Reflexivity in Police Education
– Voices of Swedish Police Officers on Field Training of Probationers

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ABSTRACT
This interview study of Swedish police field-training officers (FTOs) and their conceptions of the task of mentoring and assessing police probationers exemplifies how a field-training task can be understood as a learning incentive for professional development amongst the FTOs. In ten individual, in-depth, interviews, the FTOs illustrate how their educational practices generate new perspectives on their policing and mentoring roles due to the incentives for reflecting on the context related to the training task. Furthermore, the findings disclose the importance of proper prerequisites in understanding the pedagogies of the field-training task, and thus creating an ethical and qualified learning environment. In the tradition of qualitative and exploratory studies, the article initiates a discussion about how a pedagogical and educational perspective on professional development can be applied to other vocations and professions.

Keywords
police training, professional development, pedagogies, reflection, educators, vocation

1. INTRODUCTION
Nearly a hundred years ago, the spokesman of pragmatic philosophy, John Dewey (1933/1998, 1916/1966) made several statements regarding how we learn and make meaning by reflecting on experiences. He developed the view of the human being as an actor in society, which acknowledges a view on learning as a constructive process, not as a traditional transfer of knowledge between individuals (Johnston, 2013). Since then, several researchers have investigated the use of Dewey’s ideas, for example concerning teacher education. The concept of reflection seems in that context to be in the hands of the beholder and sometimes even used as preserving ideas, instead of developing them (Fendler, 2003). Hence, if

1. A transfer- or teacher-focussed pedagogy is defined in this paper as an epistemology that regards knowledge as an object that can be transferred from one person to another.
the notion of reflection is perfunctorily used (Moon, 2004) it can be of importance to separate reflection from thinking. Rodgers (2007) follows the heritage of Dewey and defines reflection using four criteria:

1. Reflection can be seen as a meaning-making process that deepens our understanding of lived experiences.
2. Reflection is a rigorous and systematic way of thinking.
3. Reflection should be done in interactive milieus with other individuals.
4. Reflection presupposes a positive attitude towards the intellectual maturity of yourself and others (Rodgers, 2007, p. 53).

Furthermore, although Dewey’s ideas are well spread and quoted, it is important to acknowledge that these ideas must be viewed from the horizon in the early 1900s, and that applying them in a context a hundred years later is a delicate task (Fendler, 2003). One example of a contribution in that direction is Schön’s (1983) application of the concept of reflection, which focuses on professional learning and development by experimenting and “reflection-on-action”, rather than leaning on theories (Fendler, 2003). Together with Argyris, Schön also developed a description of how professional learning can be a collective and organisational process, by using a learning loop metaphor (Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1996). Thus, the thoughts of Dewey and his followers can, in many ways, still be adapted to issues in occupational learning. Regarding this perspective on learning processes, the complexity of police occupation is an interesting object of study.

Policing in the modern world is a complex mission, involving violent and hazardous environments and dealing with the use of force, combined with the increasing societal demands to show a highly ethical and democratic professional approach (Cox, 2011; Macvean & Cox, 2012; Paoline & Terrill, 2007). Evidently, researchers on the occupation of policing have, in the last 30 years, viewed the vocation as being in transformation. This change could be described as a shift from a reactive practice to a proactive one (Chan et al., 2003; Fielding, 1988; Manning, 1988). Several studies since the 1970s—for example, van Maanen (1975), Manning (1988), Chan et al. (2003), and Crank (2004)—have tried to understand police culture and the reasons police officers act as they do. Many of these studies, especially the Anglo-American research in the 1970s and 1980s, describe police culture as masculine, rough and homogenous, to adapting by new police officers through mutual identities (Crank, 2004; Lauritz & Karp, 2013; Van Maanen, 1975).

Other studies define a more heterogeneous police culture in which newcomers can act as change agents to create a new and modern police culture (Chan et al., 2003; van der Heijden et al., 2015). Moreover, dealing with occupational socialisation phenomena often indicates training and educating issues, which presumably leads back to the discussion about the concept of professionalism and the question of how to define professional knowledge and behaviour. Chan et al. (2003) imply that, to increase professional status, it is very common to elevate an occupation to a profession (i.e., academising training and education as a step towards professionalisation). By reforming police training, governments strive to promote professional values and best practices, thus counteracting the destructive street-cop culture that undermines police professionalism (Chan et al., 2003). When reviewing
research concerning occupational education issues, it seems indisputable that, to create opportunities for professional learning, it is necessary to develop education and training (de Groot et al., 2013; Paterson, 2011; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2001, 2003). However, this does not necessarily presuppose elevation from an occupation to a profession.

