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Research paper

# Preservice teachers' professional beliefs in relation to global social change: Findings from Finland and Germany

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## HIGHLIGHTS

Preservice teachers' orientations toward society and teaching are interwoven.
Understanding of change intertwines with the perception of the world as well as of teaching profession.
The type managing change most properly is oriented toward active global citizenship.
Teacher education needs to be aligned with global education.

## ARTICLE INFO

## ABSTRACT

This article presents empirical findings on orientations that guide Finnish and German preservice teachers' professional action in the face of global social change. Drawing on group discussions interpreted with documentary method, the findings show that education under the conditions of global social change is discussed in relation to four thematic categories: the self in the world-relation, culture, social change and teaching praxis, each of which are connected to five distinctively different types of orientations. The findings shed light on how preservice teachers see themselves as change makers, and the importance of addressing each of these four perspectives in teacher education.

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## 1. Introduction

Future teachers will work in diverse classrooms and educate generations that need to cope with multiple global challenges. These include but are not limited to climate change, forced migration, and increasing social inequalities – or in short, global social change (Apple, 2011; Gaudelli, 2016; Pashby et al., 2020). Almost as long as these and other global changes have been discussed, there have been increasing calls to prepare preservice teachers to address them (see Aydarova & Marquardt, 2016; Fischman & Estelles, 2020; Zhao, 2010).

Although the role of teachers as facilitators of change is widely studied (Bourn, 2016; Brown, White, & Kelly, 2021; Niemi et al., 2018; Räsänen, 2009), little is known about how preservice teachers understand the interconnectedness of global phenomena and their teaching practice, or their own possibilities to influence change. In this contribution, we address this gap by discussing the implicit knowledge of Finnish and German preservice teachers, who participated in teacher training units addressing different forms of social change. By doing this, we explore preservice teachers' views on their roles as change-makers in a globalising world. We base our discussion on the theoretical and conceptual notions of global education (Scheunpflug, 2011; Selby, 2000).

According to German sociologist Bohnsack (2010), people have implicit knowledge that is not directly accessible to their

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consciousness. Such knowledge arises from past experiences and guides what people do, i.e. their practices. Bohnsack calls this kind of knowledge an orientation. In our research, we seek to identify knowledge stocks that arise from preservice teachers' practices while also acknowledging that those same knowledge stocks shape their practices (Bohnsack, 2010, p. 102ff.). This implicit knowledge includes the value base of acting. Extending from a previous German study focusing on preservice teachers' implicit knowledge in relation to the cultural dimension of their professionalism (Timm, 2021; Timm & Scheunpflug, 2020), the present article focuses on the implicit knowledge that guides preservice teachers' professional action in the face of social change. The choice of focusing on teacher students from Germany and Finland was motivated by the desire to extend the sample beyond one national context (i.e., only Finland or Germany), and by reasons of access and convenience, as German and Finnish researchers.

In the following section, we will map the previous research on preservice teachers' implicit understandings and substantiate the research gap addressed with this article. Then, we introduce the documentary method as our analytical tool and describe the empirical approach. In the fourth section, we will present the results, and finally in the fifth section, condense and discuss them in the light of global education, previous research and the needs of teacher education in the changing world.

## 2. Preservice teachers' beliefs in relation to global social change

Following Nederveen Pieterse (2004) we consider global social change as the result of super-diversity (Vertovec, 2007) and as one aspect of global phenomena influencing our times. A large body of literature explores teachers' and preservice teachers' personal and professional beliefs as part of their implicit knowledge in relation to global social change, and the connection between teachers' beliefs and practices (Gay, 2010; Shulman, 2006). Global social change in teachers' work is often talked about with a focus on social and cultural diversity (Garmon, 2004; Romijn, Slot, & Leseman, 2021). We now turn to that literature.

### 2.1. Teachers' professional beliefs on diversity

Research on teachers' professional beliefs on diversity is commonly about how teachers work with cultural and ethnic diversity in their classrooms. It has been argued that teachers who are "colour-blind" (Rattan & Ambady, 2013; Rissanen and Kuusisto, 2022; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010), that is, teachers who believe that cultural differences are irrelevant or even nonexistent, aim to tackle discrimination by highlighting similarity across groups of people or the uniqueness of every person (Rissanen et al., 2023). The downside of this is that invisibilisation of differences may lead to a tendency to deny the changing cultural landscape of classrooms, reluctance to adapt one's teaching or to discuss topics that are deemed difficult or potentially disturbing (Hachfeld et al., 2015). However, colour-blind teachers do not necessarily have negative attitudes towards diversity. Instead, de-emphasising group categories may be their attempt to fight discrimination (Castagno, 2008; Civitillo et al., 2019). Teachers' beliefs play an important role not only through the pedagogical practices they engage in, but also less visibly via their professional beliefs, including the positive or negative expectations teachers have of their students and their outcomes. Some of these expectations connect to teachers' views on culture, which for example Reckwitz (2004) defines as a layer of significance in social contexts. If culture is seen as a layer of significance, it means that it is not fixed. Connecting culture with the idea of significance means that culture changes in the interaction of individuals and groups, the same way as people's views on significance change.

