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Narratives of Learning Through International Professional Experience

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Foreword

As the lorry bounced along the dusty road approaching the village in the Masai Mara, droves of children of all ages ran from their manyattas towards the side of the road, with some seeming to appear out of nowhere. They hung from the branches of acacia trees, peaked through cacti fences or ran barefoot alongside the lorry, waving enthusiastically, and chanting "Jambo teachers". I was filled with joyful anticipation, as were the 25 teacher candidates with me, who were eager to begin their practicum teaching these children. My bubble of enthusiasm burst abruptly when I noticed one candidate's wide smile transform instantly into a look of horror. She broke into uncontrollable tears as she stared intently at the thatched roofs of the mud manyattas where these children lived. When I approached her, she was speechless. Out of her backpack she pulled the picture book "The Three Little Pigs", which she had brought to read to the children here. She pointed to the straw house on the cover and exclaimed, "What was I thinking!" I echoed her sentiment, recognizing that I provided insufficient support selecting teaching resources to bring on this practicum. The honeymoon was over and questions of how well prepared any of us were for this international teaching experience began to emerge.

This was the first of many uncomfortable learning experiences I encountered co-facilitating this three-week international practicum in rural Kenya for three consecutive years. As I read each chapter of this remarkable book, I reiteratively thought, if only I had done so prior to facilitating international teaching practicums, I would have been so much more prepared to do so! Whether you are a seasoned veteran who has been involved in the provision of *International Professional Experiences* (IPEs) for many years or a novice thinking about embarking on this important aspect of twenty-first-century teacher education, the rich and varied insights in this book will provide inspiration, wisdom, and guidance for your journey.

My understandings of the complexities and benefits of international teaching practicums were expanded considerably not only over the course of my experiences leading them, but also through researching the impact of IPEs on the professional growth of teacher candidates and my personal professional growth as a teacher

educator (see Cantalini-Williams et al. 2014; Grierson and Denton 2012; Williams and Grierson 2016). The commonalities between IPEs, irrespective of their location or the institution they were provided through, became apparent when my colleague Judy Williams and I examined our experiences as leaders of IPEs in the Cook Islands and Kenya, respectively. Through researching the dilemmas we encountered, we also became aware of the lack of literature documenting the experiences of academics leading IPEs. Judy, together with her co-editors, Ange Fitzgerald and Graham Parr, and their Monash University colleagues, has responded adeptly to the challenge of enhancing understandings in this underexplored area.

Narratives of Learning from International Professional Experience addresses this important void in the literature in an engaging, accessible manner that will appeal to a broad spectrum of scholars and practitioners, whose interests span diverse locations, roles, content areas, and theoretical frameworks. The authors of each chapter do not hold back in revealing their dilemmas and discomfort mentoring candidates in these unfamiliar contexts, where they themselves may feel like a "fish out of water." They share their personal professional stories, those of teacher candidates, and/or mentor teachers, candidly with authenticity that provides a feeling of "being there" on the teaching-learning journey to diverse IPE locations across the globe. Readers are taken from the Cook Islands, to Malaysia, Italy, Israel, and South Africa—with salient examples of the linguistic, cultural, social, or political complexities of teaching, learning about teaching, teaching teachers, and leading IPEs, in each setting.

Within these pages, readers will develop insights that are universally applicable across all international practicums: for instance, the dynamic evolving process of identity building as academics, teachers, and community members in these unfamiliar environments, the importance of relationships, and the significance of developing in-depth understandings of the particular IPE context in "border crossing." Nuanced differences between these experiences and situation-specific understandings are also revealed. For example, the need to value the local culture and language, become immersed in the community, and responsively adapt to a relaxed "go-with-the-flow" style of teaching and learning in the Cook Islands is richly depicted by Babaeff in Chapter "Going with the Flow: Pre-service Teacher Learning in, About and with Community." The complexities of navigating discomfort as IPE candidates develop cultural awareness, and thoughtfully adapt to teaching classes of over 55 students, accustomed to living in poverty, in resource poor South African schools, are brought to life by Subban and Clemans in Chapter "Outside in: Learning from an International Professional Experience Program."

Moreover, within this important contribution to the literature, readers have the unique opportunity to explore multiple perspectives (e.g., IPE leaders, mentor teachers, teacher candidates) of the same international experience and/or to examine experiences in the same IPE location, over different time frames as encountered by different academic leaders. For example, perspectives of the South African IPE gleaned through participants' experiences over several different years are presented in Chapters "Self-Interest and Ethical Praxis Agendas in an International Teaching Practicum" and "Outside In: Learning from an International Professional

Experience Program." Similarly, different aspects and perspectives of the Cook Islands IPE are presented in Chapters "Going with the Flow: Pre-service Teacher Learning in, About and with Community" and "Learning from Leading: A Teacher Educator's Perspective of Learning Through Leading an International Professional Experience." Likewise, different perspectives of the Malaysian IPE are explored in Chapters "Pre-service Teachers' International Teaching Placement: Outcomes for the Accompanying Academic," "Acknowledging and Learning from Discomfort: The Learners' Perspective," and "Resilience, Global Threat, and International Professional Experience." Also, particularly novel is the inclusion of teacher candidates as co-authors of Chapter "Acknowledging and Learning from Discomfort: The Learners' Perspective." In lieu of interpreting the experiences of Zoe Davies and Cassy Eaton, Gillian Kidman has honored their voices and personal interpretations, documenting how these candidates made meaning of their own transformation during their Malaysian IPE.

There is something for everyone in this book, irrespective of which context, content area, or theoretical framework is of particular interest. Those interested in intercultural communication and multimodal literacy will be fascinated by Kahn-Horowitz, Mittelburg, Bell-Kligler, and Schultz's Chapter "Mentoring-Learning in a Cross-Language and Cross-Cultural Framework: Australian Pre-service Teachers and Israeli Mentor-Teachers," documenting how English speaking IPE candidates in Israel, navigated language barriers through gestural language as they interacted with mentor teachers and students in schools where Hebrew or Arabic were the language of instruction. Thought provoking to those interested in language and identity will be Tudball and Phillips' Chapter "Building Intercultural Competence and Professional Confidence Through Collaboration in an Italian IPE" exploration of how Australian, Mandarin speaking Chinese teacher candidates, discovered their professional identity and developed confidence and intercultural competence while teaching in Italy. Kidman, Lang, and Cacciattolo's use of mathematical sentences as metaphors to interpret their experiences as teacher educators during a Malaysian IPE will fascinate readers with an interest in mathematics. Phillips' analysis in Chapter "The Influence of an International Context on a Teacher Educator's Knowledge, Practice and Identity" of the process through which he engaged in restructuring his understandings of the importance of context as it relates to candidates' technological, content, and pedagogical knowledge during an IPE in Italy will appeal to those interested in technology in education. Although my international experiences were in a very different environment, Phillips' journey resonated with me. Following his participation in a Kenyan IPE, I recall a candidate questioning why the use of technology was so strongly emphasized throughout our pre-service program, as he had learned in Kenya that "there were no gizmos required to teach."

Another significant strength of this book is the wide range of theoretical frameworks that are used by the authors to analyze, interpret, and make sense of their own experiences and those of teacher candidates. For instance, readers will encounter the use of Boyer's (1998) pedagogy of discomfort, Giroux's (2005) concept of border crossing pedagogy, Mezirow's (1991) transformative learning

through "disorienting dilemmas," Bakhtin's (1981) dialogic theory and concept of "dialogue across difference," Deardorff's (2006) Model of Intercultural Competence, and Aikenhead's (1996) constructs of tourists, tour guides, travelers, and travel agents in cultural border crossing. Of particular interest to academics seeking to understand their experiences leading IPEs, will be Lang et al. (2016) nonlinear Model of Academic Competencies (AIC), which they reconstruct in Chapter "Pre-service Teachers' International Teaching Placement: Outcomes for the Accompanying Academic" and use to explore their experiences leading an IPE in Malaysia.

Narratives of Learning from International Professional Experience also promotes thinking critically about complex IPE issues. My lens became much less altruistic as I began to rethink the morality underpinning the Kenyan practicum I led, while reading Parr, Faulkner, and Rowe's exploration of self-interest and ethical praxis agendas in IPEs. Over the years, many candidates shared that they decided to attend our Faculty of Education because of the IPE opportunities. Undoubtedly, it was in the best interests of the institution to provide these experiences. Had we done enough to ensure this practicum was also in the best interests of the Kenyan students, teachers, and community partners? The authors of Chapter "Self-Interest and Ethical Praxis Agendas in an International Teaching Practicum" have set the stage for a conversation that, while perhaps uncomfortable, is important for all those involved in IPEs to initiate. In whose interest are, and should these experiences be, and who should benefit from them?

Although the primary focus of this compilation is on the multilayered insights derived through IPEs, as a secondary focus, the reader is also introduced to the organization of Monash University's exemplary IPE Program. There are many important insights for those seeking to build or refine a vibrant diverse international experience program. The overview of Monash's IPE program provided by the editors in Chapter "Monash University International Professional Experience Programme" briefly documents the evolution from the beginnings of a few loosely coupled international field experiences to a well-coordinated programmatic approach. The narratives in many chapters provide insights into the mentorship approach to bringing on new IPE leaders, as well as the orientation, IPE debriefing sessions, and context-specific supportive dialogical structures in place for candidates on-site throughout and following these practicums. Additionally, some narratives illuminate the recursive process of responsively adapting organizational aspects of this program. For example, in Chapter "Tourist, Tour Guide, Traveller, Travel Agent? Reflections on Leading and Learning from International Professional Experience," Fitzgerald documents her journey developing new IPE opportunities in diverse locations, in her role overseeing the Monash IPE program. In Chapter "Resilience, Global Threat, and International Professional Experience," Faulkner and Keary, together with Drew, detail a dilemma that provoked reviewing IPE risk management strategies and modifying the speed-dating-type questions used in the interview portion of the IPE candidate selection process, to focus more explicitly on resilience. They also reveal the complexities of many aspects of IPE risk assessment

and management—an important consideration in our uncertain twenty-first-century context.

There is little doubt that in our increasingly globalized world, preparing twenty-first-century teachers to respond to the challenges of teaching diverse learners from and in many different contexts is important. Meeting these challenges requires nurturing teacher candidates' intercultural competencies and providing experiences that will foster a global perspective—that is, an understanding that others in our world have different, equally valid, beliefs, values, lifestyles, and ways of knowing. This book documents how and why international practicum experiences have the potential to make a powerful contribution to fostering the growth of teacher candidates and teacher educators, enabling them to develop these competencies.

While the desire to make a difference in our complex twenty-first-century world fueled my interest in leading the Kenyan international practicum, I was initially unprepared for this role. The insights in this book would undoubtedly have enhanced my preparation. Through collaborating, critically analyzing, and sharing the depth and breadth of understandings derived through their IPE program, the authors of *Narratives of Learning from International Professional Experience* have ventured into uncharted territory and hence have begun to chart a course for others. In doing so, they will provide readers from around the globe, with the motivation, confidence, and insight to undertake, reflect on, research, and learn from international professional experiences. On behalf of scholars and practitioners interested in and/or engaged in providing IPEs, and the candidates who will take part in these experiences, I extend thanks to the editors and authors for their contributions to this remarkable book, which will enrich future IPE journeys immeasurably!

Arlene Grierson

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Contents

Chapter 1
Monash University International Professional Experience Program

Judy Williams, Ange Fitzgerald and Graham Parr

Introduction

This collection, *Narratives of Learning from International Professional Experience*, presents a variety of perspectives and experiences of learning about teaching and learning during professional experience (or practicum), in a range of global contexts. It is timely to explore this dimension of teacher education, and the personal and professional learning gained by pre-service teachers, their university and school-based mentors and host communities, as such programs are becoming increasingly popular in many universities. International teaching practicums in one form or another have been part of teacher education courses across the world since the 1970s (Cantalini-Williams et al. 2014; Parr and Chan 2015). In recent years, as researchers and policy-makers have developed a greater appreciation for globalising trends across the world, governments have talked more about increased global integration and international mobility in higher education, if they are to educate the next generation of citizens for better understanding and working with diversity and difference.

The scale of developments in this area can be seen in the growing numbers of students involved in international mobility experiences. A recent OECD (2015) report states that five million higher education students studied outside their home country during 2012/13, and that there has been a tripling of international enrolments in higher education between 1990 and 2013. These figures are the result of

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governments actively and strategically promoting international student mobility—in the form of inbound mobility experiences (i.e. international students travelling to a host country for some form of study or work-integrated learning) and outbound mobility programs (i.e. students travelling abroad to study or engage in work-integrated learning programs, amongst which teaching practicums are just one example). At the same time, higher education institutions have sought to gain greater market share in the international education marketplace by offering prospective students an internationalised curriculum that enhances the employability of individual students (De Wit et al. 2015).

