Chapter 3
An Insider Look at the Implications of 'Partnership' Policy for Teacher Educators' Professional Learning: An Australian Perspective

Simone White

Abstract Encouraging, strengthening and in some countries mandating, school-university partnerships is a policy strategy used by governments globally to drive teacher education reform. The past decade has seen a rapid move by the Australian federal government from initially fostering partnerships to now mandating partnership agreements with schools. Shortly, all initial teacher education providers will need to demonstrate their formal partnership agreements in writing, tied to accreditation purposes. Within this policy environment, teacher educators (particularly university-based) are instrumental in what the design, development and implementation of these mandated partnership models might look like. Many teacher educators however appear ill-equipped for such work and are reluctant to step into these boundary spaces between universities, schools and their communities. This chapter reports on one component of a broader study conducted to better understand the current 'partnership' policy implications for teacher education, the possible reasons for resistance in partnership work by university-based teacher educators and the professional learning needs to facilitate such partnerships.

3.1 Introduction

Teacher education is a growing but still relatively new field of empirical study (Grossman and McDonald 2008) and so too is the focus on those who work in teacher education: teacher educators (both university-based and school-based). While research into this particular occupational group has expanded over the past decade (see, e.g. Murray and Male 2005; Swennen and Van der Klink 2009; Boyd et al. 2011; Mayer et al. 2011; Williams et al. 2012, Goodwin and Kosnik 2013), studies to date have not been able to keep ahead of the intense political gaze

S. White (✉)
Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Australia
e-mail: simone.white@qut.edu.au

and increasing reform pressure placed on this group by policymakers. Just like teachers, teacher educators have been described by Cochran-Smith (2003) as 'linch-pins in educational reforms of all kinds' (p. 5). While this group may be viewed as instrumental to reform agendas by public 'outsiders' to teacher education, the capacity to do policy-practice-research bridging work is simply assumed rather than explicitly understood, fostered or enabled by those who create the agendas. As a consequence, teacher educators are *implied* as change agents in order to create, design and deliver exemplary teacher education partnership programs, but without the matching attention to research (or resourcing) into the knowledge base and professional learning needs necessary to enable teacher educators to do so.

To illustrate this point, research into the components of what might make an effective teacher education program, for example, has revealed that exemplary programs tend to be those that integrate coursework and professional experience and where effective school and university partnerships are created. As Darling-Hammond (2006) notes:

> Three critical components of such [exemplary] programs include tight coherence and integration among courses and between course work and clinical work in schools, extensive and intensely supervised clinical work integrated with course work using pedagogies that link theory and practice, and closer, proactive relationships with schools that serve diverse learners effectively and develop and model good teaching. (p. 300)

While such research above provides the empirical and theoretical insights into the 'what' of effective teacher education programs, which are so vital to better prepare teachers, the implications of the 'how' of this type of program development and the 'who' is to do this work are left largely unexamined. To date the *work* and *professional learning* of teacher educators (both school-based and university-based) to enable these types of exemplary programs and partnerships to flourish are not yet well understood. To contribute to a better understanding of the professional learning needs of university-based teacher educators engaged in partnership work, and the policy implications surrounding their work, a small qualitative study was conducted. This smaller study sits within a larger research project currently funded by the Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET) that has examined the professional learning of a broader group of partners (e.g. principals, mentor teachers and pre-service teachers). For the purposes of this chapter, a particular spotlight on the policy implications for university-based teacher educators (rather than other groups) is provided.

The qualitative study consisted of two parts: first, a teacher education policy document analysis and second, interviews with the initial sample of teacher educators (n = 3) engaged in establishing and building school-university partnership models. Before further describing the study, attention first turns to the very heart of the problematic nature of defining 'teacher educators' as an occupational group or profession. Also, some of the contributing factors of the perceived lowly status and position of teacher educators betwixt 'field and ivory tower' (Murray 2002) in universities and of a 'Janus-faced' profession (Taylor 1983) are examined. These two areas are important to understand as teacher educators appear unaware of their own significance in the research-policy-practice nexus, a position that appears to be part

of the important contextual backdrop, and further adding to the problem of teacher educators being ill-equipped to respond to 'partnership' policy imperatives in the first place.