Teachers who emphasise the malleability of cultures and the importance of continuous interaction between different groups and who recognise the relevance of cultural differences are associated with positive attitudes and high expectations towards all people, willingness for intergroup contact and high cultural intelligence (Bernardo et al., 2013; Rissanen et al., 2016, 2023; Rosenthal & Levy, 2012). When teachers manage issues related to complex social dynamics and rapidly changing situations, it has been noted that their practices tend to be reactive and may be influenced by their beliefs, rather than being proactive and informed by professional principles (Cotton et al., 2019; Thornberg, 2008). On the other hand, teachers who see cultures as malleable may be better able to respond to their students' changing needs (Heikkola et al., 2022; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010).

Teachers' beliefs develop throughout their careers. The time in teacher education and the early years in the profession are especially formative. Rissanen and Kuusisto (2022) found that Finnish preservice teachers with more contact with cultural diversity had more positive attitudes towards their students with immigrant backgrounds. Likewise, Jokikokko (2005) found that Finnish preservice teachers' attitudes and knowledge towards diversity are interlinked and they predict their actions as future teachers. According to Dignath et al. (2022), the development of professional understanding can be traced to the person's previous experiences. Diverse experiences lead to rich stocks of implicit knowledge. In other words, experiences become a reservoir for implicit knowledge. The process of developing professional understanding can be enriched when a person is confronted by social complexity (Timm, 2021).

### 2.2. Global education and social complexity

Global education research (Wegimont, 2013) focuses on the interlinked social, spatial, factual and temporal dimensions of globalisation (Lang-Wojtasik, 2014; Scheunpflug, 2011). Social complexity can be understood mostly as part of the social dimension, while being interlinked with the spatial, factual and temporal dimensions. Research shows that understanding especially the inverwovenness of those different dimensions pose a challenge for teachers (Taube, 2022). Several studies also show that there is little room for teaching and discussing social complexity or other themes of global education in teacher training programmes (Gonzalez-Valencia et al., 2020). Some countries, for example, Austria, Ireland, Italy and the Czech Republic (Tarozzi & Mallon, 2019) and Finland (Jokikokko, 2005), have teacher education programs that focus specifically on global education, but such programs are not the norm, nor do they reach the whole cohorts of preservice teachers in those countries. Topics relevant to global education may be included in preservice teacher education programs, but the way they are taught depends on the individual teachers and the freedom they have in the cultural and political contexts of the university. In their meta-analysis of critical global citizenship education in secondary teacher education programs, Gonzalez-Valencia et al. (2020) show that preservice teachers have little time to address or understand the implications of globalisation. They found examples of programs touching upon some of the values, competences or skills connected to global education, but conclude that in general, teacher education programs are far from achieving to address the historical, geographic, political, environmental and economic factors of education in order to work for social justice.

In summary, the understanding of global social change is seen as important for the practice of teachers and it seems to be clear that

teacher education should address it. However, little is known about the implicit knowledge of preservice teachers towards social change and its relation to the assumptions towards the instructional practice. With this study, we address this research gap by investigating the implicit understandings of preservice teachers towards global social change and the related practices in teaching. We want to gain a deeper insight into the characteristics of those orientations and how they are shaped. Accordingly, our research question is: Which implicit knowledge stocks guide teachers in their actions under conditions of global social change?

## 3. Research design − method

People's theoretical knowledge, implicit values and practices are not always coherent (Hummelstedt et al., 2021; Taube, 2022). Values are principles or standards that individuals or groups consider important and use to guide their practices and decision-making about what is right, good, and desirable. For example, preservice teachers can claim to be open-minded and affirm diversity, but engage in practices that indicate close-mindedness and intolerance of diversity. It is difficult to empirically research this kind of inconsistency between practices, theoretical knowledge and values. People feel pressure to give answers that they consider socially acceptable, especially if it comes to diversity and global social change. Therefore, questions might unintentionally suggest what means to be expected (Krumpal, 2013). This is why exploring sensitive topics requires a method that goes beyond what is being said into understanding how things are said: what people's hard-to-voice opinions reveal about the values that shape their practices. We now turn to documentary method (Bohnsack, 2010), which is one way to do this.

### 3.1. Documentary method

Documentary method (Bohnsack, 2010; Scheunpflug et al., 2016) seeks to address the challenge posed by an incoherence between people's beliefs and practices. It is part of a qualitative-reconstructive paradigm and builds on the work of Karl Mannheim (1964, 1980) aiming to distinguish between explicit and implicit forms of knowledge and bring the latter to the fore. Documentary method shifts attention from what people say (the content of their speaking) to what their sayings reveal about their practices. This calls for the exploration of people's implicit knowledge, including the hierarchies of values and ideas that guide their actions. While explicit forms of knowledge can be expressed, implicit forms of knowledge cannot. People acquire implicit knowledge through practices they are engaged in, and this knowledge can be at least partially acquired and formed through *conjunctive experiences* (Bohnsack, 2017), meaning shared with others with similar backgrounds or engaged in similar activities. These implicit forms are the focus of the documentary method. The interpretation of the discussions is not focused only on the content but also on the importance participants seem to give to the discussed topics, as well as the values they connect to those. In other words, the documentary is more about the *how* than the *what*.