In the field of teacher education, international (OECD 2010) and national reports (e.g. Mayer et al. 2014) have argued that there is an urgent need to better prepare the next generation of teachers to meet the needs of diverse student cohorts in multicultural schools. And so, along with the development of professional teaching standards that require teachers to 'nurture an appreciation of and respect for social, cultural, and religious diversity, and a sense of global citizenship' (MCEECDYA 2011, p. 4), interest has grown in formalized international professional experience (practicum) programs (see Quezada 2010). Along with this interest has come a body of research into international professional experience that investigates the benefits for pre-service students as they engage with unfamiliar cultures, curricula and practices in the process of learning and developing as teachers. A more recent development has been a body of research examining the work and identity of teacher educators who design the curriculum for these programs and/or who mentor the pre-service teachers before, during and after their practicum experience in an international setting (Parr 2012; Williams and Grierson 2016). The narratives contained in this collection contribute to this increasing body of research, and explore the professional learning of participants in one particular IPE program based in Melbourne, Australia, which was developed by the Monash University Faculty of Education.

An Overview of the Monash University Faculty of Education International Professional Experience Program

Monash University's *International Professional Experience* (IPE) *program*, on which this collection is based, supports pre-service teachers to participate in a 15-day teaching placement abroad as part of their education course. During this time, they are continuing their journey of learning to teach alongside local teachers who are their mentors. Usually, staff from the Faculty of Education are also present in country to support this learning experience, and to provide guidance as the pre-service teachers navigate new and unfamiliar professional and personal contexts. This experience diversifies their teaching, develops their capacities as globally minded citizens and engages them with local cultures through meaningful

relationships developed in schools, with students and communities. The host locations are early childhood settings, primary and secondary schools, currently in 11 countries—China, Cook Islands, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Italy, Malaysia, Nepal, South Africa, Switzerland and the United Arab Emirates—hosting approximately 180 pre-service teachers annually. School-based professional experiences are fundamental to any pre-service teacher education qualification. Through the IPE program, Monash University Faculty of Education is able to develop students as lifelong learners and career-ready professionals, who are equipped with an education that is both translational and transportable to a range of teaching contexts, both at home and abroad. This expands their abilities to respond to cultural diversity as graduate professionals, and optimises their employability. For many, it transforms their ways of seeing education and their identity as a teacher.

Research and Learning Through Narrative Inquiry

The professional learning of participants in the various IPEs showcased in this book is presented through the lens of narrative inquiry, but what do we mean by the term *narrative*? Narrative inquiry is a methodological approach that is increasingly used in qualitative research to uncover and unpack the lived experiences of people in a diverse range of educational and other contexts. This methodological approach utilises stories in the form of written, spoken and/or visual accounts of experience, which may form the collection of data, the presentation of research findings or both. Researchers collect and examine the storied experience of participants, then present these experiences in the form of a story or 'plot line' (Creswell 2013, p. 54). Alternatively, the participants themselves recall and document their experiences in narrative form, thereby becoming researchers in the process. Whichever approach is adopted, an essential element of narrative inquiry is its embeddedness in the social, political, cultural and temporal contexts in which the participants live. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) stated that 'narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus…Narrative inquiry is stories lived and told' (p. 20). They argued that narrative inquiry embraces three essential elements—personal and social interaction; a sense of time: past, present and future; and place. Each of the narratives contained in this collection draws on these three fundamental elements in some way. They include stories about people involved in IPE living, working and learning together, over time, and in particular geographic and cultural spaces. The ways in which the data and chapters are presented may differ in their narrative forms, but each author has utilised storying of experience in ways that take the reader into their world to better understand the complexities, challenges and rewards of working and learning in IPE.

From Placement to Program—Evolution of the IPE Program

The Monash University Faculty of Education IPE program has evolved over a number of years, and has involved numerous academic and professional staff, pre-service teachers and host schools. The following narratives have been written by us, the three editors, to provide an insight into the evolution of this program over the past 10 years or so. As academics experienced in developing and leading IPEs in different parts of the world, the narratives constructed by Graham, Judy and Ange illustrate the development of this program, beginning with the tentative first steps to establish one of the Faculty's pioneering IPEs in South Africa, to its position in 2016 as a University award-winning program.

Graham—Dreaming of a New International Practicum

In June 2009, our Faculty of Education had been managing just two short-term international teaching practicums for pre-service teacher education students—in The Cook Islands and in South Korea. Monash University's strategic plan spoke about deepening its transnational partnership with the recently established Monash South Africa. For its part, the Faculty of Education in Australia was considering short-term international practicums, as a way to help develop the skills and experiences necessary for its graduates to teach in multicultural settings. In this combination of circumstances, I dreamed of setting up and coordinating a new teaching practicum for our pre-service teacher education students in Johannesburg, South Africa. In September of that year, after a whirlwind three months of planning (including hundreds of emails, and Skype conversations with Craig Rowe, Manager of Community Engagement at MSA), the dream became reality. Nine carefully selected pre-service students and I were waiting for a bus beside the disconcertingly high security gates of Monash South Africa MSA, speculating about what lay ahead in this pilot three-week practicum. Numerous interviews and cultural orientation workshops in Australia had prepared us for a city of dramatic and sometimes disturbing cultural contrasts….

On leaving the imposing sandstone buildings of MSA, our bus passed tiny roadside fruit and vegetable 'stalls' hastily constructed from rocks from dusty nearby fields. 200 metres later, these makeshift stalls were suddenly replaced by a lavishly resourced, multi-storeyed independent school situated, again, behind high security gates and armed guards. Some students took particular notice; they would be teaching at that school. Minutes later, we were driving on the outskirts of an enormous informal settlement housing 60,000 adults and children in hastily constructed 'informal' dwellings. There was time for a quick look into a primary school squeezed behind barbed-wire topped concrete walls within this settlement, a school where some of our students would be teaching in future practicums. Soon, we were

driving through acres of manicured sporting grounds towards the carefully tended gardens of another well-resourced independent school, where other students would be placed. And so on.

The inequities in sociocultural and educational settings within just a couple of kilometres left us all breathless. At the end of the first day of that first South African practicum, we were all excited to ensure that this practicum would be valuable for us as visitors, for our South African educational hosts and their student learners. And we were determined that this would lead to further South African practicums into the future. But we were under no illusions. We would all (pre-service students and teacher educator mentor alike) be challenged in ways that no previous educational experience had ever challenged us. We were not mistaken.

Judy—Growing the 'Program Within a Program'

'*Congratulations on becoming the new Director of Professional Experience!*'. The Dean's words reverberated in my ears as I began to delve into the various aspects of my new role. As I explored what it meant to be DPE, I became increasingly aware just what a complex area of teacher education this is. Number one on the agenda was the ongoing struggle to find placements for all our students in local schools. In addition to this, there was the work around policy and procedures, building relationships with providers, and ensuring that the curriculum around professional experience was clear, enacted and supported. Not to mention a research agenda… Another part of my role was in the development of new locations for international professional experience. I was already involved in the Cook Islands practicum, and was now asked to scope out with colleagues, new placements in Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong. Just what 'framed' these placements, though I wasn't quite sure. We had been running the Cook Islands placement for nearly 20 years, and there was a floundering offering in South Korea. Kuala Lumpur and Hong Kong were in their infancy, and the relatively new South African placement was growing well. However, all of these experiences seemed to me to be like satellites—operating well in their own space, with their own leaders, but with very little coordination between them, despite the best efforts of the professional and academic staff involved. Based on my limited but growing experience in this area, I was aware of the huge learning opportunities and challenges for our students, but I was concerned about the ad hoc nature of the organisation of the placements. The huge logistical exercise involved selection and support of students and staff, health and safety concerns, funding and equity issues, calls for new placements to be developed in a range of locations, in a short period of time, research…what to do?

I called a meeting with my Co-director of Professional Experience to discuss the growing number of international professional experience offerings. We invited leaders of the various IPEs, as well as other staff with an interest in this area, to provide some insights into where they thought we might be heading. As I was

attempting to develop some strategies and consistent documentation, and to map out possible new locations, I suddenly realised what was happening. We had a 'program within a program'. This emerging IPE program needed direction, consistency and leadership. As my term as Director of Professional Experience was coming to an end, I was unsure what the next step would be. At the end of that year, I was both pleased and relieved to hear that a dedicated IPE coordinator was to be appointed to oversee this growing and increasingly significant program. It needed to be someone who understood the complexities of the work, who was good at developing relationships at local and global levels, who saw the value of the program and was prepared to put in the 'hard yards' to make it all happen. Most importantly, the new coordinator, Ange, would need the backing of the Faculty to make it all happen.

Ange—Forging a New Identity: The International Professional Experience (IPE) Program

> And the winner of the Vice-Chancellor's Award for programs that enhance learning for 2016 is …

It was getting towards the end of 2014, and I had nearly been away from Monash University for two years when I found myself being interviewed over the phone by three senior colleagues for a position back in the Faculty of Education. It was in the area of professional and school experience with a particular focus on international settings. I remember at the time that I really had no idea what a position with a title like that would entail. But I did think, sitting in my pyjamas in the Middle East in the dead quiet of a holy day morning, that it certainly seemed like worlds away from where I currently was.

In starting back in the Faculty in 2015, it soon became apparent that my role, which by this time had evolved into the international professional experience liaison, was twofold: bring processes and procedures to a somewhat disparate set of international offerings and grow these offerings through new partnerships and connections. Our international program was to become a flagship, something that would set the Faculty of Education at Monash apart. Goodness. Where to start? In many ways, because this was a brand new role, I was presented with a blank slate. Exciting and daunting in equal measures. Those early months were a blur of meetings, brainstorming and moving up the learning curve quickly. I was nearly drowning with information connected to the administrative, financial, risk management and logistical aspects of staging professional experience in international locations, both at a Faculty and university level. One early experience does stand out. I drew a panel of people together—students and staff who had participated in previous international experiences—to share with Faculty staff the benefits and challenges of this work as well as start to open up some dialogue about future

directions. It was here that a formal program was born. *The International Professional Experience (IPE) program* emerged from this presentation and the subsequent discussions as our new direction.

A number of milestones emerged along the way for the IPE program. Some of the highlights include the creation of a rigorous selection process, a clear approach to risk management, an increased focus on marketing and communication, securing government-funded scholarships to support student participation and the development of this research project as a way of sharing knowledge about the value of this work. Alongside these developments, partnerships were growing with the number of locations on offer doubling as well as growing student interest in being part of an enriching professional and personal opportunity.

> … the International Professional Experience program in the Faculty of Education.

As I hear our program being recognised for its contribution, I am on the cusp of passing the baton onto a new international professional experience liaison in 2017. I motion to the group, well over a dozen of us, to join me on the stage to collect our award. Many things flash through my mind, reliving what we—academic and professional staff alike—have collectively achieved over the past two years. I pause for a moment to gather my thoughts: What might the next exciting chapter in the story of IPE program have in store?

What's in a Word? Terminology and Key Concepts Explored in the Book

The terminology we use to bring meaning to our experiences matters. The words we use help to position what we say historically as well as in terms of our own personal stance and how we might connect with a construct, conceptually and theoretically. In the context of this book, there are a number of examples, where chapter authors may be referring to similar concepts or constructs, but using different words to capture their understandings and what it means to them. Connection with culture is one such example. *Multicultural* is a word that has been commonly used in our vernacular for decades to represent the presence and participation of numerous cultural or ethnic groups within a society. It is not a term, however, that is usually used to describe how we might connect with different cultural or ethnic groups and start to become aware of their ways of seeing and being in the world. *Intercultural* is a term that has emerged to better communicate the connections and relationships that take place between cultures with a greater emphasis on shared understandings. More recently, as a response to globalisation, *transcultural* has emerged as a way of describing cross-cultural connections and gives a sense of understandings extending through and across all cultures.

While subtleties of meaning and shared understandings are important, we do not intend for this book to be uniform or prescriptive about exactly which terms chapter

authors choose to bring meaning to their experiences. Readers will encounter a variety of terms across the chapters, with different authors providing insights into their own decisions on terminology, and their interpretations of concepts. While the authors featured in this book cover a wide range of professional experience locations, participants and experiences, there are some particular key concepts utilised throughout. Many of these are regularly found in the literature about international education, although they may have different meanings for different authors and audiences. Below, we outline some of the key concepts that are brought to the fore in this book, and present a broad understanding of the terms. Later, each of the authors details in their respective chapters their understanding and use of the concept in their particular IPE context.

