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Designing a responsive curriculum for teacher education in higher professional education: analysis and exploration

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Introduction

Rapid change in society and professions asks for more flexibility in professional education. In research literature this flexibility is called 'responsive' (Onstenk & Westerhuis, 2017). A responsive curriculum can be characterized by the ability to adapt to changing circumstances (Turkenburg & Vogels, 2017). A curriculum is considered to be responsive when it contains two elements: 1) the ability to link education to the changing and dynamical vocational practice, and 2) to be able to cope with student diversity and respond to students' individual needs (De Bruijn, 2006; Onstenk & Westerhuis, 2017; Turkenburg & Vogels, 2017). In this PhD research we elaborate on the concept of a responsive curriculum in the context of teacher education. The overall research question is:

How can we design a responsive curriculum for teacher education?

Objective

The first part of this PhD research project focusses on how to define and understand a responsive teacher education curriculum.

Study design

The overall PhD research follows a model of design based research in education (McKenney & Reeves, 2012) including three design steps (see Figure 1). In the first part of this PhD research project we focus on design step one.

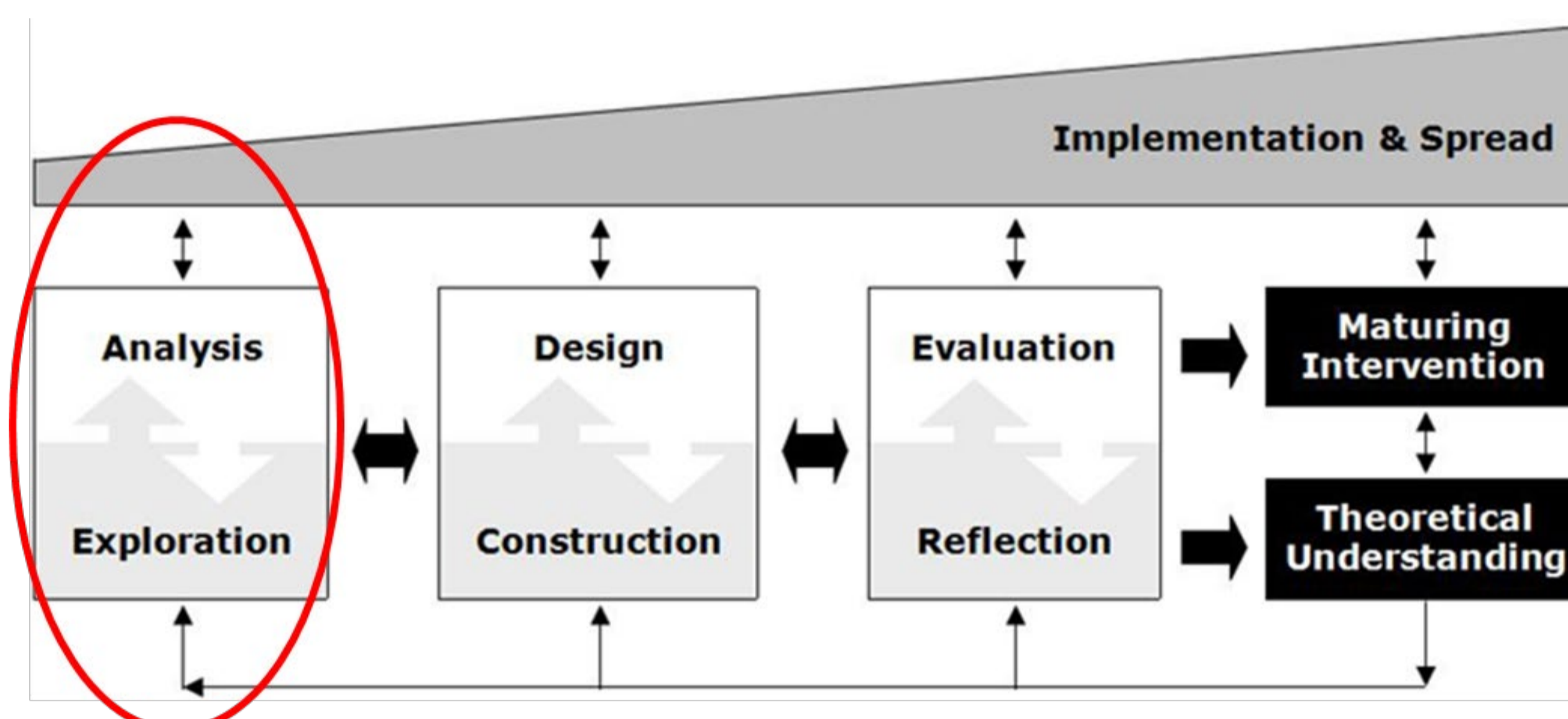


Figure 1. Generic model of Design Based Research in Education (McKenney & Reeves, 2012)