In this article, professional development is understood as a process in which actions and outcomes related to the specific task are continuously improved (Kelchtermans, 1993). Concerning policing, professional development can be regarded as an organisational development (Bjørkelo & Gundhus, 2015; Glomseth et al., 2007) as well as an individual one, and they may be connected reciprocally (van der Heijden et al., 2015). Regarding the aspect of individual professional development as educators, Tyler and McKenzie (2014) demonstrate that Australian police field training officers (FTOs) create their own personal teaching models based on the performance of the police trainees (probationers) and on their own experiences as probationers:

> The role of past mentors, personal judgments on other police actions, learning from past mistakes and successes, and in two cases, explicitly using personal indicators of trainee performance and the learning portfolio, all served as markers of their implicit personal pedagogies. (Tyler & McKenzie, 2014)

This view aligns with Lauvås’ & Handal’s (2001) ideas of theory of practice, where the personal history of the practitioner can be combined with existing theories of pedagogy, which can be a foundation for a developed educational practice. Tyler and McKenzie (2014) also identify insufficiencies in enhancing professional development with moments of questioning and reflection according to a student-focused and process-orientated learning view, hence blaming the absence of proper training and contemporary learning theories in the police academy (Tyler & McKenzie, 2011, 2014). Following Tyler’s and McKenzie’s implications about the importance of adequately preparing FTOs and police supervisors, this article will examine a similar training context.

Finally, studies concerning the intra-professional education perspective (Bowers, 2006; de Ruyter & Kole, 2010), for example nurses educating nurses or police officers educating police officers, clearly exist. However, when reviewing adjacent exploratory research about how the educators perceive and construct their new role as intra-professional educators, especially vocational educators in the field, an insufficiency appears (Seezink et al., 2009; Tyler & McKenzie, 2014). This opens up a rarely investigated question of how intra-professional educators develop themselves in a new role as educators. This article would therefore be a contribution to the occupational-education field in general.

1.1 Aim and research questions
The main aim of this study is to describe and interpret how Swedish Police FTOs perceive their task in the internship semester of the Swedish Police Basic Training Programme. This aim will be fulfilled through the following research questions (RQs):

1. How do the FTOs articulate their practice as FTOs? What are their roles and views on teaching?
2. What are the FTOs’ views on the obstacles and possibilities in their relations with other actors during the internship training period?
3. Does the task of an FTO provide any incentives for professional development? How?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1. Understanding professional and educational practice
Exploring research about educational and workplace contexts in client-oriented professions and vocations includes studies about teachers, nurses, doctors, psychotherapists and police officers.

Following the heritage of Dewey (1916/1966), the subjective educational theory explains how teachers build their personal system of beliefs and knowledge that are relevant for education and teaching, hence understanding their task as teachers. Kelchtermans (1993) developed this theory by gathering narratives from practising teachers. The findings of this study implied that a major part of teachers’ professional knowledge could be understood not as technical, but as embodied; thus, teachers could be regarded as craftsmen, not professionals. Kelchtermans also argued that ‘teachers’ subjective educational theory was developed mainly by reflection on classroom practices’ (Kelchtermans, 1993, p. 452), which aligns with the main concept of this study, reflexivity, which is further explained below. A somewhat contradictory picture of teachers’ beliefs and their reflections on educational practice was made by Ortwein et al. (2015). In that study, the teachers showed a lack of understanding of their own teaching assumptions and defined themselves as educators mostly in terms of their prior educational experiences.

In a similar line of argument, Boud and Walker (1998) emphasised the importance of considering context in professional education, thus focusing on micro-contexts to enhance learning situations, with reflection as a main learning activity. Paterson (2011) also emphasised the importance of competence in the educational environment, especially in vocational occupations, by connecting higher education to increased professional ethics.

Another side of the coin is McCoy’s (2006) description of reproduced teaching ideas, which instructors in the police academy are being forced into advocating. In McCoy’s study, the instructors perceived their own training to become police educators as ‘old-school’ or authoritarian teacher pedagogics, that were intended to transfer knowledge. The instructors themselves, however, desired to teach using a process-orientated and student-focused pedagogy (McCoy, 2006).

In summary, research concerning occupational education has revealed obstacles both in balancing academic and workplace issues and in finding creative ways to create a personal educator role through reflection on practice and educational context.

2.2 Intra-professional police educators
The literature concerning police educators with police backgrounds (i.e., intra-professional police educators) reveals several obstacles concerning their pedagogies and preparations. Fielding (1988) implied that police training must be modernised to provide closer relations between theory and practice with role playing, discussions and better qualified instructors.
and tutor constables. The tutor constables should teach and assess with a focus on interpersonal skills. Strengthening the teaching competence and status of tutor constables could have a positive effect on probationers’ professional development (Fielding, 1988). Though the organisation does not really acknowledge them, the tutor constables perceive their task as having a positive effect on the tutor constables’ views on the occupation of policing as a whole. Following a description of tension between ‘education’ (e.g., classroom-based teaching in a higher-education context) and ‘training’ (practice-based instruction in a street context), White and Heslop (2012) conducted a comparative case study of teachers, nurses and police educators. These researchers determined that police educators had a difficult mission in the higher-education-based police education and seemed to be marginalised by both the academy and by the practising professionals. Moreover, there was no rationale for ‘educating’ police or giving officers the tools to critically explore the police occupation. However, the police educators focussed on their own personal development as well as on their mission as educators (White & Heslop, 2012).

Concerning police field training, an Australian study of new police officers (Campbell, 2009) showed that the ‘watch and learn’ idea was dominant and that the newcomers were exposed to the power of the FTOs and their previous experiences, and knowledge was not accounted for. Campbell implied that the conceptions of professional learning in the Australian police force did not align with the contemporary process-orientated theories of professional learning. Tyler and McKenzie (2011, 2014) came to the same conclusion and blamed the remains of the old police culture in which the new police officers struggle to find their own police identities.