### 3.2. Data collection − group discussions

For the purpose of this paper, we concentrate on group discussions conducted with participants who share an area or field of experience (Loos & Schäffer, 2001), that is, they participated in a teacher education course concentrating, broadly speaking, on issues of culture and social diversity (see Table 1 for more details). In these group discussions, the interviewer gives a prompt connected to the shared area of experience to initiate discussion. The discussion should have minimal guidance from the researcher so that the participants can choose what to bring to the discussion. Participating in a group discussion is a practice, guided by the participants' implicit knowledge. The assumption in the documentary method is that the same logic of the practice applies when the group is engaged in other practices, linked with their shared experience. In other words, their discussion is a representation of the participants' implicit knowledge guiding actions in real life situations (Bohnsack, 2017). For this study, the prompt was: "You had been part of a university course (title of the course). Tell me about your experiences." In case the students did not touch on aspects of their pedagogical practice or the topics of culture and diversity, further prompts were given to enhance the telling of experiences.

### 3.3. Sampling

Eight groups in Finland (32 participants) and eight groups in Germany (35 participants), in total 67 participants, participated in the group discussions. The participants were all preservice teachers studying in universities. The selection followed a theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The participants attended a course that addressed social diversity and culture in education, which aligns with the theory of global education. Five Finnish groups attended a course *Equity in Education* and three of them a course *Intercultural Education and Teaching as Profession*. The German students participated in seminars *Culture and Education* and *Culture, Education and Professinalisation*. The groups differ concerning the stage of their studies and the professional experiences they had in education. The sample was saturated at the end of the interpretation process as no new aspects were found. This means that with additional rounds of interpretation of their group discussions, we encountered the same themes. There were no clear differences between German and Finnish group discussions, so the national school systems or the demographics of the population were not considered in the analysis or interpretation.

The study was approved by the ethical boards of our institutions as required. Interviewed participants were informed about the voluntary nature of the study and gave their written consent to participate.

### 3.4. Data preparation − recording, transcription, translation

Group discussions were recorded and transcribed in a phonetic way, resulting in 207 pages of transcripts. Instances of overlapping speech, the emphasis of words, interruptions, breaks, consensus, agreements and disagreements were marked in the transcription.

**Table 1**
Sample table.

| Finland (32 participants) | Germany (35 participants) |
|---|---|
| 5 groups of mostly third year teacher education students (3, 4, 4, 3, 3 participants), attending a course *Equity in Education* | 1 group of third year teacher education students (3 participants), attending a course *Culture in education*. |
| 3 groups of third year teacher education students (each 5 participants), attending a course *Intercultural Education and Teaching as Profession* | 7 groups of mostly second year teacher education students (5, 4, 5, 5, 4, 4, 5 participants), attending a course *Culture, education and professionalisation*. |

The data was anonymised by removing names, places and other direct identifiers of the participants. The transcripts gave the foundation for the two interpretation steps: the formulating interpretation and the reflecting interpretation. In the formulating interpretation, the researcher retells and summarises the discussions text in their own words. The focus of this phase is on the structure of the text including the thematic order of the discussion (Bohnsack, 2006). The following reflecting interpretation focuses on the discursive order, meaning how the participants talk, interact, agree or disagree. For this, dense narrations in the group discussions are helpful, as they often show the participants' orientations towards the practice, that is, their implicit knowledge.

The documentary method is well established for studies in different languages, as translation is seen as one part of interpretation (Bittner & Günther, 2013; Enzenhofer & Resch, 2011). The group discussions were conducted in the language of instruction in the universities: the German group discussions in German, three of the Finnish discussions in English, and five in Finnish. Discussions in Germany were conducted by Timm. The discussions in Finland were conducted by a research assistant and a university lecturer, both of whom received close guidance from the authors of this paper. Rough computer-based translations were made from the Finnish and German transcripts so that the whole team could get an overview of their content. For the further analysis, one whole Finnish interview and large passages of all other interviews were translated professionally into English. The computer-translated parts were clarified by Kaukko, a native speaker of Finnish and discussed in a group to ensure that the translated concepts captured what the persons participating in the group discussions meant (see Kaukko & Timm, 2022).

### 3.5. Understanding through comparison

All of the interpretation steps include comparisons. Firstly, comparisons are made within single cases (groups), in order to find specific patterns in different phases of their discussion. Comparisons are also made between cases with the aim of sharpening their specific profile, contrasts, and similarities with other groups. The rationale of working across several cases at the same time is that it may diminish the effect of the researcher's own preunderstanding of the explored topic. Gradually, the comparison includes all the cases and by this, thematic categories discussed by the groups are identified. These categories are used for the construction of orientation types.

The final stage of the interpretation is a condensation of the data, which leads to the identification of a typology of ideal types (see Table 2), that is, identifying how different aspects within the orientation patterns relate to one another. For this step, it is necessary not only to extract the thematic categories out of the data but simultaneously pay attention to the characteristics of the groups in the sample. This form of generalisation follows the logic of an abduction, in which prior knowledge, background information, and the specific insight at hand form the analysis. (Bohnsack, 2007; Nentwig-Gesemann, 2007; Peirce, 1934). In this study this led to the different forms of orientation connected to the category of 'culture' interlinked with the orientations of 'social change'.