3.2 Teacher Educators: A Profession or Occupational Group?

While Australian policymakers might have begun to firmly focus their gaze on teacher educators as a key occupational group to enact reform change, *who* actually constitutes this group and their professional status and professional learning needs is still very much being debated (see Swennen and Van der Klink 2009; Murray and Male 2005). Recently, Snoek et al. (2011) noted the 'definition of a teacher educator can be formulated as someone who contributes in a formal way to the learning and development of teachers' (p. 652). While traditionally this role and work have referred to those in universities, more recently in the Australian context, the definition (at least by policymakers) has begun to be widened to encompass those who work in schools with pre-service teachers. Mentor teacher or supervising teachers are emerging in the teacher education policy context as vital to improving teacher education, but there is as yet no formal professional learning required in order to accept a pre-service teacher (White and Forgasz 2017).

While the European Commission (2013) recently noted that 'teacher educators work in many different institutional contexts and come to teacher education from different backgrounds' (p. 8), in Australia, teacher educators is a term currently used to describe those who work in higher education institutions (HEI). In the Australian context, a study revealed that most teacher educators come into higher education from a teaching background, with the completion of a doctoral degree as main criteria. As an Australian study revealed, taking on the work of a teacher educator however also involves little preparation and has been described as 'an accidental career' (Mayer et al. 2011). The study further revealed that many university-based teacher educators entered higher education with little to no induction into or professional learning about the role and work: 'entering the teacher education profession often appears to be a phenomenon of chance' (p. 252). Consistent with other studies (Kosnik et al. 2011) and the European Commission (2013) and further complicating the role identification are the issues that many Australian academics involved in teacher education do not actually self-identify as a teacher educator. As noted by the European Commission (2013), 'many of those who teach teachers might not consider themselves to be teacher educators at all' (p. 8).

This statement is particularly true in the Australian context, with those based in either schools or in higher education institutions (HEI), often preferring to define or describe themselves as either a teacher or academic, respectively. As an example, classroom teachers often tend to see their first priority (quite naturally) to the children/students that they teach and are not always willing participants in taking an active role in pre-service teacher education. As a result, the Australian Council of

Deans (2008) has documented the epic struggle of asking teachers to accept pre-service teachers into their classrooms. For those based within an HEI education faculty, some prefer to define themselves by their discipline, for example, as a math educator or by the work of a university scholar or academic. This lack of role and therefore work identification has led to debates about the professional status of this organisational group and to claims of a 'hidden profession' (Snoek et al. 2011). Further complicating the situation is the lower status of teacher education within higher education, an issue that in Australia has resulted in a further marginalisation of those who do choose to identify as a teacher educator and a reason why some choose to not.

3.3 The Janus-Faced Profession: The Problem for Teacher Educators and Their Professional Learning

The consequence of the 'hidden profession' in Australia, like that of England, is largely a result of the late arrival of teacher education into universities and to the feminised nature of the occupational group as well. The last quarter of the twentieth century witnessed teacher education in Australia move from teaching colleges into the university where it remains today, albeit under greater pressure for alternative routes into teacher education to be opened up under a marketisation agenda (similar to England, the United States, and other OECD countries). Just as in the United Kingdom, its late arrival into academia has meant that it has 'also been a late arrival in the status-stakes, too' (Maguire 2000, p. 151). Teacher education's difficulty in clearly positioning itself within higher education has left it open to constant scrutiny from those both within and beyond the university. As a consequence it has been viewed, as Taylor (1983) noted, as 'Janus-faced': 'In the one direction it faces classroom and school, with their demands for relevance, practicality, competence, technique. In the other it faces the university and the world of research, with their stress on scholarship, theoretical fruitfulness and disciplinary rigour' (p. 4).