Chan et al. (2003) acknowledged the same obstacles and described how the FTOs and other senior police officers lacked information about how training at the academy worked but still often criticised it. Bad FTOs also still existed, dwelling in the dark caves of professional closure, spreading a picture of sloppy police work, cynicism and racism. However, the structural changes of the art of policing and advent of contemporary police-training ideas may still have affected how new police officers have adapted to (and perhaps changed) police culture. Furthermore, the FTOs did have great impact on how the probationers learnt police work in the field. Chan et al. also concluded that the selection of senior, female and experienced probationers, in combination with adequate academy training, helped the probationers to persevere and execute their own good professional ethics (Chan et al., 2003). Regarding structural changes in policing, Roberts et al. (2016) underline the importance of police leadership to “create opportunities for teams to collaborate and learn together, and developing learning support systems to encourage and incentivize staff” (2016, p. 31).

Concerning Scandinavian research on police training, a majority of the Swedish literature describes becoming a police officer, in training and in practice (Bek, 2012; Lauritz, 2009; Lauritz & Karp, 2013; Petersson, 2015). In Norway, several evaluations of the bachelor police training programme have been executed and reported. One report describes the police students’ views on developed competences during the education programme (Hove, 2010), and the findings show that police students in the beginning of their education expect and demand more practical activities than do nursing and teaching students. However, the differences between the student groups seem to decrease as the curriculum of the bachelor police education is accepted and internalised among the police students (2010).
In rounding up the research regarding police educators, there appear to be obstacles to overcome, especially concerning improvement of the quality of police training and knowledge in contemporary pedagogies in particular. A desire among police educators to change police culture and enhance professionalism, starting with self-reflection emerges as well, all within the borders of the concept of professional development.

2.3 Professional development and reflection

In a study about psychotherapists, Ronnestad and Skovholt (2003) argued for the importance of high-quality education and supervision. They also emphasised the importance of continuous and thorough reflections upon one’s professional thoughts and actions. Ronnestad and Skovholt (2001, 2003) further implied that poor education and supervision may create insecure professionals, premature stagnation and professional closure, manifested in cynicism and hence mistreated clients. Moon (2004), in a similar line of argument, provided an empirically based description of professional development, outlining how the concept of reflection can be used in different steps:

Reflection seems to operate mainly in three areas of learning and the representation of learning. They are reflection in initial learning, reflection in the process of representation and reflection in the upgrading of learning. (Moon, 2004, p. 161)

Following Moon (2004) and developing the concept of practical reflexivity adapted to teaching situations, Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith (2004) argued in favour of regarding reflection as a social and dialogical activity, not merely a cognitive one. This reciprocal activity should question different pre-assumptions to further develop professional practice, according to Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith. Concerning professional development in the police force, and similarly to the ideas of Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith (2004), Lundin and Nuldén (2007) exemplified how conversations about the use of different tools such as police radio, OC-spray and batons, can be viewed as collective reflections on the job. In other words, this activity may increase professional knowledge. This accentuates the problem of introducing new police recruits, as such conversations do not occur in the police academy, where real professional practice is quite remote (Lundin and Nuldén, 2007). This is partly contradicted by a study made about Norwegian police education, where the police students do not perceive a large gap between education and practice (Hove, 2012).

The concept of reflection in the Scandinavian police forces can be understood in two different perspectives: institutional development and individual development (Rantatalo et al., 2015). Rantatalo et al. also showed that the process of being socialised into police culture may contradict policy documents and therefore be an obstacle in developing reflection in education and workplace contexts. Lauritz and Karp (2013) argued similarly that analysis and reflection, both in police education and in everyday police work, can counteract existing suspicion against people outside the police force. Phelps et al. (2016) also gives explicit examples of experiential learning in police education, by showing how the use of body worn video on Norwegian police students can support reflexivity in simulation training and hence empower professional development.
Summing up the last part of the literature review, the activity of reflection seems, in contemporary research, to be of major importance for preventing professional closure and for supporting professional development, both institutional and individual. Reflection can occur under supervision or as a dialogical activity among colleagues in everyday work.

3. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In 2015, the Swedish Police Basic Training Programme consisted of two years of police-academy training followed by a six-month internship period (probationer police education, *polisaspirantutbildning*) as a probationer police officer with full police authority (*polisaspirant*). During the internship period, probationers practise under supervision of a police supervisor (*aspiranthandledare*) and together with police FTOs (*aspirantinstruktörer*) (Rikspolisstyrelsen, 2013). The supervisor has the main responsibility for supervising and assessing the probationer, while the FTO follows more closely in actual police work as a learning support, but completes the assessment task as well.

During the internship period, the probationer rotates among various sections of police work—patrol work in uniform, traffic assignments, reception duties and criminal investigations—and meets different FTOs along the way (Rikspolisstyrelsen, 2013). Worth noting is that the supervisor follows the same probationer for six months, but the FTO only for two to eight weeks. At the time of this study, the supervisors and FTOs received no extra salary benefits for this task, but the supervisors were granted a few hours during their ordinary work schedule to fulfil the assignment.