These are ideal types, following Max Weber (1904), and they are not linked to a specific person or a group. Each group discussion may represent features of several different ideal types. All the interpretation steps were continuously validated in an international group as we communicated the transcripts and sought consensus for their interpretation.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Education under the conditions of global social change as the reality

First, on a very basic level, all groups talked about global social change as important to education. This was expected, as the participating students had attended courses addressing themes on global social change and its relation to education. The participants seemed to be aware of the rapid global social change and its relevance to education. *Change* was a key concept in dealing with the social world as well as aspects of their own professional practice. All the group discussions referred to social change in an interlinked manner with education and teaching.

### 4.2. Four thematic categories as horizons of comparison

Four distinctive categories arose inductively from the group discussions. Education under the conditions of global social change was discussed in relation to four thematic categories: the self in the world-relation, culture, social change, and teaching praxis. The

**Table 2**
Typology: Bildung under the condition of global change.

| | Types | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | "Banking", assimilating education as a discouraged teacher, ignoring change | Formal education as an authoritarian teacher, denying change | Content-oriented education focusing on knowledge as a powerful teacher, managing change | Explicit experience-based education as an insecure teacher, coincidentally responding to change | Transformative education as a learning and caring teacher, fostering change |
| self and world relation | Withdrawing from the world by limiting relations to close proximity | Self-centred world relation | World relations and self-understanding created by systems of powerful knowledge | World relation by authentic experience and practical relevance | World relation by active participation as world citizens |
| culture | Distinctive cultures seen in conflict | Integration in the given majority | Distinctive cultures seen side by side | Culture as a continuum of everyday routines including everybody | Culture as super hybridity shaped by everybody |
| social change | is ignored or seen as problem of the next generation | is a burden calling for reaction | is rationally understood and responded | is perceived as contingent and occasionally responded | is a possibility for self-growth and self-positioning |
| teaching praxis | laissez-faire foundation, letting learners to assimilate to the existing environment by discouraged teaching | authoritarian foundation underestimating the power of learning and the power of children by formal understanding of teaching | rational foundation highlighting the importance of knowledge and powerful teaching | social-emotional foundation emphasising contact and encounters by cautious teaching | reflexive foundation emphasising complexity and caring for individuals |

category which we have named 'self in the world-relation' gives insights into the preservice teachers' self-understanding and self-positioning. The category of 'culture' points attention to the meaning and significance humans connect to their practices, as well as how they understand the world (see also Appadurai, 1998; Reckwitz, 2004). Culture also refers to identifying differences between and among groups and individuals and positioning yourself within communities. 'Social change' outlines the preconditions of how the preservice teachers assign the self to changing communities. In understanding 'teaching praxis', we looked for concepts of learning and teaching and the kind of orientations that guide the preservice teachers' praxis as they are students at the university, but also as they discuss teaching and learning in their future position as teachers.

Each of these categories relates to the preservice teachers' orientation to education under the conditions of change. The connection can be seen as they discussed:

the self in the world-relation, as the understanding of education, is shaped and transformed by these relations while also shaping and transforming these relations;
culture as shared values and learning to live together across differences in a changing world;
social change as being an integrally connected with education;
teaching praxis and its connection, or the lack of them, with education, social change, culture, and the self in the world-relation.

In summary, education is referred to as learning to live with others, as well as learning to participate in the changing world. However, the ways in which the preservice teachers talked about these categories revealed their different values and orientations. Looking at how different understandings in these categories are interconnected enabled us to find five different types of orientations, giving already possible prospects for their future practice.

### 4.3. Five types of preservice teachers' orientations towards dealing with social change

The results show that there are five different types of orientations among the preservice teachers participating in this study. We present each of the types with their specific combination of understandings in the categories, supported by quotations from the group discussions. As is common in documentary method research, these quotations represent the ideal type, not the groups or the individuals themselves (Bohnsack, 2010, p. 106f). All groups show features of different types, and types contain orientations from several groups in both countries. The naming of the types shows the quality of how each type links the concepts of social change with those of teaching praxis, in other words, how education under the condition of global social change is specified within their concepts.

#### 4.3.1. Type 1: "Banking", assimilating education as a discouraged teacher, ignoring change

The self in the world-relation of type 1 is narrow: it is limited in the field of one's own experience and their close environment. The world is conceptualised as the sum of experiences within one's own life. The global world is excluded from this type; it has no relevance to one's own life. Relying on this self in the world-relation culture is framed as a set of one-dimensional distinctions among groups that differ from one another. Cultures are conceptualised as entities and the starting point for understanding culture is that they are part of their own self. Type 1 makes a clear distinction between 'us' and 'them', seeing different cultures in a conflictual relation. Social

change is beyond the horizon of type 1. It is ignored, implying that if social change cannot be avoided, it is the responsibility of the next generation. This orientation shows no connection between awareness of social change and professional acting. Finally, teaching practice in type 1 is based on a foundation of laissez-faire pedagogy, with little connection with professional knowledge or professional competences. Professional thinking is guided by intuition. As there is no concept of professionalism, teaching is not viewed as an encouraging or motivating profession. In line with the orientations to culture and social change, the teaching in type 1 aims to assimilate learners to the existing environment.