It seems that neither those within academia nor those beyond, in schools, view university-based teacher educators favourably, due to the often dualist and competing nature of their role and the issues around preparing teachers. The 'late comer' and lower status of teacher education within the university and the subsequent lack of acknowledgement of the importance of professional experience work (e.g. visiting schools, working alongside teachers, supporting pre-service teachers in schools) result in a tendency for this work to be left to adjunct staff, retired teachers and principals or doctoral students and staff who often do not teach in teacher education programs. As Le Cornu (2010) explained in the Australian context, it is a problematic tendency for university advisors to be drawn from adjunct staff 'who are not deeply engaged in the rest of the teacher education program' (p. 204).

Similar to the findings from the study by Beck and Kosnik (2002), pre-service teacher relational work and the time spent in building school-university partnerships are also not as highly regarded or rewarded in Australian universities as graduate

doctoral work, research or publishing. This has led to what is perceived by the public ironically to be the most important 'policy to practice' work being left to those who are not always fully engaged in the research and practice of teacher education. Regardless of individual self-identification or the issue that this group is not yet well understood, policy reforms in Australia continue to focus on this occupational group as implied change agents. It appears that the 'hidden profession' is also hidden but vital in policy implications. The policy gaze has major implications for the future of teacher education and teacher educators' professional learning at both sites (university and school). As such, it was timely to focus research on the partnership policy implications for university-based teacher educator's professional learning.

3.4   The Study

As part of the current Australian policy partnership reform agenda that began federally in earnest in 2008 (noting that partnerships are not new in the Australian research literature) and as one illustration, the Faculty of Education at Monash University partnered with nine schools (three secondary and six primary) to form a particular partnership cluster known as the Monash-Casey Teaching Academy of Professional Practice (TAPP). The project was funded by the Victorian Department of Education for 2 years (2015–2017) and aimed to bring together school and university colleagues to improve the preparation of pre-service teachers. A component of the overall funding was dedicated to researching the partnership project *from the inside*.

The main aim of the research component was to investigate the professional learning needs of teachers and others involved in partnership work within the project. To this end, interviews have been conducted over the funding period from across the various stakeholders involved including principals, key mentor teachers, teacher educators, pre-service teachers and parents and community members. Ethics approval to conduct the study was gained from Monash University Research Office (Project ID CF15/2971– 2015001221). Interviews have been audio recorded and transcribed and returned to each participant for their permission to use the interview transcript as data in the analysis. For the purposes of this chapter, data is drawn from two components: an examination of the teacher education partnership policy trajectory and documentation, drawing from the release of the Australian Government's Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) review and report entitled *Action Now: Classroom Ready teachers* (2014), and; the first wave of semi-structured interviews conducted in early 2016 with three teacher educators (university-based) who were centrally involved as both teacher educators and researchers in the project.

Thematic analysis was used for both sets of data. Atkinson and Coffey (1996) refer to documents as 'social facts', which are produced, shared and used in socially organised ways (p. 47). Using document analysis (Bowen 2009), the two most recent policy documents (the TEMAG recommendations and the report) were examined to find, select and make sense of and synthesise the data in particular

reference to the key question of how partnerships are understood and portrayed within the documents. And, what is the (implied or explicit) work of teacher educators in the partnership agenda revealed within the documents? These questions were then considered across the three interview transcripts looking at the data to uncover the ways in which the teacher educator's themselves discussed their own identity, role, work and any professional learning in relationship to the partnership work they were engaged with.

3.4.1 The Australian Teacher Education 'Partnership' Policy Context: Document Analysis

While university-based teacher educators are the main focus of this chapter, it is important to understand the broader partnership policy context and reforms that impact and shape their work in the Australian context. It is also important to note for international readers that Australia tends to 'shadow' the teacher education policy trajectory of England, in particular, and is increasingly heavily influenced by reforms occurring in the United States (see Mayer 2014; White 2016). Australia's close economic, social and historical ties with England and the United States not surprisingly mean that reform agenda tend to be sourced from our close allies with a rapid rate of 'reform borrowing, not always learning' (Lingard 2010) since the turn of the millennium. For Australia, being in such a policy periphery position can be both a blessing and curse, with the ability to know what might be ahead by looking to our 'cousins or relatives' (Gilroy 2014) past. What is outlined below therefore might sound like *deja vu* for some international colleagues.