3.1 Swedish police FTO policies and education

The main official document framing the task for the police FTO, known as FAP 761-1, summarises most of what is officially said about the FTO task:

9 § A police field training officer guides the police probationer and should function as a foreman during each section in the internship semester. It is the duty of the field training officer:
  - to give the probationer feedback concerning achieved results,
  - to create basis of judgement for the final assessment if the probationer has completed and passed the training and
  - to provide the supervisor with a completed basis of assessment (Rikspolisstyrelsen, 2009)

[The author’s translation].

The statement that the FTO ‘guides the police probationer’ indicates that the National Police Board may consider the task to be not educational but more like a mentorship with an explicit and official assignment. However, the national curriculum for the internship period is described as a ‘probationer police education’ (in Swedish, ‘*polisaspirantutbildning*’) (Rikspolisstyrelsen, 2013). This accentuates the discussion whether there is ‘training’ of or ‘educating’ police officers (Fielding, 1988; White & Heslop, 2012). This is easier to handle in the Swedish language, as we Swedish speakers generally use the broader notion ‘*utbildning*’, which covers both ‘training’ and ‘educating’. In the FAP 761-1 the use of “utbildning” is consistent. Moreover, in October 2015, a supplement to FAP 761-1 stated that
the FTO shall be provided with an introduction regarding purpose, aims and assessment process. This document also states that an officially appointed FTO with recurring tasks shall undergo a course in pedagogies connected to the internship period, which could indicate that the Police Authority wants to increase the competence within the FTOs (Polismyndigheten, 2015).

Occasionally, local documents give the FTOs a general idea of their task. One of these local documents or memorandums describes the FTOs’ role and emphasises the FTOs’ responsibility of letting the probationers develop their professional identities on their own conditions (Polisen, Memorandum). Furthermore, the FTOs, according to this particular memorandum, should be consistent in providing space for the probationers to take their own initiatives and continuously reflect on and learn from previous work sequences.

As of November 2015, there were no national courses preparing the police FTOs for their task, although some larger urban regions offered short (one- or two-day) FTO courses. When this study was conducted, three out of four chosen regions did not provide FTO courses at all. This could be contrasted with the fact that the police supervisors, since 1999, have attended a national Police Supervisor Course (PSC) consisting of 25 days of reflecting, practising, reading literature and discussing professional supervision (Polishögskolan, 2014).

4. METHODS

In order to answer the RQs regarding the FTOs’ articulation of conceptions, relations and creating meaning, the most appropriate study type was an interview study with a qualitative and exploratory methodology (Cohen et al. 2011 Jenkins, 2015; Van Maanen, 1979). Thus, individual, and in-depth interviews with ten voluntarily selected FTOs from four police regions in Sweden were conducted. The people interviewed were directly connected to an ongoing study concerning Swedish police supervisors in the same context. This circumstance narrowed the selection to about 25 FTOs, who were approached via email at two occasions. Ten FTOs from four regions finally answered and chose to participate in the interviews.

The in-depth interviews were carried out and recorded between May and September 2015; five took place in person and five via telephone. The interviews lasted between 64 and 97 minutes, for a total time of 12 hours and 56 minutes, and they were based on an interview guide derived from the RQs. These are some of the interview questions:

- Tell me about how you look upon your task as FTO.
- What is the best way of learning to be a police officer in your opinion?
- What exactly do you do the first time you meet a new probationer?
- How would you like to be prepared for the FTO task?
- Tell me about your relation to the other actors in the internship training.
- How has the task as FTO affected you as a police officer?

Nine of the interviews were transcribed, although one interview consisted only of notes due to technical failure. Hence, a rich collection of material emerged from which the FTOs
could articulate conceptions, reflections, meta-reflections, opinions and knowledge about
the FTO task and about police work in general (Cohen et al., 2011; Kvale, 1997).

4.1 Analysis
In the analysis, the transcriptions were regarded as texts and interpreted using a model
inspired by Cohen et al. (2011). They suggested four stages in the analysis of interview data:
generating natural units of meaning; classifying, categorising and ordering; structuring
narratives to describe the interview contents, and interpreting the interview data (2011, p.
555). Moreover, the analysis was inspired by a hermeneutic approach in which the
researcher was seen as an interpreter. In this approach, the researcher acted as an inter-
preter by considering pre-understanding of the context, moving in and out of the herme-
neutic spiral and thus constantly changing perspective from sharing the FTOs’ world to
considering the research concerning occupational educators and professional development
from a distance (Gustafsson, 2004). Finally, the transcriptions were conceptualised from
the RQs by creating metaphors and patterns, thus ‘bringing the data to life’ (Cohen et al.,
2000, p. 283).

4.2 Methodological considerations
Concerning credibility, this study follows the tradition of qualitative and exploratory stud-
ies (Cohen et al., 2000). Credibility has been achieved through transparency, both by show-
ing the interview questions and by providing several quotes in the Findings section. Fur-
thermore, by analysing conceptions of the FTO task, this study can be seen as contributing
to vocational and professional research; it can also hopefully provide inspiration for further
studies on the matter (Larsson, 2009). One limitation in the data is that the interviewed
persons wished to present themselves as competent educators and thus may have overesti-
mated themselves (Cohen et al., 2000). However, their conceptions of education fit the pic-
ture of good education according to presented literature; nevertheless, they hesitated to call
themselves educators. This phenomenon is further discussed in the Conclusions section.
These conceptions could, in light of the related research, be seen as incentives for profes-
sional development in the Swedish police force and other occupations.