The following quotation illustrates this type. It derives from group R2, consisting of Finnish preservice teachers, talking about maintaining the laws and rules of Finland. The group has very limited experiences with people they consider as different, and their consensus is that differences equate difficulties.

"That's about the way it is, but it may also be so that at least I noticed that I don't personally have that much awareness, and my contacts, as was said, have perhaps been a little negative at times, yeah at least through my own work they have not always been some of the most positive, so if I could leave them behind and acquired some truly researched knowledge about good means to have an effect on these issues, but then one kind of wonders how to turn this in both directions, I think I sometimes feel burdened by thinking that the burden of integration is with us native Finns only, so as I said, this must be an issue that's based on, anything based on experience, so it is a problem based on experiences and nothing like researched knowledge. "

Group R2, line 143-152

The idea of "the burden of integration is with us native Finns only" shows the distinction between implicit and explicit forms of knowledge. In this quote, integration is referred to as a two-way process. This shows the explicit knowledge of the topic, and the socially desirable values connected to integration. The next level shows that these values are not internalised. Looking at how this type speaks shows their implicit understanding of integration as two separate one-way processes. In one of the processes, Finns have "the burden" to integrate those who are different. In the other, those who are different integrate into Finnish society, which remains unchanged. As such, type 1 combines the competence of dealing with diversity with experience, and they use their own lack of experience as an excuse for a gap in capabilities, which cannot be filled by knowledge. Thus, type 1 is orientated towards distancing themselves from responsibility to deal with social change.

#### 4.3.2. Type 2: Formal education as an authoritarian teacher, denying change

One-dimensional self in the world-relations are also the essence for type 2, but in a different way than in type 1. The world is seen as a given and as an extension of the self: it is reduced to fit into one's own image of the self. The self is positioned at the centre of the world, being both the focus and the limit of one's own worldview. In this orientation, there is no attention to different life conditions, systems of order or hierarchies of values. One's position in the world is weak: it is not chosen or reflected by the individual. Consequently, there are no opportunities for alternative positions or different courses of action. There is also no complex understanding of cultures, their functions or implications. Culture is seen as a given and the self is integrated into the given majority. There is no reflection on one's own cultural identity or belonging. Social change is located outside the part of the world that type 2 sees. The image of change does not fit with a fixed understanding of self in

the world, which is why social change is mostly rejected. When change disrupts the normal, it causes irritation and calls for re-actions. The *teaching praxis* of type 2 is based on a formal and authoritarian understanding of teaching. There is a fixed hierarchy of positions, and this hierarchy legitimises teaching, its content as well as the relationships between students, teachers and parents. Teaching is a replication of the given norm by following rules and underestimating the power of learning and children.

The quote below illustrates the orientation of type 2. In this quote, R1 in Finland talks about the teachers' role.

> "That is a good point because, because it has often been debated that, in a way, the responsibility for education is being pushed to schools and colleges, that the responsibility is kind of being transferred there from the family. But in reality, it is the case that we are most of the time, especially in childhood, under the in-fluence of our family, and the skills and thoughts and such are very, very strongly transferred from the parents to their chil-dren, and that is especially why this kind of education is needed at school so we can influence and change it, change the mindset and … well."

> Group R1, line 58-64

This quote illuminates the orientation of type 2 to hierarchical roles of parents and teachers, and their understanding of the roles of formal vs. familial education. It is suggested that families have a strong influence on children's learning and the school's re-sponsibility is to intervene and reclaim their rightful position as places of learning. The discussion points to implicit assumptions as well as explicitly stated knowledge that teachers have or should have the power to change the mindsets of families. As teachers' power to change the mindsets of families is raised at the end and not challenged by the other speakers, the sentence concludes the core idea defining the orientation of type 2.

### 4.3.3. Type 3: Content-oriented education focusing on knowledge as a powerful teacher, managing change

Rationality is the core principle for type 3. The *self in the world-relation* of type 3 is based on systems of powerful knowledge. Organisational rules and rational principles facilitate order and give security to act. The complexity of *world society* is transferred into rational principles and the world is seen as well-organised. If rules are adapted, it is to re-stabilise order. The understanding of the social world contains very little consideration of contingency. Instead, future circumstances are seen as an extension of the pre-sent with few possibilities for surprises. In type 3, distinctive *cul-tures* are seen existing side by side. There is an implicit understanding of cultures, which are added to each other, and in this view, culture is a term of distinction and of stable values and ways of living. Fixed groups existing side by side create stability, reliability and harmony for societies and neighbourhoods. Relations between cultures are rational; knowledge about the 'other' is crucial. *Social change* is seen as a peripheral phenomenon; it is not denied or ignored, but the orientation of type 3 does not place great emphasis on social change. Response to change is based on rational negotiations and learning about each other. Change is considered on a local level, without acknowledging the global dimensions of seemingly local changes. *Teaching praxis* is founded on rational principles, highlighting the importance of knowledge and powerful teaching. Learning is seen as the acquisition of knowledge and teaching is seen as delivering that knowledge. The knowledge in question is mostly factual and technical, aiming to prepare students to manage life and the world, which can be accessed by analytical

and systematic knowledge. In such a worldview, knowledge is powerful as it is crucial for the regulation of social relations.