In following our 'cousins', the Australian government has embarked on a 'nationalisation' agenda in relation to teacher education and schooling, for example, the past decade has witnessed the creation of national curriculum, assessment and reporting and national standards in the form of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and a national movement for accreditation of all initial teacher education providers as well as a nationalised approach to school-university partnerships. With this national strengthening has also come an emerging deregulation agenda of the current university-led teacher education programs with calls for greater market-driven accountability and alternative routes such as Teach for Australia (TEMAG 2014). At the heart of many of the calls for improved teacher education is belief that such partnerships will 'solve' the perceived divide between 'theory' and 'practice'. 'Partnerships' have long been viewed in this way, as the vehicle to bring closer together the perceived divide and address many of the critiques of teacher preparation programs, particularly those coming from principals and pre-service teachers.

In Australia, the 'partnership' policy imperative at the federal level began in earnest via the National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality (Australian Council of Deans of Education 2008). This document was the first partnership policy wave, placing a greater focus on strengthening linkages between

initial teacher education (ITE) programs, beginning teaching and teacher professional learning by endorsing:

1. The systemic response to strengthening linkages between initial teacher education programs and transition to beginning teaching and teacher induction
2. The professional learning implications of pre-service teachers and in-service teachers working together as co-producers of knowledge (Australian Council of Deans of Education 2008, p. 4)

While the second partnership wave through the TEMAG report (2015) did not specifically state recommended mandated partnerships, it is through the changes to the national ITE accreditation processes that will ensure initial teacher education providers place 'partnerships' as a key feature. For example, Program Standard 5 states:

> Formal partnerships agreed in writing are developed and used by providers and schools/sites/systems to facilitate the delivery of programs, particularly professional experience for pre-service teachers. (p. 34)

Complimentary to the accreditation reforms, the TEMAG report named five main reform themes, two of which are directly linked to the partnership agenda. The first is a 'stronger quality assurance of teacher education courses', with increased focus on 'producing graduates with the skills and knowledge to drive student outcomes' (p. 4) and the other an 'improved and structured practical experience for teacher education students' (p. 4) noting that 'the focus on high quality practical experience should be embedded in every teacher education course' (p. 7).

There is a heavy emphasis within the TEMAG recommendations, and report on the need for university program changes to reflect a greater focus on the importance of 'practicum' rather than the coursework or curriculum component and on 'partnerships' in recognition of the key role and work of those who mentor pre-service teachers at the school level. The TEMAG report includes the following:

> To ensure new teachers are entering classrooms with sufficient practical skills, the Advisory Group recommends ensuring experiences of appropriate timing, length and frequency are available to all teacher education students. Placements must be supported by highly-skilled supervising teachers who are able to demonstrate and assess what is needed to be an effective teacher. The advisory Group strongly states that better partnerships between universities and schools are needed to deliver high quality practical experience. (p. 7)

Classroom teachers as evidenced within this quote are increasingly viewed or positioned as highly influential in the preparation of teachers, yet there is no reference in any of the recommendations or documents to their own work as teachers of pre-service teachers or of the work implied for teacher educators in either building partnerships or in supporting classroom teachers. As highlighted, the stress on 'partnerships' within this document is not necessarily new to the international teacher education audience. This shift in emphasis away from university-led coursework towards 'partnerships' and more school-based (not yet school-led) professional experience (practicum) is consistent with changes that have occurred in other countries and has been described by some as a practice turn (Reid 2011) or 'practicum turn in teacher education' (Zeichner and Bier 2013).