The ethical rules of social science research regarding informed consent, confidentiality,
and the use of empirical data (Cohen et al., 2011; Vetenskapsrådet, 2002) were taken into
consideration concerning the interview persons in the study. For example, pseudonyms
have been used in place of real names in all documents related to the study and the record-
ings were kept locked up. Further the interview persons were informed of the opportunity
to withdraw from further participation in the study at any time.

5. FINDINGS
The findings are presented in three themes: Roles and relations, Conceptions of educational
practice and Professional development. The first and second themes derive mainly from the
narratives concerning RQs 1 and 2, and the third theme mostly relates to RQ 3. The FTOs’
narratives revealed that they had disparate prerequisites for their task. From that perspec-
tive, it was even more intriguing that their narratives overlapped or differed according to their conceptions and actions related to the FTO task. Regarding the consistency between the quotes in the three sections, it is clear that the FTOs’ views on relations within the task and knowledge about it were somewhat sprawling, but they appeared to be more consistent vis-à-vis the FTOs’ views on learning and professional development.

5.1 Roles and relations

A main part of the interviews concerned the FTOs’ relations with the probationers and their views of the FTO role. The FTOs got the opportunity to explain how they look upon themselves in relation to the probationers: as colleagues, students or as something else? For example, Aron gives his view:

For the first three weeks, I saw myself as a teacher, but the remaining time it’s more like, this person is growing more and more into a colleague. (Aron)

Hanna uses another notion to describe the relationship:

Well, I would call myself more like a mentor. She [the FTO] is the person, the probationer knows that, I can always go to her. (Hanna)

Bonnie gave a somewhat different image, which may indicate that she considered herself an educator, not a mentor:

I think we were teacher and student all along. (Bonnie)

Evidently, the FTOs offered somewhat diversified descriptions of how they related to their probationers, apparently depending on the context of the police task and on their previous experience in training and educating. However, one common phenomenon was the description of the probationers’ exposed and vulnerable position, especially regarding the assessment process.

The FTOs also had diverse experiences with their supervisors. Some of the FTOs described the connection between FTOs and supervisors as insufficient:

… colleagues who have probationers at the moment don’t have a clue about what is being assessed. Maybe some supervisor has been in contact with some FTO to get some kind of assessment, but I know there are lots of insufficiencies. (Hanna)

Other FTOs found their contact with supervisors to be fairly sufficient:

[Does it work with the supervisors?] Yes, I believe so. The supervisors do have a proper education and so on, they need to actively apply for the course, and not just anyone gets admitted either. (Aron)
Regarding their perceptions of the power relationship between the supervisors and the FTOs, the FTOs in this study who were well-prepared, acknowledged the hierarchy, even though in some sense they regarded the FTO mission as being more important than that of their supervisors.

Another popular topic related to inappropriateness among certain FTOs who were depicted as inexperienced and insecure:

… if somebody who is not secure in his role tries to teach somebody who is not particularly secure in his role, tries to teach a new probationer who is not particularly secure in the role, you know it gets a bit stiff, as though you don’t see the whole picture of police work. (Felix)

The interviewed FTOs also expressed concerns about young, immature and bullying FTOs:

And more importantly I believe that initiatives from the probationers suddenly die. It is very easy to kill [an initiative] if you don’t give them self-confidence and space to think independently. (Felix)

In that quote, Felix opposed the masculine culture and acknowledged the process-oriented pedagogies that will be discussed further in the closing section.

To sum up the first theme, the relational aspect revealed how the FTOs conceived the contexts and prerequisites of the task. It became clear that the FTOs had obstacles to overcome, especially regarding their relationship with fellow colleagues, with other (somewhat macho and insecure) FTOs and with supervisors.

5.2 Conceptions of educational practice

The second theme concerns how the FTOs actually conceived their educational tasks; this represents the main interest in the authors’ research. As a majority of the FTOs in this study were offered only the minimum of education and directives to fulfil their tasks as FTOs, their narratives revealed that they invented their own strategies and educational models. However, their teaching methods were similar, especially regarding their views on learning as a process:

Providing some sort of guidance or drawing a handrail: How will you react? What can you expect? Why do you react like you do in this particular situation? Showing that it is not just a mechanical training or a mechanical way of regarding this pedagogically. What happens to the actual person in this kind of situation? (Ivan)

Bonnie is even more specific in positioning herself towards a reciprocal and process-oriented teaching view, and against transfer pedagogies:

No [laughs], it is quite obvious that I can’t transfer my twisted brain to my probationer, it’s impossible. It is rather the opposite, I’m glad that I can learn from him, again. (Bonnie)

Ivan clearly regarded the probationers’ learning processes as ‘becoming a police officer’. He also used reflecting instruments from the police academy training and the national tactics training program:
We have an idea that we are supposed to hold on to; what happened, what did you feel, what did you learn [emphasis added] … building on these three simple words you get a good discussion. \(\text{(Ivan)}\)

Denise, a civilian investigator, revealed the same process-orientated learning ideas as Ivan had; she had not considered herself an educator before the interview. She focussed on reflection in terms of what happened, what she felt and what she learned, just as Ivan did.