To illustrate type 3, we refer to a group of Finnish students talking about what they learnt in their shared course.

> "Yeah. In broad outline, I also have quite similar thoughts as you in that, er, one will surely encounter all of this cultural diversity or whatever the right term you should use is even more in the future, so it is good to think about these issues already now. And especially what Leena (pseydonym) said, not to leave it just empirically based, so the first experiences that you encounter may come like when you end up teaching in a school where there are, for instance, very many children with an immigrant background, so whether they are good or bad, the first im-pressions should not become something that kind of defines your entire future stance to the whole matter, so you should have some underlying research knowledge and such. As it is easily so that well, this topic is as such kind of challenging because the public debate on this, immigrants and all possible minorities and such, it is running quite hot, so you easily just get the feeling that I had a terrible immigrant family as my neigh-bour and now I detest them all, and then there are the other folks who think diversity is a richness and all immigrants are good people. And the same of course also applies to all minor-ities other than immigrants, to have a correct, kind of neutral factual basis to approach this topic."

> Group R2, line 70-83

The group uses a range of expressions, which are common in social and professional debates about immigration. The random use of concepts such as "cultural diversity or whatever" goes hand in hand with the belief that preservice teachers must acquire tools to navigate this field while maintaining their neutrality and ratio-nality. Because the role of a neutral teacher is in conflict with the polarised discourses on immigration, there is an attempt to exclude one's experiences and express opinions as de-personalised. A "correct, kind of neutral factual basis" and "research knowledge" are seen as crucial for being a teacher in a globalising world, and finally managing change by learning about the other.

### 4.3.4. Type 4: Explicit experience-based education as an insecure teacher, coincidentally responding to change

Type 4 emphasises the importance of experience in accessing and understanding the world.

The *self in the world-relation* is guided by principles of authen-ticity, which means that the worldview is opened by one's own experiences, without integrating abstract thinking into their posi-tioning with the word. Type 4 might be open for new experiences, depending on how relevant those experiences would be for their own practice. *Culture* is conceptualised as a never-ending stream of everyday routines. Type 4 sees practices as formed by culture and as sites of culture. The perception of *social change* is contingent; it might or might not happen. Social change is not seen as something to be denied or welcomed and consequently, the attitude for social change is neutral. Type 4 sees responding to social change as their own responsibility if the situation is connected to their own experience. *Teaching praxis* is assigned mainly by a social-emotional foundation. As students are seen with their individual needs and rights, they are seen as active participants in teaching-learning-processes, each contributing with their own fields of experience. Teaching is insecure and cautious, careful not to provoke people to exceed their experiences or disrupt their worldviews. Teaching addresses the learner in a holistic manner and with close contact.

This type is illuminated by a quote taken from a German group talking about how different aspects of culture are connected to subjects.

"But if you as a teacher haven't had any experience with the culture yourself, then I also find it difficult to teach that; so if I don't have any idea about it myself, and have only read up the knowledge, I don't really know if it's true, and well, as a teacher, I can't travel to every country in the world to see if the culture is really like it is said in the book I read, that's why I find it difficult."

Group P1, line 75-80

This passage could be understood ironically, but it also implies a lack of trust in knowledge about circumstances, which are not personally experienced. The way type 4 doubts knowledge can be seen in the expressions such as "if it's right"; only experience gives validity to knowledge. The quote also illustrates an understanding of cultures as closed and defined entities. The quote illustrates the teacher's insecurity in teaching about matters that are not in their field of experience.

### 4.3.5. Type 5: Transformative education as a learning and caring teacher, fostering change

Type 5 shows an orientation towards being active within the world, especially as teachers. *The self in the world-relation* is guided by an idea of active participation as world citizens, which means being self-guided and curious. This self is oriented toward motion and is not hesitant. The self in the world-relation is reciprocal and participative, as indicated by the ability to change one's own position and the ability to change the world. This active self-positioning through participation goes hand in hand with the idea that the world is a complex and comprehensive environment, meaning its global dimension is considered. The complexity of the world can be grasped through abstraction, which is relevant to one's own life. This type is oriented toward being a world citizen. *Culture* is seen as super hybridity shaped by everybody. Culture is in permanent motion, shifting and overlapping. It is an area of participation and activity of all people, breaking the binary between 'them' and 'us'. For type 5, *social change* is a possibility for self-growth and self-positioning. Change happens in one's own self-repositioning in the social world and provides impulses for new learning. People have the double responsibility of shaping society so that it enables a good life for all, and secondly of supporting all people in their capabilities to participate in society. *Teaching praxis* for type 5 is reflexive and has an emphasis on complexity and caring for individuals. Learning is a process of adapting to the complexity of the changing world by advancing one's own complex thinking, so teaching aims to make this possible for all learners. The pedagogical thinking in this type takes into consideration the individual learner in a holistic manner, implying teaching is also a caring profession. As the world is permanently changing, teaching needs to foster space for learning to learn.