Professional Learning in Boundary Spaces

In the context of the globalising activities we mentioned at the start of this chapter, there is a range of discourses that researchers have turned to in an effort to describe the challenges and rewards of professionally learning and developing in and across contrasting cultural and educational spaces. Giroux (2005) proposes the term 'borders' or 'border spaces' to describe the 'co-mingling', sometimes 'clashing' (p. 2), that can occur when individuals and groups involved in movement across the world encounter each other, bringing to the encounter their own particular experience of different cultures, languages, literacies, histories and educational disciplines. The process of mingling (and making sense of that mingling) and clashing (and seeking to resolve these clashes) is a crucial part of the pre-service teachers' and mentors' professional learning and development on their IPE. It is sometimes referred to in the literature, and in the chapters of this book, as a process of negotiation. Giroux calls it 'border crossing'. Each chapter illustrates and reflects on border crossing (or negotiation of borders), which is a feature of all the IPE programs presented in the book, although some draw on different frameworks to make sense of their experiences, such as the work of Aikenhead (1996).

Following is a short (but by no means exhaustive) list of some of the border spaces or 'borders' that are experienced or 'crossed' (as Giroux would say) in the IPE projects reported on in this book:

- *Geographic borders*—the Australian pre-service teachers and their Australian mentors are literally moving across often vast distances to teach and learn in a new country, with all of its different amenities, laws, institutions, protocols and expectations;
- *Economic borders*: sometimes on these IPEs, the Australian pre-service teachers are 'crossing over' from privileged school and university experiences, in Australia, to work with schools and students whose level of material wealth is vastly different from what they have been used to;

- *Cultural borders*: clearly, the pre-service teachers (and their mentors) encounter different cultures and cultural practices in the host country's schools and in their day-to-day living experiences in larger school communities or outside the schools altogether. There can also be extreme differences among the different schools in the host country, where the pre-service teachers are placed.
- *Institutional borders*: this border space encompasses the differences between what Monash University expects in terms of pre-service teachers practices and responsibilities and the host schools' expectations. It might also refer to differences among the institutions in the host country which the pre-service teachers and their Australian mentors move between in the course of a single international professional experience
- *Pedagogical borders*: pre-service teachers on an IPE invariably work in educational border spaces, where their own emerging ideas about teaching, learning, curriculum and perhaps classroom management must co-mingle and sometimes clash with those of the mentor teacher in the host country whose class they are working in.
- *Internal/personal borders*: the borders mentioned above generally represent phenomena outside the individual. Another type of border crossing that many IPE participants experience is internal to themselves, and concerns how they see themselves as professionals and their role in the IPE experience. This involves the evolution or transformation of identities as a teacher/leader/mentor/learner, and learning from navigating or negotiating personal 'discomfort zones' created by the challenge of external border crossing experiences.

Identity

Much of the focus of teacher education programs is on helping pre-service students to develop their knowledge and practical skills as classroom practitioners, and the narrative methodologies utilised in this book certainly detail how this happens in a range of IPE contexts. One of the particular benefits of using narrative-based research methodologies is that authors are also able to describe in nuanced ways how the pre-service teachers, academic staff and their mentors developed or changed in terms of their professional identities through participating in an IPE. Although it is difficult to speak for all authors in the book, it is fair to say that the narratives in this volume present broadly post-structural notions of identity, which suggest that one's professional identity as a pre-service teacher or mentor (or researcher) is dynamic, evolving and multiple. Identity, as discussed in this book, is not something that people on an IPE choose from amongst a range of options on offer, such as on a supermarket shelf. It is an unstable combination of an individual's developing sense of self, his/her social sense of self and others' perceptions of these two. As Bauman (2004) puts it, 'identities float in the air, some of one's own choice but others inflated and launched by those around' (p. 11). The

extraordinary range of IPE experiences—in culturally and educationally unfamiliar placement classrooms and staffrooms, and beyond these schools in company with others on the IPE—enrich and promote the development of academic, pre-service teacher and mentor identities described in the pages that follow.

Discomfort and Support

The literature on international teaching experiences, and our collective experiences as described in this book, suggests that IPE provides an overwhelmingly positive learning experience for participants. This is the central reason why such programs exist and are expanding. However, not all learning is achieved through personally enjoyable or comfortable experiences. 'Pedagogy of discomfort' is a purposeful teaching strategy, originally described by Boler (1999), which is underpinned by the belief that students (in any teaching and learning context) can learn in profound ways when they are outside their 'comfort zones'. It appreciates that the student may experience some degree of discomfort, but that this is necessary in order to prompt the student to question and reflect upon some fundamental beliefs, assumptions or practices. The intention is for the discomfort to be substantial enough for the student to be 'jolted' into reflecting differently about some of those beliefs, assumptions or practices, but it should not be so traumatic that it becomes distracting from, or even unhelpful in, the kinds of reflection and learning that are hoped for. Zembylas (2015) has argued that there might be overriding ethical reasons for a learner to be expected to endure severe discomfort when the outcome of that pain is profound learning. Almost all research literature that investigates the stories of people undertaking an IPE makes explicit reference to their experience of being 'out of their comfort zone', at least in the early periods of their practicum. One might argue that all international professional experiences involve some elements of pedagogy of discomfort. However, there are significant differences in the various pre-service teachers' responses to this discomfort, and ways the IPE university-based and school-based mentors are able to scaffold the students through this discomfort. As with all pedagogical strategies, there are risks associated with this, which should never be ignored by educators or researchers.

The Development of This Collection

Along with the significant growth of the Monash University Faculty of Education IPE program in recent years has been the growing recognition that this program was unique for teacher education in Australia in terms of its scope and processes, compared to IPEs provided by other universities. The distinctiveness of the Monash program also lies within the growing body of research that documents the stories and experiences of participants, and that highlights the educational

values of these programs from a number of different perspectives. Key staff in the Faculty believed that it was time to focus on the research that had already been undertaken in relation to the IPE program, and to foster and support continued research, through the development of this collection.

To share the learning inherent in these experiences, we three editors met to discuss the focus and purpose of this book in terms of how it would be distinctive with respect to existing publications, what the methodology of the research might be and the style of writing. Articulating our focus leads to the submission of a book proposal to Springer for an edited collection that would feature a narrative approach to documenting and critically investigating the professional learning gained from participation in a range of IPE programs, from a number of perspectives. With this in mind, invitations were extended to all who had taken a leading role in a Monash IPE in the last decade to submit an expression of interest, including a proposed abstract, for a chapter in the collection. All who had submitted expressions of interest participated in a half-day project workshop, where writing ideas and methodologies for the book were discussed. This helped to develop a shared understanding amongst all authors of the book's focus and methodology, particularly in relation to how a narrative approach was understood and enacted. Following this workshop, authors received feedback from editors on their abstracts and then embarked on the process of developing their chapters. Approximately six months later, the authors and editors participated in a two-day writing retreat where early drafts were shared, and all chapters received feedback from other authors in the book. Again, this collective process assisted in developing a shared vision and understanding of book, including identifying key themes emerging from the IPE and common frameworks that assist with making sense of this experience. Finally, revised drafts were reviewed by us as editors, and detailed feedback was given before completed manuscripts were submitted to the publisher. In the following chapters, you will read the outcome of this collaboration. Before that, however, we present an overview of the chapters and the key themes of each narrative.

Overview of Chapters

In this chapter, the editors of the collection have outlined the background and context of the Monash University Faculty of Education IPE program, discussed some of the key methodological and conceptual ideas underpinning the collection, and presented our own narratives about the evolution of the IPE program over the past decade or so. The first of the narratives of learning from IPE is presented in chapter "Tourist, Tour Guide, Traveller, Travel Agent? Reflections on Leading and Learning from International Professional Experiences", where Ange Fitzgerald takes us on her journey as leader of and within the IPE program, and presents her professional learning as the evolution of multiple identities: tourist/learner; tour guide/teacher; traveller/individual and travel agent/leader. In chapter "Pre-service Teachers' International Teaching Placement: Outcomes for the Accompanying Academic",

Gillian Kidman, Catherine Lang and Marcelle Cacciattolo continue the exploration of the impact of IPE on the professional learning and identity of academic leaders of these programs, when they discuss their experiences in Malaysia. They present one outcome of their leadership and collaboration, the model of Academic Intercultural Competencies (AIC). Chapter "Self-Interest and Ethical Praxis Agendas in an International Teaching Practicum: Promoting Synergies Through Transcultural Dialogue Across Difference" takes us to South Africa, where co-authors Graham Parr and Julie Faulkner (from Monash University) and Craig Rowe (community liaison with Monash South Africa) use narrative to investigate ethical tensions in leading the South African practicum over several years. They propose a dialogic conceptual framework—'transcultural dialogue across difference'—to explain how they and their students have negotiated a way through these tensions. The notion of community is also included in chapter "Going with the Flow: Pre-service Teacher Learning in, About and with Community", where Robyn Babaeff explores pre-service teachers' and academics' experiences of learning with, and within, school and local communities during the Cook Islands IPE.

A different perspective is offered in chapter "Mentoring-Learning in a Cross-Language and Cross-Cultural Framework: Australian Pre-service Teachers and Israeli Mentor-Teachers", when Janina Kahn-Horwitz, David Mittelberg, Roberta Bell-Kligler and Rachael Gelfman Schultz discuss their experiences as teacher educators in Israel hosting inbound Australian pre-service teachers. In this chapter, the authors examine how various stakeholders in this practicum dealt with the cultural and linguistic challenges of pre-service teachers teaching in schools, where English is not the language of instruction. Similar challenges are explored by Libby Tudball and Mike Phillips in chapter "Building Intercultural Competence and Professional Confidence Through Collaboration in an Italian IPE". Here, they discuss the experiences of pre-service teachers undertaking IPE in Prato, Italy, and in particular, how pre-service teachers gained a greater understanding of themselves and others in multicultural and multilingual Italian classrooms. We return to South Africa in chapter "Outside in: Learning from an International Professional Experience Program", where Pearl Subban and Allie Clemans (teacher educators from Monash University who were actually born in South Africa) explore the experiences of a group of 13 female Australian pre-service teachers and their academic leaders on IPE in Johannesburg. Through a series of narrative reflective cases, they show how the Australian pre-service teachers and teacher educators journeyed outside the familiarity of their 'home' country, and how they responded to the sameness of, and differences between, between the two countries. The use of ICTs in teaching during IPE is discussed by Mike Phillips in chapter "The Influence of an International Context on a Teacher Educator's Knowledge, Practice and Identity", where he turns the focus inward to explore how the impact of the context of IPE in Italy challenged his existing beliefs about the role of ICTs in student learning. Through these experiences, his understanding of his identity and practices as a teacher educator shifted from a focus on knowledge, particularly the interplay of technological knowledge with pedagogical and content knowledge, to deeper considerations of how the local context mediates these understandings.

Chapter "Acknowledging and Learning from Discomfort: The Learners' Perspective" brings us back to Malaysia, where Gillian Kidman and two pre-service teachers, Cassy Eaton and Zoe Davies, explore situations that took them well outside their comfort zones, and how these discomforting experiences actually contributed to their growing intercultural competencies and sense of self as global educators. Still in Malaysia, in chapter "Resilience, Global Threat, and International Professional Experience", Julie Faulkner and Anne Keary also explore pedagogies of discomfort when discussing the vexed issue of potential global threat impacting on IPEs, in this case, the fear of a perceived imminent terrorist attack. They show how and why reliance is an essential quality for those participating in IPE, anywhere in the world. The final narrative is presented in chapter "Learning from Leading: A Teacher Educator's Perspective of Learning Through Leading an International Professional Experience", where Judy Williams provides an exploration of the evolution of her professional identity as a teacher educator over the course of four year's involvement in IPE in the Cook Islands. She concludes that managing and negotiating relationships is at the core of the work of IPE, and that in this process, it is possible to begin to discover your *academic self.*

Whether you read this book from cover to cover, or dip into various chapters as interest and time permits, we hope that you gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the value, complexity and learning opportunities that are inherent in international professional experiences. We also hope that educators around the world can benefit from the insights shared by the authors in this book.

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Chapter 2
Tourist, Tour Guide, Traveller, Travel Agent? Reflections on Leading and Learning from International Professional Experiences

Ange Fitzgerald

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:

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Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.
(Frost 1916)

Robert Frost beautifully captures the notion of journey in his poem, shared above, *The Road Not Taken*. It prompts the reader to think about not any old journey, but one where a conscious decision about which path to follow needs to be made, with one option continuing on into the familiar and the other veering into the unknown. As this poem brings the metaphor that lies within this chapter to the fore, it segues into the experiences that will be shared and made sense of throughout this narrative.