Examples of transfer pedagogies were hard to find in the FTOs’ narratives, which contradicts the findings of McCoy (2006). Charlotte exemplifies this trend:

\[\text{I guess I want to influence my probationers in not being affected by, I mean not doing like everybody else just because everybody else does it, without reflecting on why you think in a certain way yourself, and how you act, sort of. (Charlotte)}\]

However, Aron worked in three-shift patrol in a rough district which had recurring riots and violence against police officers. He emphasized the importance of security, tactics and, in this sense, ‘watch and learn’ (i.e., transfer) pedagogies, although he applied a more student-focussed teaching method later on:

\[\text{… I am a bit more commanding in the beginning, and the closer we are to the end of their rotation period, the more I let them think independently. I don’t tell them anymore; they should figure it out by themselves. (Aron)}\]

This emphasises the diversity of police work. In emergency situations that require quick decisions to maintain security, there is no time for reflection or for a probationer to be focussed on pedagogies. This is somewhat different from the narratives of the investigator FTOs, in which the importance of security is absent; according to these FTOs, the probationer can try first and ask questions later:

\[\text{… sometimes you think, if somebody [a probationer] asks you something, there are two ways to handle it: either you tell them how to do it and you show how, or you ask: How would you like to handle it? And then I feel more like a teacher when I ask that question. (Hanna)}\]

During the interview sessions, the FTOs spoke about whether they considered themselves educators, which in most cases they did not. However, the question made them reflect on their roles. Joanna discussed how her lack of participation in an FTO course and her lack of educational experience made her hesitate to call herself an educator:

\[\text{Because I don’t feel that I have an education to educate. (Joanna)}\]

Erich, who had attended an FTO course, easily identified with his role and responsibility as an educator; he even prepared a curriculum before he met his probationer:

\[\text{… I looked through the assessment document to sort out what I am supposed to assess, you know there is a national document for assessing. (Erich)}\]
Somewhat opposite to this view, two of the FTOs were not familiar with the internship period’s steering documents or with the FTO task at all. This accentuates the problem of how to objectively assess probationers in the end. Furthermore, if the FTOs are not familiar with the curricula of the internship period, how does this affect their pedagogy?

However, several of the FTOs used the word ‘reflection’ when describing their educational models. They prepared reflections at the beginning of the shift, between jobs in the patrol car and after the shift. On most occasions, the probationer was the focus:

I always take time for reflection [with the probationers] after the shifts. *(Bonnie)*

The FTOs also had the opportunity to express how they wanted to be prepared for the task. Erich gave his opinion of a one-day course he attended:

Yeah, it was a whole day at X, and it was a lot, if I may put it that way, focusing on soft issues, not that concrete maybe … I remember an exercise where we practised giving feedback to the probationer … I’m not sure that you need that much education to be a FTO, but if you are positive about having a probationer and not that bad of a police officer [laughs] and can explain and use pedagogy in a normal way, I think you can manage being an FTO. *(Erich)*

Considering that the other FTOs in this study did not have any such preparation or education and still emphasised the reflection pedagogy, it is interesting that the prepared FTO (Erich) did not fully approve of the course, especially its problematizing and communicative practises. However, prior to the FTO course, Erich was already familiar with communication techniques. Based on the FTOs’ preparations before the task and on their relations with their supervisors, a notable overall need was to have the opportunity to discuss the different roles with the probationers:

That you sort out your different roles and minimize the risks of misinterpretation, maybe then you get a clearer idea about your role. *(Charlotte)*

Another view about a proper and national FTO course was that it should raise the status of the FTO task, thus attracting motivated and better-suited FTOs:

… and then it would become more, how do you say, it gets a bit more prestigious … that you have been educated to be able to carry out your task better … hopefully the course participants will have considered it once or twice. *(Glenn)*

Summarizing the second section, a picture emerges of how, in most cases, the FTOs create personal educational models by reflecting on the task. Moreover, Charlotte, Joanna and Felix connected their views on pedagogies with earlier encounters with education, such as in the Police Academy with their own FTOs during their internship semesters. Thus, although they lacked proper preparation, these FTOs were creative in finding their own models (which often contained reflection activities) in a similar process-orientated learning paradigm. They also presented a clear view of how they wished to be prepared and educated. Furthermore, a complementary piece of information is that there were no visible
patterns in their conceptions of their educational models concerning sex and age of the FTOs. Their conceptions seemed to primarily evolve from their earlier experience of education.

The next theme explores the FTOs’ relations with other actors during the internship period.