Like England in the early 1990s, where it was made mandatory for HEIs to offer pre-service courses with schools, thus making partnership a 'core principle of provision' (Furlong et al. 2006, p. 33), Australia is now following suit. Conroy et al. (2013) describe the rise of 'professional learning schools' across a number of countries as part of a recent partnership reform agenda in Scotland but suggest there is little emphasis on the place, work or role of university-based teacher educators to bring about such change. Australia is currently in this same position, and the funding of the Teaching Academies of Professional Practice is itself an example of governments (state and federal) creating 'professional learning schools' or school-university partnerships through major funding initiatives.

What the 'practicum turn' policy rhetoric seems to be missing, with its focus on 'partnerships', practicum and mentors, is the equal attention to teacher education curriculum redesign and teacher educator's professional learning at the university, to enable them to enact the important policy-practice work. In following England's 'partnership' agenda, it can be expected this second partnership policy wave for Australia will in turn spawn a new emphasis on the importance of mentors in schools, their expertise and professional development and career opportunities and involve large numbers of teacher educators and mentors who will become involved in school-university boundary crossing activities and the professional learning opportunities offered by them (White and Murray 2016). It is to the very nature of this 'new' boundary crossing work for Australian teacher educators as they build such 'partnerships' in Australia that the attention now goes.

3.4.2   Teacher Educators: Partnerships and Professional Learning

To complement the policy analysis and to begin to better understand some of the implications of the partnership policy agenda on the professional learning needs of university-based teacher educators in creating and developing partnerships, a group of three teacher educators (themselves researchers in the project) agreed to participate in the study and were asked a series of questions. These included:

- What experiences have you had with school-university partnerships?
- Do you identify with being a 'teacher educator'?
- What do you understand are the challenges and benefits of working in a partnership model?
- What motivates you to do this partnership work?
- What previous professional learning have you had in working in partnerships?

In analysing the transcripts of the interviews, a central theme emerged, which was consistent with the literature discussed earlier. This central theme, discussed below, explores the connection between the emerging role identification of a teacher educator with the work and professional learning involved in partnerships. The three teacher educators are introduced in the following section, and excerpts as data

from the transcripts are used to illustrate points. The three teacher educators have been given pseudonyms.

3.4.3 Teacher Educator's Identity and Professional Learning in Partnership Work

The three teacher educators interviewed had varying degrees of experience in working in a higher education setting. All came to teacher education from a teaching background. One teacher educator (Julie) had more than 25 years in primary classrooms before beginning her work as a teacher educator. At the time of the interview, Julie had only recently stepped down from her official role of Director of Professional Experience, a key role that had been created within the faculty 4 years ago as a direct response to the first wave of the federal government's focus on incentivising partnerships. Roberta came to teacher education from a secondary teaching background where she was a drama teacher. Roberta had also just completed a term as a professional experience advisor, a role formed within the faculty that placed her centrally to the administrative workload required in supporting pre-service teachers' experiences in the practicum. Heidi also came from a primary teaching background and is the newest of the group to teacher education, with 3 years' experience. She has recently taken up a professional experience liaison role, yet another newly created role within the faculty, in line with the second wave of partnership policy development. This particular role involves partnership brokering and developing partnership agreement arrangements.

For all three, it appeared their professional experience roles given to them through the changes made in the structural portfolio roles within the faculty became instrumental in thinking explicitly about the role and work as teacher educators in professional experience and was the catalyst for them to become more focused on their own identity, role and boundary crossing as teacher educators engaged in the work of partnerships. All three described that they were very motivated to engage with school partners, as part of and beyond their actual role and workload at the university, and keen to create effective and systematic partnerships. All described, however, that they had little to no formal professional learning prior to being given their roles at the university, and so they drew from their own experiences as teachers, mentor teachers and teacher educators and on their own research expertise.