The beginning of 2015 signalled the start of a journey for me, which involved overseeing the International Professional Experience (IPE) Program in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. The decision to embark on this journey was made at a crossroads period in my life and was to involve not only navigating a road less travelled but a path not yet trodden. A new role in the Faculty that required bringing together several existing international learning opportunities, and adding several new ones with a focus on moving from individual ventures to a programmatic approach, including formalizing the processes and procedures that would support such a move. This was, of course, in some ways exciting and energizing and in others daunting and overwhelming. I wasn't to know then what I now know two years down that unmade track, but my choice to venture into the unknown has made all the difference. It has presented me with opportunities that I would never had imagined, along with challenges that I didn't want to imagine; it has enabled me to grow both personally and professionally as well as to reflect on things that I could have done better. And importantly, it has impacted on student learning and their experience as a student of teacher education. It can be hard to put a finger on exactly what is different now, compared to when I first embarked on the IPE journey, but it is something that I do feel and recognize. As I continue to beat my way through the undergrowth, I am mindful that a new crossroad is about to present itself, requiring another decision. This will inevitably involve veering down a different road, but this time, I am presented with one that is not quite so unmade.

Given this timing and opportunity, it seems right to reflect on and make sense of my experiences leading and learning from the IPE Program these past two years. While the metaphor of a journey may be overused, it seems appropriate in this instance, given the nature of the work I have been engaged in, to continue down this narrative path. Though this is not to suggest simplicity—a straightforward moving from A to B. This journey has been one of twists and unexpected turns; it has been complicated at times and wrought with complexities. It has been a role that has meant different things to different people at different times. I have grappled with it as I have moved in and out of different spaces and contexts, always coming back to a key question—who am I in this space? Again, while an oft-used lens, notions of border crossing (Aikenhead 1996) seem appropriate here as a frame for navigating this experience and for shining a light on why and how this is challenging work. For Aikenhead (1996), border crossing refers to the cultures and subcultures that we

negotiate and move between as we navigate our worlds. Sometimes these crossings are straightforward because the context is familiar, and we are able to adapt and apply what we know to make sense of the experience. But sometimes the crossings can be challenging because the context, its ways of being and of making sense of the world, is completely different and perhaps even at odds with our own world views. Continuing on through this chapter, various aspects of the border-crossing paradigm will be drawn upon as well as my own reflective stories to make sense of the different identities that evolved and emerged, which I adopted and moved between, during my involvement with the IPE Program.

Prologue: A Starting Point

February 2015

5am. A brisk winter morning in Rome hits me in the face as I drag my cheap, and increasingly less compliant, suitcase towards the departures hall. I start to question my decision to skip a coffee before embarking on this next adventure. Good Italian coffee too. When hindsight kicks in, I will definitely have regrets. I have only been back at Monash, and in this new role as the IPE liaison, for less than a month with most of that time spent in Prato supporting our pre-service teachers on placement in local schools. What an energizing time that has been! The pre-service teachers who participate in the IPE program really inspire me. It is hard to put my finger on exactly what it is, but partly it is the ways in which they tackle the challenging times they face in and out of the classroom, and partly the confidence they take away from successfully navigating learning and teaching in a different cultural context. But as I stride into the Fiumicino Airport, this experience is already fading into the background. This has been the familiar aspect of this new position, having supported students in the Cook Islands over two years a few years back now, and now looking ahead to the unfamiliar. A series of firsts awaits. Setting up a new IPE in a new country with new partners that I haven't met yet. Strangely enough, I don't have a sense of being overwhelmed or concerned about what lay ahead, more excited and focused. I wonder if this is because this seems like a homecoming of sorts. This new IPE will be based in Israel and only two months earlier I was coming to the end of a two-year stint volunteering and living in neighbouring Jordan. As I pass through the sliding doors and into the warmth of the building, thoughts of the past and the future dissolve as I am quickly pulled aside by the Israeli border control (Israeli citizens based in Italy) charged with doing their job. Having negotiated several border crossings into Israel in the not so distant past, I was expecting this encounter, but not before my feet had left Italian soil. I knew I was in for a lengthy discussion, but I wasn't expecting it to go for over an hour. I was aware I would be asked a lot of questions, but I didn't expect to be fact checked. I was up for being challenged, but I wasn't expecting to have my suitcase emptied and each item scrutinized. Expectations. You know what they say about expectations? None of this might seem relevant or important on the surface, but after recovering from the initial confrontational aspects of this interaction, it seemed to me that there was something particularly prescient about this moment. Racing through check-in, security, immigration and boarding, I slump in my seat. Coffee regrets sneaking in. Sitting and thinking, wishing I could replay that incident and observe myself. It seemed like I was calm on the outside and accommodating of all requests, but I was definitely experiencing some turbulence within and my mind was whizzing to process the

> next move. Border crossings? Expect the unexpected. Be ready to be a shape shifter. Moving between different roles and requirements. Think on your feet. This experience of border crossing, physically and metaphorically, was sending me a message about what lay ahead. It was saying something about who I am and what I will be in this space, but in that moment it wasn't entirely clear. Not yet.

Who Am I?

This experience of an actual border crossing sparks in me a series of memories about what it is like to negotiate this space, which in this day and age essentially is about interactions with immigration officials, and it strikes me as interesting for a couple of reasons. Firstly, there is the preparation that goes on before hand to be ready for the experience from the prosaic (e.g. finding your passport, completing forms) to the more problematic (e.g. seeking a visa, contemplating the line of questioning) to the personal (e.g. staying calm, being organized). This leads to the second point, which is a certain level of perceptiveness you may bring to an experience, as you enter into and pass through this space. This might present itself in considering how to read the moment (e.g. making sense of body language and gestures) and then how to respond (e.g. to speak or not to speak). The reflection above captures a particularly turbulent experience of negotiating a border crossing, but I have a whole spectrum of interactions to draw upon. These range from a lively five minute discussion with an the immigration official in Norway about his time in Australia as a young man, wanting to chat before he would stamp my passport, to the detached robotic persona I seem to adopt as I file past most immigration check points across the world. Each border crossing requires in and from me particular levels of preparation and perceptiveness.

Therein lies the complexity. To successfully negotiate a border crossing, there is a requirement to know about or be aware of having to respond differently to different circumstances. There is something within this need for responsiveness that I find fascinating—how do we as individuals navigate this space so that we emerge unscathed and successful, and what does this mean in terms of who we are? This is why Aikenhead's extensive work on cultural border crossing, and the body of research that has stemmed from it, resonates with me. As a science educator, I first came across this work in relation to students' navigating between different ways of understanding science phenomenon. This involves moving between everyday interactions with science, which are often culturally embedded, and the ways in which science is depicted and disseminated in school, which is often through a Western lens. Scaling this up from the specific to the more general, as we move through our lives, we come across a mesh of cultures and subcultures (Jegede and Aikenhead 1999) that we may be more or less familiar with, that we need to interact with and navigate. What emerges through the literature in this field is that regardless of the context, we generally start to develop strategies that enable us to move

between different ways of being and doing, to enable us to operate effectively, more or less, in these different spaces. These metaphorical border crossings can take place numerous times on a daily basis. 'Generally' and 'more or less' become important words/phrases here because how well we fare in our border crossings depends on a range of factors, such as the dominant culture, our own cultural backgrounds and the process of enculturation we have, or have not, been involved in.

With the inherent challenges in cultural border crossings, it is not surprising that searching questions, like *who am I* and *how do I position myself in this space*, might be lurking close to the surface. However, in the border-crossing circumstances that I find myself in, raising questions of such an existential nature might seem just plain dramatic. But based on my recent experiences, it is this search for a sense of identity that I would like to explore. The multifaceted nature of overseeing an initiative such as the IPE Program has caused me to consider the different spaces that I work within and across as well as the different meanings my role, and by association myself, hold for the different stakeholders. It has become apparent to me that having the ability to take on different ways of being that best meet the needs of a situation, and being able to move fluidly between these spaces, is critical to how effective I am at navigating and negotiating the border areas of my work. In drawing again on my involvement in science learning and teaching, it has been interesting to ponder the notion that success in science education depends on teachers helping students to mediate cultural borders and to engage in some form of negotiated learning (Jegede and Aikenhead 1999). The metaphor 'teacher as culture broker' was first used by Stairs (1995) to make sense of a teacher's role in resolving cultural conflicts. For example, a science teacher who is a culture broker will guide their students in the act of border crossing between their everyday culture and the culture of science, helping them resolve any conflicts that may arise. Aikenhead (1996) conceptualized culture brokers in two ways as being like a *tour guide* or a *travel agent* with those doing the border crossing imagined as *tourists* or *travellers*. *Tour guide* teachers support students who require a high degree of guidance when border crossing, just like *tourists* in a foreign country on a guided tour. *Travel agent* teachers support students who require much less guidance when border crossing, just like world *travellers* in a foreign country making their own way around. These roles are not considered as dichotomies, but rather the differences being considered as a matter of degrees along a spectrum.

From tour guide to travel agent, tourist to traveller—what does conceptualizing who I am, and how I engage with border crossing in these ways, offer in terms of how I make sense of my experiences? To start with, it captures my imagination. At different times in the past two years, I can clearly envisage myself operating in each of these roles—as both border crosser and culture broker—and taking on the relevant identities to assist me in finding my way. So in using these four roles as a framework, I will now explore who I am in the IPE Program, and what that has meant for my work in this space from these perspectives.

Tourist: Me as Learner

June 2015

I did harbour nerves about travelling to India for the first time. India is one of those places – you love it or you hate it. At least that's what I had heard. While I'm at ease in moving outside of my comfort zone and enjoy a challenge, there was something slightly daunting about taking on this challenge with nine others, who you are meant to be supporting, watching on. About a week before departure, we were all squashed around a table in a tiny Indian restaurant in suburban Melbourne and enjoyed a laugh or two over a curry. While we were waiting for more naan bread, I started a discussion with the group about what they were most looking forward to in terms of this experience as well as what we were most anxious about. One by one, we moved around the table. The vibe was one of general excitement about the country and the different ways of thinking about and being in education that this experience would open up, followed by anxiousness about exactly the same things. I essentially felt the same way. I was most excited about this incredible personal and professional opportunity for the students, but, with a different twist, I was anxious about how I would mange myself while managing them. Managing is probably not quite the right word, but the sense of what I meant resonated. We will all be learners in this new space, navigating it together. If I am deeply culture shocked and you are all deeply culture shocked, how does this play out as we try to forge our way, side-by-side, through this experience?

This notion of tourist in the cultural border-crossing analogy is usually reserved for those needing a significant amount of support to negotiate and navigate an unfamiliar space (Aikenhead 1996). It is focused on the border crossers rather than the culture brokers. In relation to this narrative, the role of tourist could typically be allocated to many of the students who participate in an IPE. It characterizes their interactions in a new cultural context inside and out of a classroom setting, which are often tentative and uncertain. While I agree with this notion generally, my experiences suggest that there is a need to broaden our understandings of who constitutes a tourist, and when. For me, a tourist is someone who is a very much a learner, though that is not to suggest that the other three roles (tour guide, traveller and travel agent) explored in this chapter do not involve some level of learning too. There is a sense to the concept of tourist that you are at an entry level or venturing into a space for the first time. While my role had me positioned as a culture broker, my work in India found me personally in unchartered territory. Finding myself in this situation resulted in me positioning myself as a learner, and certainly as someone who was very much a tourist in this context.

The duality captured in this example—of being a border crosser while supporting border crossers—highlights the complexities inherent in this role, as well as raising a number of implications. As a culture broker, you need to find a level of comfort in acknowledging your tourist status before seeking avenues of support to help guide you in this space. Not positioning myself as the knowledgeable expert but instead as a co-learner alongside my students made sense to me and was ultimately something that lead to a richer experience. There was significant benefit in being honest about not knowing all the answers, or fully understanding what the experience would be like, by instead demonstrating an ability to be open to

whatever presented itself and willing to solve problems as they arose. Perhaps I was acting as a role model, in a sense, for how a tourist might act and respond in this cultural context. Taking a co-learner approach also had a neutralizing influence, as the responsibility and pressure of having to know or organize everything did not fall to one person but was instead shared across the group, which ultimately spread the sense of ownership over the experience. While my anxieties about managing the group and myself in India did not amount to anything serious, it is interesting to ponder what the impact of not smoothly transiting this crossing might be.

Tour Guide: Me as Teacher

> *January 2016*
>
> At first I thought I must be a slow learner. Every time I worked alongside a group of students on IPE I seemed to stumble across an approach and/or strategies that were better or more effective in supporting their learning and growth in a new cultural context. Whenever this happened, it was one of those moments where you want to slap your forehead and exclaim - *why didn't I think of doing that before?!* This time, with the group in Sharjah, I finally felt like our approach to our weekly formal debriefing sessions was really working. By really working, I mean it was generating rich professional discussions, insights about identity and place in education, and incredibly thoughtful reflections about learning and teaching in a different, and often challenging, cultural context. The conditions also seemed to be more nurturing – smaller groups, couple of set questions, weekly changes to the dynamic, more focus on drawing on their journaling to inform the conversation. Going back to my initial thought (being a slow learner!), I stood back and considered this more. Of course, we get better at things with time. That is the learning process. But this was not just about learning, it was about teaching too. It was about me engaging with this experience as a teacher/facilitator and responding to the needs of the students as well as the context, not only based on what had happened in the past but what was happening in the current situation as it unfolded. I was bringing a particular level of awareness and responsiveness to orchestrate a positive learning experience.