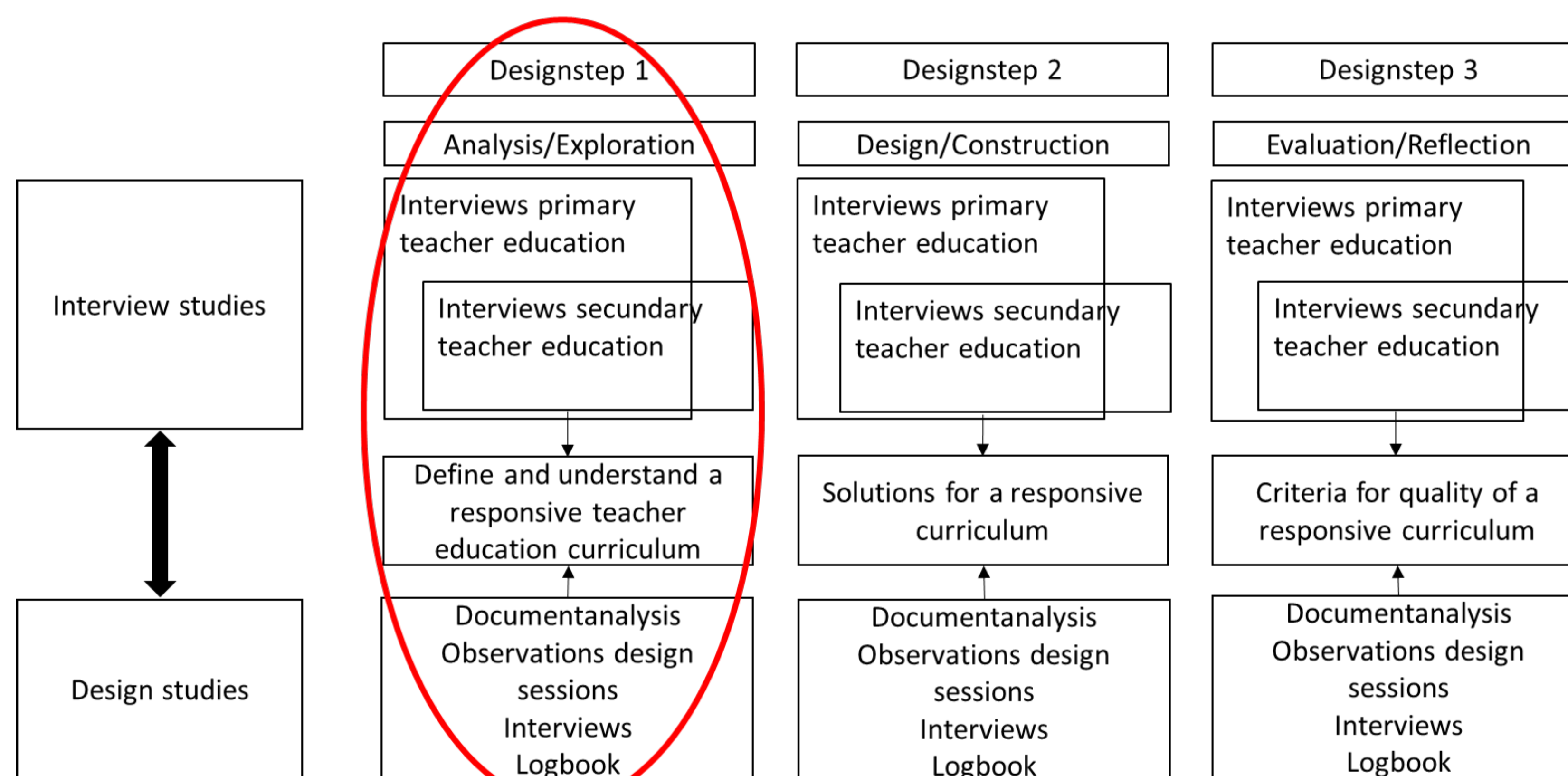


Figure 2. Overview of the PhD research

Two methods are employed, an interview study and a design study (see Figure 2).

Interview study

A series of interviews to explore the expectations of students, teacher educators and student teacher supervisors.

Design study

Participatory research of a curriculum design process in the context of a specific teacher education institute.

Added scientific value

The research approach of this PhD research is design based. Curriculum design research in teacher education is considered relevant both national and international (Livingston & Flores, 2017). In the Netherlands teachers are educated in higher education (university or university of applied sciences). This PhD research aims to develop design knowledge on responsive curricula in Higher Professional Education.

Declaration of Interests

This PhD research is a collaboration between the Open University of the Netherlands and HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht-Research Group Vocational Education.

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