 2018. Holistic academic development: Is it time to think more broadly about the academic development project? *International Journal for Academic Development*, 23(4),261-273.