Some time ago, Phelan et al. (1991) proposed a model for understanding the multiple worlds that students moved between, which helped in making sense of the ways they experienced their border-crossing transit. Their data uncovered four types of transitions, which are still relevant to current ways of thinking about border crossings: smooth, managed, hazardous and impossible (Phelan et al. 1991). Congruence between the worlds to be traversed supports a *smooth* transition, whereas differences between the worlds, no matter how subtle, require transitions to be *managed*. When the worlds to be transited between are diverse, this can lead to a *hazardous* transition, while highly discordant worlds cause a resistance to transit, leading to an experience which is virtually impossible to manage. To enable a smooth transit between everyday and new cultural experiences, the requirements of a border crossing must be made explicit. Explicit, in the sense, that there is an understanding of the ways of being and acting in that space that are acknowledged as appropriate and acceptable. The role of a tour guide (e.g. teacher) is to assist in helping to make these cross-border transitions accessible to tourists (e.g. students).

The notion of being a culture broker re-emerges here, characterized as resolving cultural conflicts as they arise.

In the reflection shared above, my role as a teacher focused on providing the students with ways to make sense of their classroom experiences in a different cultural context by identifying the learning taking place, the problems they were encountering and the possible impacts on their future. It is worth considering the multifaceted nature of the transition inherent in the IPE Program. In that, the border experiences of students are not only positioned in the classroom, but in terms of their journeys into the general cultural milieu of a location as well. To navigate these spaces, students are involved in extensive briefing sessions prior to departure, which start to prepare them for what lay ahead. Particularly useful in these sessions is inviting past participating students to speak about their lived experiences of an IPE and how they managed the challenges they faced. However, there are many aspects of supporting students that take place in situ and are responsive to their needs in that moment. This highlights that even within one location, different students can experience border crossing in varied ways, ranging from smooth to virtually impossible and an individual might even move between these different states (e.g. managed to hazardous) depending on what they face. What arises from these understandings is an important consideration about how to support students in these situations, that is, how to be a tour guide/teacher. It is certainly not a one size fits all approach or a matter of being didactic in telling what needs to happen when to smoothly traverse this experience. It is more about drawing on a diverse range of strategies and resources in ways that are known to be appropriate or useful for that particular cultural context.

Traveller: Me as Individual

February 2016

Anyone who does this kind of work greets the question – how was your holiday? – on their return to the office with a wry smile. Natural instinct is to blurt out it was no holiday, more like school camp but lately I have been working at keeping those words in my mouth. It is not that I think that we shouldn't talk about the nature of this work and highlight its complexities, challenges and rewards; we absolutely should. I also think that someone who asks a question like that probably doesn't get what these experiences are trying to achieve! But I don't want to overplay that this experience is all work, and that I don't get some kind of personal enjoyment and growth out of spending time in another country. Of the places I visit, Israel holds a special place in my heart mainly because of my strong ties to this region. As I roam the streets of Haifa, I greatly value being able to interact with Arabic-speaking Israelis in their native tongue, no matter how hashed it may be, and feel very lucky be able to benefit from the surprise and the warmth these interactions bring. The man at the end of the street always sneaks me a couple of freshly cooked falafel as I wander past, and I like to think that is because I reached out too, wanting to connect. The woman at the nearby sheesha coffee shop waves me away when I try to pay for my evening hot chocolate. No, we are friends, she says, I don't take money from a friend. Her name is Ibtisam, which means smile in Arabic , so I do then merge back into the night. But this is not just about

having a shared spoken language. I am fortunate enough to have stories from around the world of connections like these. It is enough to ibtisam/smile, a universal tool of communication, and keep my heart and mind open.

Somewhat different to the tourist is the traveller. In the cultural border-crossing analogy, the traveller refers to someone who needs much less guidance and support as they transit in and out of new territory (Aikenhead 1996). They are more autonomous and capable of negotiating different cultural spaces, but benefit from the insights of, and being challenged to think differently by, someone in a facilitator-like role. Like the tourist, the traveller has traditionally been allocated to border crossers rather than culture brokers. In relation to this narrative, me adopting the role of traveller may seem self-indulgent and perhaps unnecessary. Not to justify my own exploring, but being able to engage in my own cultural learning, and to gain lived experience in transiting different cultural spaces, seems critical in terms of how I can ultimately prepare myself to better support students throughout an IPE. As a traveller, I am able to draw on my own experiences to share relevant stories to assist others in reflecting on their transits, as well as make better informed decisions related to what might be considered appropriate or acceptable in a particular context. Given this role involves working with partners and service providers in different locations, having some locally based knowledge and experiences is useful in fostering positive relationships.

Again, in identifying as a traveller, the complexity of occupying multiple roles in this space is apparent. While honing my own abilities in smoothly transiting between different cultural spaces—countries, communities and classrooms—I am conscious of being present to help manage the transits of others, both students and local partners. In contrast to being a tourist, the traveller should bring a certain level of capability and confidence to this work. In adopting this role, there is still the notion of co-learning, but there is also an ability to engage with a different cultural context on a deeper level, and to pay attention to the nuances inherent in that context. There is a sense of moving from the bigger picture, which may initially involve survival and getting by, to finer details, such as immersion and getting involved. The implications of these complexities are embedded in the importance that is placed on honing a particular set of skills and gaining a range of experiences. Unlike the tourist, being a traveller involves a certain level of willingness to share and critically reflect on the border-crossing mistakes and blunders made to further the learning of others.

Travel Agent: Me as Leader

Ongoing, 2015-2016

It can be hard to not get caught up by and sucked into the drama that can be part of an IPE. Although, it seems to be human nature to want to know the warts and all stories – what happened to whom and what did we do about it? - it is like the notion of the train wreck. We don't want to look, but we can't look away. And sure, there have been a number of

> incidents and accidents in the last couple of years that I could and do share. For me, however, there are some subtle differences in telling versus communicating the successes and challenges of an IPE. Perhaps what is lost in the telling, but captured in the communicating, is the sense of learning from the experience, the grappling for answers and the problem solving about what could be done differently. Communication has certainly been an important component in my role as a leader. In some ways I feel like a centre point from which the program pivots, in and out, to and from students, their families, my colleagues and our partners across the world. Inward and outward-facing in our education community. An extra head to think things through, a set of ears actively listening, a set of eyes on the look out for possibilities and pitfalls, and a voice for which to communicate and advocate for the needs and concerns of all involved. My experiences leading and supporting the IPE program have required me to move beyond getting caught up in the telling of the stories, to not overly invest in the drama and the hype, and instead engage in open and honest communication. Being aware of a shift from telling the stories to communicating the messages. In acknowledging this, I genuinely experienced a change in how I view myself as a leader, from simply moving through a number of tasks in a more reactive way, to participating in a way that involves a more critical appraisal of what is happening, why and how to respond.

Travel agents, such as tour leaders, support the navigation and negotiation of border crossers, but their focus is usually on travellers rather than tourists. As mentioned earlier, transitions from a culture or subculture to another requires managing. One way of enabling a smooth passage is through the development of academic bridges (Aikenhead 1996). An academic bridge is constructed from multiple perspectives (e.g. historical, sociological, social issues) and plays an important role in helping travellers manage their border crossing. This notion of the bridge was encapsulated in Pomeroy's (1994) cross-cultural agenda and is engendered in this quote: 'bridge the world view of students and that of Western science' (p. 63). In the context of the IPE Program, the bridges that we hope to create for students enable them to gain access from their current world views to the different world views and realities of new cultural and classrooms settings. It is important to acknowledge that the intention in bridge building is not of enculturation or assimilation into the characteristics or norms of another culture, but instead acculturation. This may seem like a subtle shift, but acculturation is a process of modification and adaption to accommodate different ways of being rather than acquisition. This distinction is important because it highlights finding ways to fit in, while maintaining one's own identify.

One aspect of the roles of a travel agent is to provide encouragement for travellers to further their interest and engagement in a topic or issue. Generating a need to know supports their ability to negotiate the border crossings they face as they construct their own ways of being in this new space, and develop ways to articulate and critique their experiences. An important aspect of this leadership position, which is alluded to in the story shared above, is the interchange between being a travel agent and a role model. This position is about encouraging all involved to really delve into their border-crossing experiences and to face up to the triumphs along with the challenges. In leading and fostering my own reflective practices and communicating the learning I am engaging in, I am in turn modelling approaches that both students and partners could adopt to support their learning, as we negotiate and navigate these new spaces together. The introduction of this leadership role to

the IPE Program has played an important part in filling what previously was a gap —the provision of a central person to liaise with students, staff and partners. While previous IPEs had been successful, in terms of border-crossing transits, having a key person to turn to makes a significant difference when clarity or support is required.

Making Sense of It All

In revisiting the poem that opens this chapter, Frost hints at the complexities inherent in the decisions we make about the paths we choose to take and the journeys we embark on. They are certainly not always linear or straightforward. My experiences in the past two years certainly attest to this, although it becomes interesting to ponder the added complexities that are apparent when a journey involves the crossing of borders, both actual and metaphorical. Aikenhead's (1996) work provides a useful backdrop for making sense of this navigation and negotiation process by highlighting the work required to move back and forth between different contexts as smoothly as possible. The framing provided by Aikenhead's four constructs—tourist, tour guide, traveller and travel agent—helps to capture and make further sense of the messiness of border crossing. In my involvement in IPE, I was moving back and forth, managing my own experiences as border crosser (tourist and traveller), as well as culture broker (tour guide and travel agent) to support the crossing of others.

As I reflect on the continuous shifting that occurred between my roles of learner and leader, it becomes apparent that this experience was much less about changing myself to manage a situation, and much more about adopting a constantly evolving sense of self. My narratives may give a sense of an evolution of my identity in these border-crossing spaces that is linear or progressive. The reality was, however, that I was required to draw upon aspects of being a learner and a leader all of the time. It was just that different dimensions of these identities were required to emerge, to be foregrounded, at different times for different purposes. The experiences reflected upon in these narratives certainly speak to Kamler and Thomson's (2006) understandings of identity, which suggest that this construct is plural in nature and that multiple identities may form in response to specific contexts and experiences. Of particular interest to this narrative, and the development of my own identity as a learner and a leader of the IPE program, is the notion that identity is not fixed, but always under construction, being made and remade as we live out an experience (Kamler and Thomson 2006).

Framing my experiences using aspects of border crossing proved useful in making sense of the spaces I found myself moving between and within these last two years. But it has left me pondering of what value these insights might be as I approach a new crossroad in my journey. I will be moving into an existing role in the Faculty—Director of Professional Experience (DPE)—which will essentially involve me overseeing and supporting all of our student placements. This will

require negotiating a range of different settings, each with their own culture and ways of being, such as early learning centres, kindergartens, primary schools, secondary schools and alternate education settings (e.g. museums, zoos, etc.) situated in urban areas through to regional and rural locations across the state and country. I will be taking up the mantle of leader and learner yet again.

My ponderings have resulted in three key insights. Firstly, border crossings do not exist only in the world of international travel or in cross-cultural partnerships, even though that is the way they have played out in this narrative. This construct equally has a role in local contexts wherever there are spaces that have us moving out of familiar territory into unfamiliar situations or circumstances as my new role will surely attest to. Secondly, taking the time to reflect on these experiences, and becoming aware of the evolving rather than changing nature of how I come to be in different circumstances, has provided me with understandings and a heightened sensitivity to the importance of being responsive to the context. A skill that I hope will hold in me in good stead as I embark on my journey as the DPE. Third and finally, this narrative brings to the fore the complexities inherent not only in border crossing and identity work, but in the development of genuine partnerships. A reality that is a constant grapple in the professional experience space and one that I will become more attuned to as I meander down this new track.