To illustrate this type, we refer to a passage from a German group discussing what they learned from a seminar on cultural education.

"Speaker 1: Maybe it is also possible to make the pupils aware that when you talk about culture in class, that it does not only exist in class, but also in their real life, and that the pupils realise the connection between their own everyday life and school life; it is not only theoretically founded.

Speaker 2: Well, maybe also that the pupils learn that there is not only one culture in which they find themselves, but also

learn a bit more diversity and that- yes and also accept other cultures; because that is also often a problem that is often made by the parents, um yes.

Speaker 3: Yes, perhaps also the way in which one conveys to the children or the pupils that they also get to know other cultures.

Speaker 4: So, in the end, develop a new culture somewhere here.

Speaker 3: Exactly; yes."

Group P2, line 153-161

Learning is seen as transformational while at the same time, its outcome is kept open. The group acknowledges that new cultures are developed and existing cultures change and that this should be made visible in teaching. Teachers' responsibility is to provide opportunities for all students to learn self-positioning and participate in the creation of new social relations.

### 4.4. Summary

Education under the conditions of change is perceived in four dimensions: The orientations of preservice teachers toward education under the conditions of change are developed within four categories. Considering these categories multidimensionally is important for further research as it shows that these categories do not exist in isolation and should not be addressed as separate phenomena of teacher education. Instead, the categories of self in the word-relation, culture and social change and teaching praxis are all interlinked and each of them is related to the preservice teacher's perception of society and teaching. The crucial importance of these categories on the one hand, and their interlinked nature on the other, challenges the current division between how to teach (pedagogy) and what to teach (didactics). The categories are cross-cutting in all dimensions of teaching and should be considered in fostering preservice teachers' professional development.

Our interpretation identified five types of implicit knowledge. The orientations can be grouped in five distinctively different types (see Table 1 below). Type 1 comes with a narrow and self-centred world-relation: the world is seen as the sum of own experiences and culture as something that makes distinctive groups different. A clear distinction between 'them' and 'us' guides the teaching, which is assimilative. Type 2 consists of another rather self-centred view of the world, with the exception that the world is not ignored, but seen as an extension of self. This type has a formal understanding of teaching with not much regard to cultures, global relations or social change. Type 3 is oriented by rationality. Organisational rules and rational principles are important for understanding life and for teaching. The complexity of the world and cultures is reduced to rational principles: orientation that follows orders goes hand in hand with a binary understanding of separate cultures, possibly strengthening stereotypes and discrimination by believing in simplistic social order with essentialised culture-based hierarchies. Type 4 bases its worldview and teaching on own experience, without abstract thinking of one's own positioning in the world. Teaching takes into consideration the students' experiences and worldviews. Finally, type 5 shows an orientation towards being active within the world, especially as teachers. This type considers the world as complex and interconnected and is oriented toward being a world citizen. Following this idea, teaching for type 5 aims to provide opportunities for students to develop toward responsible and active global citizens.

All types refer to the interconnectedness of the individual,

society and learning, as well as change which can restructure people's self-word-positioning. In their abstract form, these relations point to the notion of Bildung, which Koller (2012) defines as transformation of the self-world-relation and Kaukko et al. (2023, p. 5) as a "process in which an individual acquires the needed skills and knowledge for individual growth and character formation (on an individual level), while also learning to be an active and critical member of their community (the social level) to open up new possibilities for individual and shared lives." Therefore, we have named the typology "Bildung under the condition of global change".

## 5. Discussion

Our article shows that preservice teachers' beliefs on global social change and those on the practice of teaching are interconnected. This highlights that in the preservice teachers' orientations, guiding their responses in relation to different types of changes (in the world, in students, in teachers) is at the core of their professionalism. This has been shown in previous studies about the interconnectedness of teacher professionalism and beliefs and values regarding globalisation (see above). However, our interpretation goes further than that and provides more precise knowledge about how the teachers' views of themselves in the world, culture and global social change are interlinked with their understanding of teachers as change makers. Those who show complex thinking about the global world and its relations have high trust in the power of education to change the world. The understanding of a teacher as a powerful figure allows more space for acting and managing the impacts of social and global changes. In turn, the types, which ignore or resist social change, paint a picture of a hesitant and inactive teacher. Our findings show that the preservice teachers' understanding of themselves in the changing world is not an additional section of their professionalism, it is an integral part of it.

Each of the five different orientations demonstrates a very different level of complexity in their constructions of the categories in their discussions. We could verify by group composition that these differences do not depend on the length of their studies, their nationality or their major subjects. For example, nearly all the respondents use positive tones and expressions when discussing increasing diversity, a central topic in all of the categories. This shows that their explicit knowledge is in line with what is perceived as socially expected: diversity is a good thing. However, at times, their implicit knowledge comes through and indicates something else. This can be seen in how the discussion focused on problems as specific and decontextualised. The orientations also showed a struggle between the short- and long-term goals of education, and the question of whether it should primarily benefit the individual learner or the whole humankind. We could see an emphasis on qualities that enable teachers to work effectively to meet the immediate needs of the individual child, but at the same time can be disruptive considering the aims of global education at large. In most types, there were references to responding to social change, but the "social" was at times seen as limited to their own classrooms or schools. The global dimension of social changes, and the interlinked nature of global and local phenomena, were beyond the horizon of these discussions.