Julie explained that in taking on her role as Director of Professional Experience (a significant leadership role in partnership development) the advice given to her in relation to building partnerships with provider schools was to 'go out and see what works'. Likewise Heidi, when allocated her role as a professional experience liaison (PEL) officer, mused that perhaps it was because she was good with people, 'a relational person' that she was asked to take on the role. She described in doing so she had little understanding or knowledge of the work she should be doing beyond a recognition of the importance of what she was being asked to do. In being asked

about her work and any professional learning about partnership building, she responded:

> Especially given my role as a PEL, [professional learning about partnerships] is probably fairly important. But I don't know what that might look like really, what sort of professional learning you might actually do; I don't know. Who might run it or what might it involve or what you might learn there, I don't know. I think I've just sort of seen it as a go in and do the best I can type thing.

When Julie first began her leadership role, she described her work as 'driving out to schools' and 'trying to find a partnership framework' to understand partnership work itself. Initially she noted schools were keen to be partners, but their understanding of this work was also different to her own. She explained some frustration at schools' perception of 'partnerships' as seeing people from the university coming out to schools as experts of a particular 'discipline' or knowledge base and not as she hoped with the view of a mutually reciprocal relationship. She notes this earlier work as:

> Our real challenge, and we did, we drove many miles, went to a whole lot of different schools who are very keen to talk to us, very keen to build some sort of partnership but the overwhelming partnership they wanted was professional development from academic staff to their staff, [for example] tell us about the latest things about teaching maths or how do you use ICT and a good way to use Smartboards in classrooms, we want PD from the university because you're the experts.

Julie goes on to describe the desire for a 'real' partnership as an understanding and respecting of different knowledges and expertise and seeing each other as colleagues. She expresses this as an issue because as she describes, school-based colleagues have little understanding of the work of a teacher educator at a university. She describes the feeling of strangeness of going back into schools and 'knowing the school' but that her colleagues did not understand her work or her context in the same way.

> When I go to schools I know what they do because I've done it whereas teachers in schools, unless they've worked in universities don't know what we do. I think the perceived divide is that lack of knowledge of others' work practices and what we actually do. [T]hey don't know what we do whereas we can walk into a school and feel fairly comfortable and know probably what's going on even if we may not know the detail. I think in building the partnerships and trying to get that divide bridged in some way is to enable them to see us as colleagues, as teachers. If you're a teacher educator you're still a teacher, you're teaching but see us as colleagues rather than somehow separate.

Roberta also describes in her interview her shift in understanding of her identity in relation to her school-based colleagues and to her shifting view of her role in partnership work. She described that in coming in to teacher education work, she originally thought of herself as more of an expert drama teacher. This shifted over time to now describing herself as a teacher educator, teaching through drama. She notes this shift in thinking about herself as a 'teacher educator' changed the way she thought about partnership work. She considers partnership work similar to Julie in that partnerships are about different expertise coming together in mutually beneficial ways. She notes:

> So there was something [originally] uncomfortable about inviting school based colleagues to share my space [at university], because that was my expertise. Now that I don't identify as an expert drama teacher anymore, and so I'm looking for school based colleagues to connect with. Because they're the examples of powerful practitioner approaches, and my role is to mediate what are they doing and how does that connect to what we're exploring theoretically.

She further describes the partnership work she is now doing as a 'third space' of interaction.

> I really do identify as a teacher educator and a researcher of teacher education. It is just evident to me that there is not – it's almost like there is no point, there's no point doing amazing work in the university space or the school space – unless there's that third space of interaction in that work. Yeah I just feel like I get it, I get the accusation of academics in their ivory towers in teacher education. If you're not simultaneously looking at what does this actually look like and how does it translate and what does it mean and how does it mean anything, in the context of school. And that pull for pre-service teachers, the pull to school and what is really happening, there's no point, it's like there's no point doing my job if I don't engage in schools.

For all three in reflecting on their partnership work, they explained that it made them realise their own expertise as a teacher educator and helped them to distinguish and value the role of teachers and especially of teachers who were taking on the work of becoming school-based teacher educators. This realisation and sharpening of their teacher educator identity helped them to distinguish the work they were doing and in turn helped them seek out more mutually agreeable partnerships.