Epilogue: Coming to a Close

October 2016

6.30am. Looking out the window, I can see a brisk morning in Zurich awaits me as the wheels of my plane screech to a halt on the tarmac. A thought flicks through my mind – I should have tried to get some more sleep on this red-eye special. But in a flash it is gone, I will worry about and feel the effects of a long day later. A soundtrack of mooing, tinkling cowbells and distant yodelling greets me as my expensive, ultra slick suitcase glides into the train carriage ahead of me and I am whisked from one airport terminal to another before exiting out into the fresh air. Ready for my reconnaissance trip to Switzerland and the beginnings of a new IPE partnership. Mindful of how many of the students tend to approach travel (casually!), I have done very little to prepare myself in getting from the outskirts of town to the city centre. I want to experience this new location in a similar way to how they might approach it. How easy or hard is this to manage? Without too much hassle, I negotiate buying a ticket for a tram that will take me close to my accommodation. How incredibly straightforward is public transport in Europe? Amazing. Announcements in English alert me to my destination and I jump off the tram only to realize that I actually have no idea which direction to head to find my hotel. North, south, east or west? It's really anyone's guess! A moment of hesitation, but then the situation is quickly rectified by venturing into the nearest hotel and asking for some assistance. How simple are things, in general, in Europe? Fabulous. Hotel found, luggage dumped, search for coffee on. As I sit in the sunshine, outside a café that looks like it belongs in a gingerbread village, my thoughts catch up with me. This will most likely be the last time I am setting up a new IPE in a new country, with new partners that I haven't met yet. My superficial (and somewhat tongue-in-cheek) smugness about flash luggage, easy travelling and cute locales aside, this is a strange feeling to grapple with. It feels even stranger when I consider the experience

that this moment bookends. It is not that these things get easier – that is not the right word – but perhaps it is about a certain level of becoming more comfortable and confident with the process. I feel like I have a sense of knowing what to do when certain circumstances arise or trust that I will know how to react when faced with an unexpected challenge. Maybe this level of reassurance is directly connected with coming to terms with who I am, or who I need to be, in this space. I think in the past two years or so I have developed an in-depth knowledge of how to juggle my multiple identities, and a more nuanced understanding of which version of me needs to be foregrounded and when. In this moment in this new city, as the sun warms my face and my coffee disappears, I can't help but smile and embrace my inner tourist. Or perhaps after all this time, it is traveller? Though you don't have to scratch too far beneath the surface to recognize that the tour guide in me is taking mental notes to share with the students (you need to know a café latte in Zurich is around $7!). Meanwhile my travel agent self is composing a list of questions to share with our partners in the coming days (where can you find a cheap coffee in this city?!). If only the border work were this simple. This work is messy, tangled and complex, but that is also where the beauty and interest lies. The good things aren't meant to come easy, right?

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Chapter 3
Pre-service Teachers' International Teaching Placement: Outcomes for the Accompanying Academic

Gillian Kidman, Catherine Lang and Marcelle Cacciattolo

Introduction

There is a long research trail exploring the benefits of international education experiences for the learning of students in higher education (e.g., Bennett 1993; Deardorff 2006; Northcote et al. 2014). However, it is only recently that research has begun to focus on accompanying academics and the impact of international professional experiences on their professional and personal well-being (Casinader, in press; see also the many authors in this book). Co-authored by three teacher educator researchers who were accompanying academics on an international teaching placement in Malaysia, this chapter joins the range of emerging literature that investigates a particular international teaching placement with a particular focus on the experiences of the accompanying academic rather than the pre-service teachers. The chapter also provides a deconstruction/reconstruction of the model of academic intercultural competencies (AIC), which we three co-authors proposed in an earlier publication (Lang et al. 2016) as a valuable way for generating insights into the experience of being an accompanying academic on such a placement.

The AIC model that is central to the analytical work of this chapter was developed to depict and investigate our experiences during a Global Education Practicum (GEP) in Kuala Lumpur (KL), Malaysia, in 2015. Through this model, we determined that the growth of our own intercultural competency was not linear,

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and this appeared to be in line with recent research that showed the nonlinear growth of accompanying academics' Cultural Dispositions of Thinking (Casinader 2014). This finding was significant since earlier models (e.g. Bennet 1993; Deardorff 2006) in the literature had reported that the development of students' intercultural competencies tended to follow a linear progression.

In this chapter, we unpack each element of the AIC model, to explain our intercultural competency trajectory while on an international teaching placement. We show that our experiences on that placement enhanced our understanding of the shifting and variable role of the accompanying academic on global education practicums. Before we do this, we explore the conceptual framework underpinning the model's representation. To do this, we want to take you on a journey down mathematical memory lane and share a narrative that may generate some discomfort in you as a reader depending on your memories or associations with mathematics. This is a deliberate strategy.

Early mathematicians G.W. von Leibniz (1646–1716), Leonhard Euler (1707–1783), John Venn (1834–1923) and finally Georg Cantor (1845–1918) developed and refined what became known as the Venn diagram and its associated theory to represent statements of logic concerning relationships as components of a universal set. Venn diagrams are commonly associated with the discipline of mathematics, but we are conscious of course that they have been used in a number of other disciplines in the hundreds of years since they were developed. Our AIC model uses a simple Venn diagram to represent the relationships between three aspects that contribute to an academic's intercultural competencies while accompanying pre-service teachers on an international teaching placement. In Fig. 1, we represent these aspects within a universal set we call "U", which constitutes our international professional experience as accompanying academics on a placement in Malaysia. Readers may be aware that the language and representation of "sets" became the basis of the "new math" movement of the 1960s and 1970s across English-speaking and some European countries (Quine 1982). Perhaps you recall from primary school that according to "set theory", the objects in a collection are called *elements*

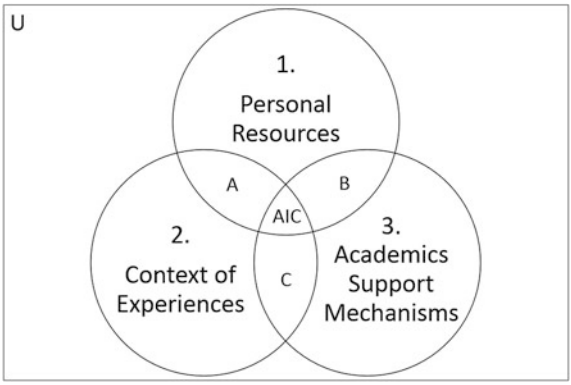

Fig. 1 Academic Intercultural Competencies (AIC) model (modified from Lang et al. 2016)

{x}. The three "sets" drawn from our AIC model are *personal resources, context of experiences* and the *academic's support mechanisms*.

From these sets, it is possible to identify certain "elements", which in our study include concepts such as *content and pedagogical knowledge*, *school policy and student age*, and *self-sought and collegial support* (see Table 1). If mathematics is not a strong part of your academic background, please bear with us for a moment, while we take you further down the mathematical memory lane by examining Table 1.

As mathematicians, we would observe the notation $x \in S$ shows that x is an element of S or that S "contains" x. Therefore, we can say that *content and pedagogical knowledge* are elements of the *personal resources* set. When all elements in all sets in a universal set are considered, we refer to the *union* U of the universal set. When elements are common to any or all of the original sets, we refer to the *intersection* $\cap$ of the sets. The reality of any teaching situation involves a combination of many elements within these sets. For example, when *content and pedagogical knowledge* from the *personal resources* set are impacted by *school policy* from the *contexts of experiences* set, the two items intersect and together they influence our behaviours. A set of elements in a collection is defined through the use of curly brackets. Table 1 provides a summary of the framing of the AIC's three sets {1, 2, 3} [{personal resources, context of experiences, academic's support mechanisms}] and the corresponding intersections {A, B, C} in the universal set U —our international professional experience in Kuala Lumpur.

The AIC (see Fig. 1 above) employs three circular areas {sets} (U of the universal set) to represent three subsets of the universal set {1, 2, 3} and the areas overlap the intersection $\cap$ of the sets {A, B, C}, resulting in the formation of eight areas (1, 2, 3, A, B, C, AIC and U).

Each area or {set} can be reviewed as a stand-alone factor in the form of an ***Intra-Action***. *W*e can also explore the ***Inter-Action***, or intersection $\cap$ of the sets,

Table 1 The sets and elements of the AIC

Intra-Actions Union U of the universal set	**Inter-Actions** Intersection $\cap$ of the sets
Personal resources S = {$x \in$ PR} 1 = {confidence to …, curriculum documents, pedagogical knowledges, commitment to …, content knowledges $\in$ Personal Resources} *Context of experiences* S = {$x \in$ CE} 2 = {location of placement, school location/accessibility, school policies, student age/ability $\in$ Context of Experiences} *Academics' support mechanisms* S = {$x \in$ ASM} 3 = {self-constructed, self-sought, collegial, resources $\in$ Academics Support Mechanisms}	1 $\cap$ 2 = A 1 $\cap$ 3 = B 2 $\cap$ 3 = C

between the elements. We are using the notion of Intra-Actions within each element of the AIC {1, 2 and 3}, then looking at Inter-Actions {A, B and C}. Through all of this, it is important to note that our emphasis is on *Actions*—what we did, what we decided, etc. Inter-Actions as identified above (see Table 1) are represented using set theory that is mathematically aligned with Venn diagrams.

If mathematics is not an area of strength for you, we suspect that you, our reader, are feeling a degree of discomfort as you attempt to understand our story through a mathematical lens. Perhaps you were part of a generation of children who experienced "new math" in the 1950s and 1960s, with its strange symbols, and the requirement of a precision and maturity of language. Perhaps some of what we are speaking about here may be making some sense to you. But perhaps "new math" passed you by altogether. Perhaps you have always been uncomfortable with mathematics. If you *are* uncomfortable, and if you *are* feeling a degree of discomfort as you read, then we sympathise. We suggest you are now possibly feeling some of the discomfort that we felt when we first experienced an international teaching placement. We have deliberately situated this opening to our chapter within a range of mathematical discourses and symbols. We assumed that many readers would not be comfortable with our use of these discourses and symbols, and so we anticipated that writing in such a way would provoke feelings of distress. We hoped that this would help you, our reader, to more fully understand and empathise with our discomfort we will go on to detail in the pages hereafter.

Please bear with us for just a moment longer, while we pursue the logic of our argument using set theory to its conclusion. In Fig. 1, you can see that we experienced intercultural growth resulting from the intersection of two or more elements of the AIC model. We argue that AIC does not develop as a result of any singular set element, but rather as an intersection of two or more elements. For example, Gillian can outline her intercultural growth (AIC) from a base of *{Personal Resources}*. Her element intersections $\cap$ of the sets are shown as A and B on Fig. 1. Marcelle experienced growth from a *{Academic's Support Mechanism}* base and uses A and C to represent her element intersections $\cap$. Catherine uses B and C to represent her growth pathway from a base of the *{Context of Experiences}* through either *{Academic's Support Mechanism}* or *{Personal Resources}*. None of us experienced a permanent state of discomfort on the GEP, so we feel it is inappropriate to continue any mathematical discomfort you may be experiencing. However, for the remainder of this chapter, we will intersperse the mathematical lens as a metaphor for representing and making sense of our discomforting experiences.

How we navigate through pedagogical discomfort when meeting the challenges of an international teaching placement is a matter of concern for all educators who are committed to global education. In this chapter, we present our journey as an example of the ways in which academics can embrace and make sense of alternative world views. In the next section, we present a summary of the literature that informed the development of our AIC model overall and each of the "sets" in that model, i.e., the Personal Resources set, the Context of Experiences set and the Academic's Support Mechanisms set.

Literature Informing Our Model

Any academic accompanying pre-service teachers on an international placement brings with them a rich range of *Personal Resources.* This is the title we give to set 1 in our AIC. We include in amongst these resources the collection of life experiences that a teacher brings to their teaching, be they in-field or out-of-field. Examining a teacher's Personal Resources makes it possible to identify what is immediately present and what is not immediately present—i.e. what the teacher *needs* to adapt in order to meet the particular teaching challenges he/she encounters. Adaptive expertise, according to Holyoak (1991), is the ability to apply knowledge effectively to novel problems or atypical cases. According to Simmons et al. (1999), adaptive expertise refers to cognitive, motivational and personality-related elements as well as habits of mind and dispositions. As teachers adapt to and work within different educational environments, they construct their knowledge and beliefs "from the perspectives of self in relation-to-social context" (Simmons et al. 1999, p. 948). As academics accompanying pre-service teachers on international placements, we each found ourselves tapping into our personal experiences in different ways at different times.

The second set in our AIC model is titled *Context of Experiences*. When we conducted a search for literature related to short-term International Professional Experience programs, we found that there is usually some mention of the importance of context in published articles. However, the discussion of context is more often related to the student experience than to the experience of the accompanying academic. For example, Campbell and Walta (2015) focus on the ways pre-service teacher comments on the first GEP program frequently related to accommodation and cultural differences. They assert that "PSTs commented on the problematic issues of finding the hostel from the airport; the conditions of the hostel including air conditioners not working and cold showers; difficulties finding food, and the inappropriate allocation of bedrooms" (p. 9). Their focus is on the effectiveness of the pre-departure orientation programs for pre-service teachers, but there is no consideration given to the value of such programs for preparing the accompanying academic.