5.3 Professional development

The third theme relates to how the FTO task affected the FTOs as police officers in general. Despite insufficient preparations in most cases, the FTOs clearly described a professional development connected to the FTO task, even though this is not an official or explicit effect of the FTO task:

In some way you get humble concerning your professional role, and that everyone starts as a newcomer [as probationer] ... and then as a bonus you get to pat yourself on the back: ‘Well I bloody well have learnt something during these years of service, and I’m getting to be quite professional at what I’m doing.’ (Ivan)

Ivan's view can be compared with the findings in a study concerning police teachers (Bergman, 2009), where the metaphor of changing spectacles was given to explain how the teachers’ roles changed their way of looking at police work in general. Aron describes it in a similar way, using a process-orientated metaphor:

… taking on a probationer is a learning process, because you need to dust of your old law book in order to explain the basis of judgement to them [probationers]. (Aron)

He even stated that the FTO task has affected him as police officer and as a human being:

I think I have become a better police officer, yes, and a better person, sure, because I get to practice on my patience, all the time. (Aron)

Erich presented a similar example of how he changed his perspective on his own eager police role, and how, due to his task as an FTO, he assumed an analysing role if the situation allowed:

… I mean police officers usually show an image of eagerness, like you want to be first and sort of catch thieves and stuff. As an FTO you are expected to take a step back, and if you have had six probationers it becomes like a personality thing, that you fall into that FTO role and take a step back. This can even occur with colleagues, when you’re in a patrol car. I mean of course you don’t treat them as a probationer, but still you let them take initiative in occasional situations. (Erich)

It is important to point out that, in the interview situation, Erich did not mean that he had become a passive police officer who let his colleagues do all the work. This quote exemplifies how professional development can mean taking on a broad view in concrete situations regarding daily police practice. Further on Erich specifically mentions the FTO task as one main incentive to become a more analytic and hence a more professional police officer:
Yes, I would say so, I surely would. I think it is important to be an analytic police officer and not just run into situations… (Erich)

Felix describes in a similar way how the task as FTO had developed him as a police officer. For example, by watching a probationer in action and in the discussions afterwards, especially regarding the communication aspect of daily police work:

… how they [the probationers] communicate, by just watching them. I learn a lot by their mistakes and I have seen really nice pitches when they approach people and break the ice and get them to open up … (Felix)

In terms of professional development, the FTOs were asked how they viewed their futures as FTOs and whether they had considered a supervisor role. A majority of the FTOs would consider taking on the supervisor role, but they had diverging opinions on the matter. Aron was attracted to the idea but reluctant to leave ‘real police work’:

… I can see myself taking on the supervisor role … the curriculum of the police supervisor course hasn’t put me off … but still it seems like a lot of just sitting down and just talking, compared to [the joy of] being out in a patrol car. (Aron)

Bonnie articulated an intrinsic need to increase her possibilities for practical reflection, together with her probationers:

It probably has to do with my wish of forming, hearing these new, hearing these reflections, their brains, how you think when you enter a profession. It is really interesting. (Bonnie)

To investigate their views on further education and on the supervisor course in particular, the FTOs were informed of the PSC’s curriculum, which refers to a pedagogy based on reflections and discussions; it lasts 25 days: 13 days of home studies, and 12 days on campus. In the FTOs’ view, this kind of curriculum was not very common in the Swedish police educational context. Charlotte thought for a second and then replied:

Ok, then it is an extensive course! That is quite good, I think. (Charlotte)

Summarizing Theme three, it is obvious that the FTO task provided an opportunity for the FTOs to develop professionally, especially with regard to their incentives for reflecting along with the probationers in a reciprocal relationship.

6. DISCUSSION
This section will connect the article’s purpose to the RQs about the FTOs’ perceptions of the following: the FTO task’s educational aspect, FTOs’ reciprocal relations with probationers and professional development. This section will also offer conclusions and suggest directions for further studies.
The FTOs in this study have similar opinions about the best way to learn in the police context, but they define their roles differently. Their pedagogic models are also embodied through a reflection on practice (Schön, 1983; Argyris & Schön, 1978, 1996), much like the professional knowledge of craftsmen, which Kelchtermans (1993) has implied concerning teachers’ knowledge. Connected to the implications of Ortwein et al. (2015) and regarding shallow insights into the educator role, these FTOs occasionally show the ability to frame their pedagogies. Furthermore, the FTOs’ pedagogies clearly align with the ideas of a process-orientated learning philosophy formulated by Dewey (1916/1966), despite their occasional lack of preparation and formal education. The FTOs clearly show the same kind of reflexive and reciprocal approach towards the probationers that Moon (2004), Cunliffe and Easterby-Smith, (2004), Rønnestad and Skovholt, (2001, 2003) and Schön (1983) called for.

For example, the existing questions of ‘What happened? How did I feel? What did I learn?’, used by Ivan and Denise, is very similar to Moon’s (2004) concept of reflection in three stages. This partly contradicts the implications concerning the remaining transfer pedagogies in police education, as both Campbell (2009) and Tyler and McKenzie (2011, 2014) argued. Moreover, some FTOs had no knowledge of the steering documents formulating the FTO task or of the curriculum for the internship period. This can be connected to the importance of insights among the educators regarding both the academic context and the workplace’s micro-context (Paterson, 2011; Boud 1998). Evidently, offering more education on training pedagogies could enhance the FTOs’ educational competence, (Chan, 2003; Tyler and McKenzie, 2011, 2014).