> We're not doing this just so that we can show… that we've got X number of partnerships, here's the piece of paper to prove it. We're doing it because it's valuable in its own self. There needs to be the structure and the support in the faculty to make sure that the partnerships or the relationships or the models keep going and evolving, they don't have to be the same for the next ten years but [partnerships] need to be central …. When I asked what is the framework around this partnership work that we're meant to go out to the schools and do, instead of getting [teacher educators] to go out and see what works, we now have a structure in place or getting it in place that will be that framework that hasn't been there before. So I think that's a challenge for all of us from the Dean down. It doesn't need to involve money all the time, it's not about that, it's about how people think about what they do.

For teacher educators, such as Julie, Roberta and Heidi, who move across sites such as schools and universities and other community settings, their multi-memberships can become fraught as they work hard to negotiate their identities across different boundaries and educational spaces. For university-based teacher educators, adding 'more faces' can sometimes make their role and work incredibly challenging. As Wenger (1998) notes:

> The job of brokering is complex. It involves processes of translation, coordination, and alignment between perspectives. It requires enough legitimacy to influence the development of a practice. (p. 109)

For teacher educators doing this type of brokering and relational work, it requires a new understanding of workload and of reward and recognition within the already

difficult space of competing research-teaching pressures. As Williams (2014) describe:

> One of the more difficult tasks faced by members of a community of practice is negotiating meaning between various communities of practice, or brokering. However, by coordinating connections across communities, participants are able to open up possibilities for learning, and to gain new perspectives that are not apparent within one community alone. (p. 246)

3.5   Conclusion

The call for mandated partnerships in the Australian context clearly heralds the need for a change or shift beyond the current status quo for stakeholders. The silence around the role of the university-based teacher educator in much of the policy focus, however, means that there is a missing piece to the collective puzzle of improving teacher education. Effective school-university partnerships require broader system support for all stakeholders and a recognition of the brokering skills to do so. To move beyond the status quo, we need a systems approach. As Le Cornu (2015) states: there appears to be an increasing commitment to the view that sustaining high quality partnerships requires a 'whole of systems' response (p. 16).

'Janus-facing professions' like teacher education in particular need an alternative approach – one that stops the constant 'switching' to either/or – but to 'both'. Goodwin et al., (2014) explain that what is needed is a 'research-practice hybridity'. Including a 'both and also' approach has increasingly been recommended to address the types of binaries described above that appear to divide the teacher preparation profession. Zeichner (2009) recommended these 'both' approaches utilising 'hybrid spaces' consistent with the way Roberta frames her work. Spaces in which 'the traditional dichotomy of academic and practitioner knowledge' (p. 89) can be overcome and resolved. Bhabha (1994) described *third space* as founded on the notion of 'in between spaces' that exist in the 'overlap and displacement of domains of difference' (p. 2). In regard to partnerships, the 'domains of difference' as Bhabha (1994) notes apply in the perceived traditional education divides between university and school, university teacher education coursework and professional experience placements, teaching and mentoring, and learning to teach and assessing teaching. A particularly enlightened review (Donaldson 2011) into teacher education noted that school-based experience such as partnerships and the practicum should do much more than provide practice in classroom skills, vital though these are. The review notes that:

> Experience in a school, provides the opportunity to use practice, to explore theory and examine relevant research evidence. We need alternative models that help reduce unhelpful philosophical and structural divides [that] have led to sharp separations of function amongst teachers, teacher educators and researchers. (p. 5)

Partnerships can be a loose connection with little real reciprocity or learning across stakeholders, or they can be a functioning and evolving community of

practice whereby schools and universities exhibit the three elements of notions of mutuality, joint enterprise and shared repertoire (Wenger 2008). To create these highly effective 'hybrid' partnership models, it is important to re-examine the work, roles and professional identities of teacher educators as they endeavour to create and work in these new spaces.

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