Similarly, Barkhuizen and Fervok (2006) mention context as a positive and a negative aspect of the student experience. The reflections of the Hong Kong students who undertook a short-term placement in New Zealand mention context in terms of New Zealand cultures, the teaching environment and students' personal growth. Generally, the students were surprised at how different New Zealand culture is compared to what they expected and they made many comments related to the food. The environment and negotiating public transport also featured as a theme. These authors concluded that students' expectations and actual experiences are interrelated in complex, sometimes unexpected, ways. Here again, though, their attention is on student perspectives, and not on those of the accompanying academic.

Against this trend of focusing on students only, Parr (2012) wrote an essay inquiring into his own experiences as a teacher educator "leader" on a short-term international professional experience program in Johannesburg, South Africa. In the essay, he reflects on the "complex reworking" of his "intellectual and emotional responses" (p. 99) to razor wire used by his own country to fence in refugees and the appearance of razor wire around almost all housing and buildings in Johannesburg. His reflections not only capture the physical challenges that he encountered, but also the cultural and educational experiences he faced when planning and leading this program. The benefits of dealing with challenging situations are also discussed. Parr concludes that "one meaningful indicator of the value of the project for me is the extent to which it has prompted me to think differently about my own work as a teacher educator, especially about the value of transcultural and transnational collaborations" (p. 106). Parr's views are not too dissimilar from ours.

Concepts like intercultural competency, transcultural capacity, global citizenship, ethnorelativism and culture shock regularly feature in teacher education journal articles that assess the impact of international teaching placements (Doungphummes and Cacciattolo 2015; Northcote et al. 2014) or issues relating to the cultural competence of educators (Casinader and Walsh 2015). Additionally, the social, physical and ethical challenges that almost always arise for pre-service teachers when teaching in a foreign context have been acknowledged as important to their personal and professional growth (Brown 2009; Sleeter 2008; Kissock and Richardson 2010). All this literature suggests that international placements, in unfamiliar settings, can help to create transformative spaces for pre-service teachers (and accompanying academics) to unpack and reassess taken-for-granted assumptions around privilege, political beliefs and "the world's community of peoples" (O'Reilly et al. 2013, p. 164). The literature also suggests that providing pre-service teachers with opportunities to live and work in foreign settings can help them to develop a greater awareness of cultural, religious and linguistic diversity (Kissock and Richardson 2010; Lee 2011).

But as we have said, the impact of overseas teaching placements on the accompanying academic is a relatively recent area of investigation. Few research articles draw attention to the kinds of mind-shifts that can occur for teacher educators when they lead and participate in IPE programs (Williams and Grierson 2016). As a result, the types of academic support mechanisms that we rely on when confronted by unexpected complexities remain largely unexplored in the research literature. We posit that this is an area that deserves much closer attention, as it helps us identify and better understand those skills and competencies that make up highly effective teacher educators. This is largely what we are referring to in set 3 of our AIC model, *Academics' Support Mechanisms*. Engaging in systematic inquiry through a process of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schon 1983) places teacher educators in a better position to "understand the effects of our

motivations, prejudices and aspirations upon the ways in which we create, manage, receive, sift and evaluate knowledge". Just as importantly, it enables us to appreciate the ways in which teacher educators are "influencing the lives, directions and achievements of those whom we nurture and teach" (Day 1999, p. 229).

Framing our research around the AIC, we pose the questions: Can discomfort be helpful in teacher education? This is a key question in the burgeoning literature around "pedagogies of discomfort" (see Boler and Zembylas 2003). It is the question that was prompting you the reader to reflect on as you were reading the opening mathematical framing of this chapter. It is worthwhile reflecting now whether you did in fact feel some discomfort, and how you responded to that discomfort. Did you persevere with that section of the chapter? Or did you gloss over it. Perhaps you stopped reading altogether? If you did read on, were you able to make sense of the mathematics or the issues? Was the initial discomfort helpful in an ongoing way as you grow in your understanding?

Please keep these questions in mind in the next section as we engage in critical deconstruction of the AIC model and reflect on its value in our reflection as teacher educators. In the writing that follows, we each draw upon the reflective diaries we kept on the international placement in Malaysia, and on the writing we continue to do as we frame and reframe our universal set-our IPE.

Gillian: Personal Resources

The Venn diagram in Fig. 2 represents my journey as an accompanying academic on my first international teaching placement. I begin my discussion of that diagram focusing on the *Personal Resources* set in our AIC model.

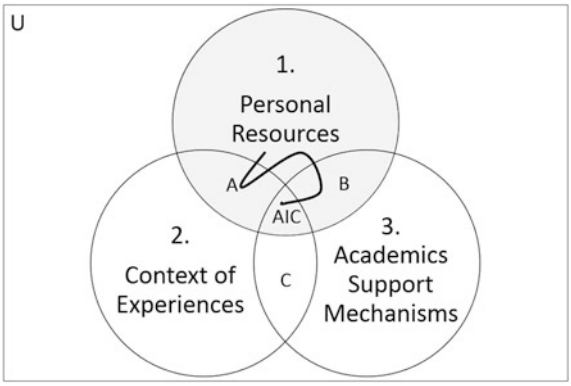

Fig. 2 Gillian's looping back to resources journey

Mathematics is my comfort zone. My field of expertise is as a mathematics and science teacher, teacher educator and researcher, but the Malaysian placement required me to work with teachers who were not mathematics educators, and this was quite discomforting for me. As my story below indicates, I see myself as resilient; throughout my career have I relied on a range of what I might call my inner strengths to work through challenges and to achieve. So *Personal Resources* is a natural starting point for me when reflecting on my experience on this teaching placement. I think I know myself and my abilities as well as my preferred ways of doing things. I have not spent a great deal of time deliberately analysing myself, but I know and understand what makes me comfortable and I tend to stay within my comfort zone if possible.

I have grown up living in and negotiating multiple (Western) cultures. Moving between continents and cultures was an important part of my childhood. Negotiating across different cultural traditions and expectations was second nature to me as I grew up, and it has continued to be as I have developed my knowledge and expertise as a mathematics and science educator and researcher. In fact, I see much of the negotiating skills as akin to the scientific process of an investigation. As a researcher, I am aware how much of my training has been in honing my skills in observation and analysis as I move forward and build knowledge. But I find when culturally challenged, I don't always travel in a forward direction. At times I have to go back and reassess myself. I sometimes find myself on a roundabout learning more on each revolution. I tend to revisit my comfort zone many times before I truly move forward.

When teaching curricular planning and delivery of instruction, I utilise a lot of scientific and mathematical disciplinary resources. I have my favourite "tools of the trade". Before departing Australia to begin the placement in KL, it did not occur to me that I would not have many of these disciplinary "tools" at hand. The particular group of pre-service teachers I was accompanying were not teaching any of the sciences (including mathematics) which I was so familiar with; instead, they were teaching predominantly English language in primary schools. None of my tools were appropriate. In giving instructional pedagogy assistance "out-of-field" I often felt like I was trying to do an electrician's job using a spade. My discomfort may have been akin to what you experienced when reading the earlier framing section of this chapter. It is confronting facing the unfamiliar. I have no experience (and therefore no confidence) in teaching English language in primary schools in Australia or elsewhere. I had no idea what were effective methods and what resources to use. My teaching philosophy meant I was not satisfied with recommending pedagogical strategies that revolved around a textbook. I needed an interactive approach to recommend to my pre-service teachers.

And so without these disciplinary tools and resources to help me, I was forced to rely more on my Intra-Actions within the Personal Resources set in order to help the students and to support my own growth as a teacher educator. My pre-service teachers and I, together, had to work hard to adapt their knowledge of teaching English in an Australian context (with the Australian curriculum), and my pedagogical knowledge from years of teaching science and mathematics, to planning

lessons that would align with the teaching of English language (according to the Malaysian curriculum). This process of adaptation and negotiation was challenging. Learning about a country's educational standards in three weeks—such a short period—was daunting. And so, as Fig. 1 shows, I had to consider a range of elements within the Context of Experience set of our AIC model and in particular, we had to keep firmly in mind the school policy and what the school thought was the students' age and ability. The school required a set page of the textbook to be "taught" on a given day—irrespective of the academic or social progress of the students in the classroom. The curriculum provided plenty of answers to the question, "what do we teach?", but it gave no guidance to our questions of "how do we teach it?" In many respects, my personal resources did not help on their own; in key ways, the school policy of teaching prescribed content to students irrespective of their particular needs clashed with our teaching philosophy. As teacher educator and pre-service students, we found that we were naturally supporting each other (aspects of the Academic Support Mechanism element)—it was an equal relationship where the pre-service teacher was not the only learner. I was learning from the pre-service teachers' teaching of English language. (The story of my learning through this collaboration that I have presented here is told from the student perspective in chapter "Acknowledging and Learning from Discomfort: The Learners' Perspective").

Collectively, I think we managed to complete a successful teaching placement. The schools were happy. The pre-service teachers were happy. And my pedagogical discomfort lessened over the course of the placement. I learnt a lot about the teaching assumptions of the KL teachers, coupled with the teaching assumptions of my pre-service teachers. I learnt a lot about myself. As a teacher educator, I am still learning about teaching and learning in other disciplines, and I am still learning about the Malaysian educational system and curriculum. I am not totally comfortable with accepting the Malaysian principles of education as valid alternatives to the disciplines and systems I know. But as I grow to better understand the context of teaching in KL, I am growing to understand why they are the way they are.

The *mathematical sentence* below is a metaphor of my discomfort while in KL and displays the nonlinear path (repeated access to personal resources set 1) of my growth through and beyond this discomfort in terms of my Academic Intercultural Competencies.

1	A	1	B	AIC
$S = \{\epsilon PR\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon PR\} \cap S = \{\epsilon CE\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon PR\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon PR\} \cap S = \{\epsilon ASM\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon PR\} \cap S = \{\epsilon CE\} \cap S = \{\in ASM\}$				

Translating these numbers and symbols into English prose, I can say that the *mathematical sentence* shows how I moved from Personal Resources to Context of Experiences, back to Personal Resources then into Academics' Support Mechanism in the process of growing and developing intercultural competence.

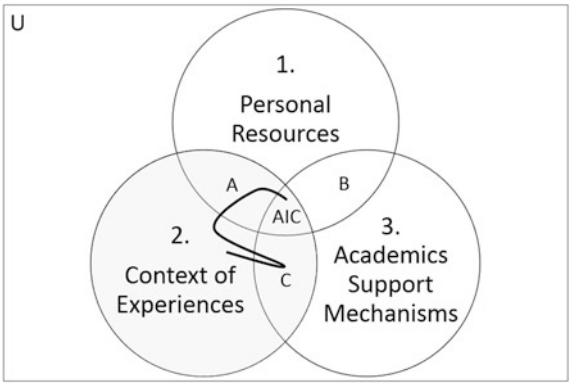

Fig. 3 Catherine's looping back to context journey

Catherine: Context of Experiences

Figure 3 demonstrates my journey of learning on the GEP in Malaysia, which (unlike for Gillian) started at the *Context of Experience* in our AIC model.

Context, in this case defined as the physical climate and location of the international teaching placement, strongly influenced my experience and actions in the first few days of the Malaysian Global Education Practicum. Prior to accompanying my students on this international placement in KL, I had been a familiar traveller in Asia in a variety of different contexts. For example, when I was in a managerial role, I was conducting business in air-conditioned offices, using town cars for transport and staying in five-star hotels. When I was travelling in Asia as a tourist, my experiences were very different again. I was much more relaxed with no time pressures; I was responsible for no other people and often I was looked after by others through pre-arranged activities and transport.

I found myself acutely under prepared for the hustle and pressure of a Global Education Practicum in KL. As accompanying academics, we had committed to visiting every school where our students were placed from the earliest days of the practicum. In oppressive heat and humidity, I needed to catch trains, taxis and walk to get to schools that were located in various outer suburbs of KL. Time was always an issue. I needed to arrive for the start of school, or to see a student teach a particular lesson. My ability to do this was complicated by my variable knowledge of the distance schools were from train stations, and there was the additional issue of whether taxi drivers would accept the trip when I hopped into their taxi. In more than one case, the driver refused to drive me to the school where I needed to be, because he claimed he did not know the suburb where the school was located. In one cab, I was using the GPS on my phone to direct the driver, who had limited English and who seemed intent on dropping me at another school, not the one I was meant to be at. We seemed to circle an outer block getting trapped in one way roads and a freeway. I recall stopping to ask a fruit vendor how to get to my school, when we were already 20 min late for my appointment. All of these complications added

to the intensity of the first few days of the GEP in KL. As a person who likes order and punctuality, I found it overwhelming.