Our article highlights the need for global education at the core of teacher training. There are hardly any education systems in the world that could disagree with the aim to educate people for greater justice, equity and human rights for all. The changing world on the one hand, and the crucial importance of preservice teachers' beliefs and orientations on the other, have led to increasing calls to integrate global education into teacher education programs.

According to the new Dublin Declaration (Global Education of Europa GENE, 2022), global education "enables people to reflect critically on the world and their place in it; to open their eyes, hearts and minds to the reality of the world at local and global level. It empowers people to understand, imagine, hope and act to bring about a world of social and climate justice, peace, solidarity, equity and equality, planetary sustainability, and international understanding" (see also Nygaard & Wegimont, 2018; Scheunpflug, 2021). Like closely related fields such as intercultural education, multicultural education, global citizenship education and world-view education, global education aims to find educational responses to global issues (Scheunpflug, 2021). Global education surfaces the interconnectedness of the temporal, spatial, factual and social dimensions in our everyday lives (Scheunpflug, 2021). Our findings suggest that the preservice teachers were aware of aspects related to global education and that in general, they had a positive stance towards dealing with global social change, but at the same time, we see that most of their experiences in and outside the university do not support changes in orientations. Thus, we see that global education with its emphasis on the interconnectedness of aspects of culture and global social change is not strongly anchored within their orientations. Therefore, we argue that teacher education needs to be more attuned to align with global education, not only as content but also as a principle of teaching. This can open a pathway for reflexive praxis and a deeper understanding of one's own position within the globalised world.

We have entitled our typology *Bildung under the conditions of global social change,* because the typology as a whole relates to transformative Bildung (Lang-Wojtasik, 2019; Scheunpflug, 2019). This understanding of Bildung emphasises the relation between the individual and the society in all levels and dimensions. In this regard, transformation means that a person is not only changing as an individual but also acting as a change-maker. The concept of transformative Bildung takes into consideration the global social change as a starting point, but also as the aim of the needed transformation. Global social change in this regard calls for a transformative Bildung as within this concept the complexity of the social world is included already at the level of the concept. What can be seen within our findings is the relation between dimensions, which are mostly separated. They show that the preservice teachers' understanding of society is reflected in their understanding of schooling, and that the five identified types conceptualise this connection in different ways. If all people's active participation in society is seen as desirable, then the same understanding applies to schooling: teaching and learning start from the notion of active student participation (type 5). If the self in the world-relation is more focused on the self and society turns peripheral, it is conceptualised more or less as homogenous in the horizon of the self. If so, schooling is based on an idea of students as objects of instruction (in different ways type 1 to type 4). The findings of this research show that the ways in which teachers are oriented towards global changes impacts their orientation towards teaching as well as their self in the world-relations – and this means *Bildung.*

### 5.1. Limitations and further research

Although our participants come from Finland and Germany, our study is not comparative. The participants were students in our universities so their selection was based on convenience. Finding national differences was not our aim, and our analysis shows that comparison would not have been justified, either. The Finnish and German students seem not to differ; all students' orientations are all distributed across all five types. This may be surprising, as Germany and Finland differ in terms of their educational systems, the training systems for teachers, the attractiveness of the teaching

profession, demographic situation and political environments, but this result is in line with other studies of Finnish and German teacher students (Rissanen et al., 2023). On the other hand, Finland and Germany share a long history of perceiving their countries as rather monocultural and homogenous. The lack of differences in the groups confirms the findings of Rühle (2015), who in her comparative study in Finland and Germany found great congruence for teachers' mindsets of dealing with diversity are similar, despite considerable structural differences between the education systems.

This sample is insufficient to elaborate on *how* these findings relate to social situations or in which ways they are universal. For that, a stronger international study would be needed.

Further quantitative research could explore the distribution of the different types identified in this study among larger cohorts of preservice teachers. In turn, participatory action research with teachers or preservice teachers would strenghten the practice relevance of this study, possibly leading to a higher probability of type 5 teachers. Finally, we need more research on the experiences which are connected with these specific orientations.

As noted above, several authors before us have called for incorporating the themes of global education within teacher education (Bourn et al., 2017; Kimanen et al., 2019; Gonzalez-Valencia et al., 2020). In line with this research, our findings highlight the need to develop and research teacher training that pushes preservice teachers to question their orientations and broaden their worldviews. Increasing the understanding of preservice teachers' roles in the changing world develops hand-in-hand with their professionality.

## 6. Conclusion

This empirical study on preservice teachers' orientation toward social change shows that the orientations toward society and toward teaching are interwoven. The aspects do not exist as separated dimensions. For preservice teachers change is the key concept for the perception of the world for professional thinking. Change culminates in Bildung as restructuring the self-world-positioning. The reconstructed typology for Bildung under the condition of global change reveals that one out of five types is oriented toward active global citizenship. For this, we argue that teacher education needs to be aligned with global education.

### Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

### Data availability

The data that has been used is confidential.

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