Regarding the question whether to ‘train’ or ‘educate’ police officers, some of the FTOs in this study hesitated to call themselves educators, which may be due to the only steering document for the FTO task, FAP 761-1 (Rikspolisstyrelsen, 2009), using the expression ‘guides the probationer’ regarding the FTO’s task. However, the internship period is part of a national curriculum known as ‘probationer police education’, which raises the question of whether the FTOs should be considered ‘educators’ rather than ‘guides’. Connecting to the implications that Fielding (1988), White and Heslop (2012) and Chan (2003) made, it may be a good idea to reconsider the concepts used in FTO education and to increase the FTOs’ educational levels.

Concerning roles and relations, the findings imply that the FTOs in this study had, in some cases, different views on how to relate to the probationers (i.e., on their professional role as FTOs). As some FTOs disclosed, one main problem is that, in the assessment process, the probationer’s future in the police force may depend on the opinions of an officer who has limited knowledge of what to assess and how to report it. The FTOs in this study also noted the presence of improper FTOs, as Chan (2003) and Campbell (2009) described; however, in this study, these improper FTOs were identified as incompetent and isolated entities in the police force. Another important insufficiency concerned the lack of understanding and communication between supervisors and FTOs.

There are several examples of how the FTO task has developed the FTOs professionally, both as police educators and as police officers in general, and it seems like the interaction with the probationers is one important incentive in this aspect. Similarly to the (2003) study of Chan et al., the FTOs in this study also show a desire to educate others and change police culture. This raises the question of whether the ten FTOs in this study represent the
majority of the FTOs in Sweden. Who are they? According to statements in the interviews, the FTOs who participated in this study were particularly interested in issues of training and learning; therefore, they were in favour of participating in this study. Surely they showed eagerness to learn more about the FTO task, and in that sense, they may be more self-secure and predisposed to reflective activities than other FTOs. The FTOs in this study may differ from other FTOs, especially those who have only reluctantly taken on that task and who may not be as eager to reflect upon themselves or on the FTO task. However, it seems obvious that the FTO task has developed their ability to reflect on their practice.

The FTOs’ task is of great importance both for preparing new police officers for the job and for creating role models that represent positive changes to the existing police culture (Chan et al., 2003; Campbell, 2009; Tyler & McKenzie, 2011, 2014). The FTOs in this study show the ambition to develop and to improve their educating competence, and they adapt to contemporary reflexive pedagogy with curiosity and humbleness, which could positively affect the new police officers they mentor. However, within police culture, there is resistance to soft values, such as reflective activities, which must be overcome (Karp & Stenmark, 2011; Rantatalo et al., 2015; Phelps et al., 2016). Applying a pedagogical perspective on professional development which builds on the concept of practical reflexivity (Cunliffe & Easterby-Smith, 2004; Rønnestad & Skovholt, 2001, 2003), the Swedish police may need to initiate a discussion about how to develop a national and compulsory FTO course. This could be inspired by the PSC, which is well-appreciated. According to the claims of Roberts et al. (2016) regarding police leadership, it can be of importance to stimulate Swedish police leaders to empower reflexive activities.

Closing the Discussion section and opening new questions calls for a final reference to Dewey (1916/1966):

No experience having a meaning is possible without some element of thought (1916/1966, p. 145).

Thus, to develop and obtain professionalism and an ethical approach towards clients when entering a profession, occupational educators should be provided with adequate tools to empower that process using reflective activities. Moreover, the rarely investigated creative and positive capacities within the police organisation need to be acknowledged and enhanced. However, as Fendler (2003), Moon (2004) and Rodgers (2007) claim, it is of great importance to be accurate with the concept of reflection and regard the activity as more than just thinking. Reflexivity demands an attitude of individually and collectively regarding yourself, your fellow colleagues and your context with some sort of metaperspective.

Finally, disregarding the important implications of Dewey and his followers, a comment on reflection and police work should be made. Reflective activities in police practice are only possible when opportunities are given. In an acute or dangerous situation, a police officer must rely on training and instinct, setting aside fear and sympathy. However, the presented literature and the empirical material in this paper may inspire occupational and educational learning. Perhaps it is time to provide professionals with more frequent opportunities to reconsider what they are doing and why, both before and after action?
7. FURTHER STUDIES

Considering the main findings in this study, there is most likely a need to further illuminate the importance of suitable workplace training, especially concerning the pedagogies of workplace trainers (i.e., educators). For example, as the FTOs in this study imply, more research is needed regarding those improper and unqualified FTOs who do not create proper and safe learning environments. To expand on these issues, a large survey—preferably, an expanded interview study involving FTOs and supervisors in the Swedish police—would serve to investigate educators’ views of their tasks in greater depth. Moreover, following the work of Chan et al. (2003), Lauritz (2009) and Petersson (2015), some studies—and especially exploratory ones—should be conducted on Swedish probationers.

Regarding the contemporary research on police culture, organisation and training, there is a lack of studies to identify the views on knowledge within police organisations worldwide, especially regarding individuals’ positive and creative incentives. Is there as a shift towards a process-orientated view in general, with the pedagogies of the police academies as change artefacts—as Chan et al. (2003) has implied—or do transfer pedagogies still rule?

REFERENCES


Polisen (Memorandum). *To be considered as a police field training officer.*