The other accompanying academics and I also met the pre-service teachers each evening at 6 pm to discuss their day. From very early in the practicum, students used these meetings to complain about issues that appeared either trivial or else beyond our control. Again I felt a lack of preparedness. There were complaints about the program costs: "Why did we pay 'x' dollars for the 3 weeks and 'y' university students pay less than us?" (It was not until much later that details of different grant contributions were made clear to all). Complaints about supervising mentor teachers' behaviours soon followed with remarks such as "My teacher barely talks to me" or "My teacher left me in the staffroom all afternoon". I recall a mature-aged Master's level student complaining about a student from another university who was placed at the same school as her. She asserted that this other student's lack of enthusiasm and interest in teaching had affected relationships with the teachers and leadership in her school. In exasperation, she exclaimed, "Every day this happens and I have to address the situation and try to convince the school principal that I have a passion and am serious about teaching". Other complaints seemed to be about trivialities: the lack of good coffee, availability of western food, the unreliable Internet at the residences, the heat… It was only a few days into the practicum, and already I was exhausted and at a loss how to respond to these complaints. By Day 5 of the program, after visiting my quota of schools, I needed to reconsider my own coping strategies. I did not leave my room at all on Day 5. My need for a quiet space away from students and colleagues was overwhelming. I designed and implemented my own retreat. I remained in a quiet, air-conditioned and controlled environment, ordered in food, caught up with my academic work—which is continuous when on these placements—and I reconsidered my way of operating on this practicum.

My retreat on Day 5 was the first indication of my "self-sought" resources. I needed this time and space to consider how my confidence had been affected by the difficulty of managing the climate and location issues. I acknowledge that I was out of my comfort zone and was the "newer" member of the group of accompanying academics. It took several more days before I began to take note of the interactions amongst my colleagues and observe how they dealt with the climate, the students and the constant flow of questions. Some academics embraced the cultural newness of the placement and when not visiting schools went shopping or sightseeing. I accompanied them on some of these trips, but soon got hot and tired in the extreme humidity or frustrated waiting while they pursued an interest that was not a passion of mine. I observed another accompanying academic who managed her level of interaction with colleagues and students judiciously. She joined the group for breakfast, but never for lunch or dinner, and she limited her interactions with students to the mandatory meeting times in the evening. She never used public transport or bartered with taxi drivers to ensure that they took her exactly where she needed to be, and waited to bring her back. I myself wavered between joining the outgoing shopping, tourist group or keeping myself isolated.

I continued to waver in confidence and question my own abilities to support students and keep my sanity.

As I shuttled between the Context of Experience set and the Personal Resources set, I learned to limit the amount of interaction time with colleagues and adopted some of the practices of the more experienced academic who at first appeared to isolate herself. I grew in confidence and better managed my interactions with taxi drivers and only used public transport when I was with more experienced colleagues. I drew on the Academic Support set of elements to increase my commitment to the educational aspects of program. This helped me discount the more trivial complaints from students, or else I encouraged them to draw on their own resources to find solutions to their issues, like sharing good coffee shops via Facebook, self-organising visits to cultural events, sharing the numbers of good taxi drivers. There were still incidents to deal with, like the student who published on Facebook that she had bedbugs and spread this claim through the group, when in fact it turned out to be nothing more than a heat rash.

The reflective learning that I engaged in while deconstructing these experiences with my two co-authors for this chapter has allowed me to see how I had adjusted my level of engagement with this community and set parameters for the coming days to ensure that I was at my best to support the students. Towards the end of the GEP, I better understood through learning in context that climate was always going to be a challenge; however, the strategies I adopted allowed me to be prepared better physically, academically and procedurally. The personal journey I took shuttling back and forth between the three Context, Academic Support and Personal Resources sets was not at all linear. However, this process of reflection suggests to me that without the discomfort I felt in this situation there may indeed have been less growth in my understanding of how best to manage myself and support my students when in the role of accompanying academic.

The mathematical sentence below can be read as a metaphor of my discomfort on the journey of this GEP. It shows the nonlinear dynamic of my learning on this practicum (featuring repeated access to the Context *set 2*), and it helps to explain the value of developing a stronger understanding of my personal resources in the process of building my own Academic Intercultural Competency.

2	C	2	A	AIC
$S = \{\epsilon CE\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon CE\} \cap S = \{\epsilon ASM\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon CE\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon CE\} \cap S = \{\epsilon PR\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon CE\} \cap S = \{\epsilon PR\} \cap S = \{\epsilon ASM\}$				

Marcelle: Academic Support Mechanisms

Using the AIC Venn diagram again, Fig. 4 shows how my own response to the Malaysian GEP, as an accompanying academic, was slightly different from that of my colleagues Gillian and Catherine. It indicates how my intercultural

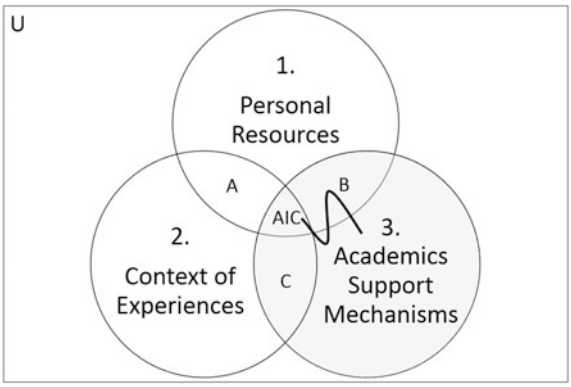

Fig. 4 Marcelle's looping back to academic support mechanisms

competencies grew through a stronger reliance on the Academic's Support Mechanism elements, although I still found it valuable to access my Personal Resources set in order to guide and assist my pre-service teachers.

In the first week of the GEP, I was confronted with anxious first-year pre-service teachers who felt they lacked the skills needed to respond to the cultural challenges of their placement. The pre-service teachers I was responsible for, Sharon and Jane (pseudonyms), both had around 50 students in their classrooms and had limited classroom teaching experience. In the first year of their teacher education degree, they had spent 5 days observing a primary classroom in semester one. In semester two of that year, they had observed seven one-hour sessions in another primary school and also had the opportunity to lead small groups of students on literacy tasks. Yet, these experiences had not prepared them for the behavioural issues that were emerging in their KL classrooms. In addition, Sharon and Jane expressed anxiety about having to embed effective English as an additional language (EAL) learning activities into their lessons. Their inexperience meant that they were unaware of engaging pedagogical approaches that would help them teach English language in complex cross-cultural contexts. What soon emerged in our conversations were doubts about their capacity to do this work and to get through the next two weeks of the placement.

As the pre-service teachers' moved in and out of negative self-talk and with a steady increase in their feelings of discontent, I found myself moving into my own "discomforting space". I started to wonder about how I could have better prepared Sharon and Jane for their teaching stint in KL. I began to reconsider the value of the pre-departure program that I had led with these students and the time I had spent on various intercultural activities. Perhaps I should have spent more time discussing cultural, pedagogical and intercultural concerns. Perhaps if I had discussed the physical, emotional and cognitive challenges that the students would encounter on their practicum, this would have encouraged richer discussion around strategies for coping.

I wondered what my colleagues would say when they found out that two of my students weren't coping with the cultural terrain. In conversation with a colleague

the previous night, I had been questioned as to "why I had allowed first year pre-service teachers to come on the trip?" I remember responding in a defensive way, noting that they had just as much to learn regardless of their inexperience in the field. Now that this situation had emerged, it was as though a threatening spotlight was shining on my academic reputation. I felt anxious and concerned that if these issues weren't resolved that there would be serious consequences to follow.

I went into "fix it" mode straight away. I worked solidly with the two pre-service teachers to develop their classroom lesson plan activities so that they were less didactic and more in tune with movement, song and play. Having recently completed a Masters of TESOL, I found myself returning to my own EAL activities that I had designed in my classroom. I shared my resources with the pre-service students and spoke about the importance of engaging primary school students on multiple levels. We also discussed the need to give the primary school students the freedom to use their own language in the classroom. This would be especially important when students were struggling with some of the English language concepts being taught. Working with peers in collaborative ways would provide a safety net when students felt too intimated to ask the teacher for help. I recalled also how during my own TESOL practicum, some years earlier, I had made an effort to encourage students to bring in their own cultural artefacts that told a story about their life-worlds. It was reassuring to note that Sharon and Jane appeared to be responding well to my intensified efforts. They were beginning to consider how they could trial a range of activities that would be more inclusive of the students' local landscape and rich cultural heritages.

When I finally returned home to Australia, I met with my two co-author colleagues to discuss our work on the GEP. It was during this time that I discussed the experience of working through some of the issues that Sharon and Jane had raised. Both Gillian and Catherine discussed the importance of writing about this incident in an attempt to make sense of dilemma that I had encountered. During this time, we also spoke about Boler and Zembylas' (2003) work on "pedagogies of discomfort" and how this linked to the feelings I had encountered. In my initial desire to smooth over the teaching and learning concerns that had been raised, I had missed the opportunity to pry open the importance of "discomforting truths". Gillian, Catherine and I spoke about the value of contradictions and unstable emotions when they arise. We came to understand that emotions and responses represent particular perceptions and mindsets surrounding power, whiteness, dominant truths and cultural identities. The value of sharing my narrative with colleagues and writing about my experience has been important. Through our collaborative discussions, and through our collaboration on writing this chapter, I have been able to consider the importance of provocation and ambiguity when working in intercultural contexts.

I also came to realise that I had missed the opportunity to make connections between spaces of "teacher vulnerability" and transformative learning. When discussing this theme with Gillian and Catherine, we spoke about essential qualities of effective practitioners. These characteristics included the ability to be empathic to the needs of school students who are the least advantaged. For Sharon and Jane,

living out of a space of insecurity and tension led to feelings of self-doubt and failure. These are the likely feelings of so many young people in Australian classrooms who are bullied, homeless, labelled as "under achieving", or who have a learning disability. In these kinds of situations, it is unlikely that life situations can be "easily smoothed over" or "fixed". But, I have come to appreciate how being able to empathise, to stand in the shoes of these students, is the first step to developing understanding, compassion and respect for other ways of being in the world. If this international teaching placement experience enabled Sharon and Jane to rethink their notions of language acquisition, prejudice, racism, poverty and disability, in ways that will propel them to make a difference in young people's lives, then perhaps the discontent they experienced in KL was well worth it.

A similar thing may be said of the discomfort I experienced, as an accompanying academic on this placement. The mathematical sentence below can, as with Gillian and Catherine, be read as a metaphor of my discomfort on the GEP experience. It shows the nonlinear dynamic of my learning on this practicum. But unlike Gillian's or Catherine's experiences, it indicates how for me repeated access to the Academic Support Mechanism *set* was crucial for my growth in terms of Academic Intercultural Competency.

3	B	3	AIC
$S = \{\epsilon ASM\} \rightarrow$ $S = \{\epsilon PR\} \cap S = \{\epsilon ASM\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon ASM\} \rightarrow S = \{\epsilon ASM\} \cap$ $S = \{\epsilon PR\} \cap S = \{\epsilon CE\}$			

Our Reflective Summary

In this chapter, we have presented our experiences as accompanying academics on the Global Education Practicum in Kuala Lumpur both in narrative prose as well as through the symbols and metaphor of mathematical sentences. We decided to use this combination of mathematical symbols and metaphors to provoke a level of possible discomfort in you, our reader. The metaphor of mathematical sentences demonstrates how we did not experience linear growth in intercultural competencies but shuttled back and forwards between sets of the AIC Venn diagram model: drawing on personal resources, adjusting to the context of experiences and making good use of our own and colleagues' support mechanisms in our version of the academic "toolbox" that all academics carry. We presented influencing factors in a Venn diagram, as well as narratives to demonstrate that our journey was not linear. The Venn diagram shows through the sets the factors intersect and overlay each other. They do not follow a clear line from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism and deeper Academic Intercultural Competence.

By interrogating our journeys through mathematical metaphors and Boler and Zembylas' (2003) pedagogy of discomfort, we posit that without this level of

discomfort, we may not have experienced as much growth in our intercultural competency and we certainly would not have gained such a strong understanding of that growth. This discomfort allowed us each to achieve an increased awareness and understanding of what we as accompanying academics can gain from these international placement opportunities while supporting our pre-service teachers.

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Chapter 4
Self-Interest and Ethical Praxis Agendas in an International Teaching Practicum

Graham Parr, Julie Faulkner and Craig Rowe

Introduction

For decades now, globalisation and technological advances have promoted the interaction of peoples, practices and cultures across national and international borders. This interaction has sometimes facilitated education projects where culturally diverse groups have been able to work together to address local and global issues (Isar 2014; Samuel and Mariaye 2014; UNESCO 2011). For more culturally homogeneous groups, though, increased interaction with diverse 'others' has sometimes generated distrust and fear, as seen in the rise of political movements founded upon nationalistic rhetoric and/or xenophobia (Wodak 2015). In the face of these disturbing developments, governments across the world have urged higher education institutions to play a role in developing greater transcultural understanding and appreciation of difference in their graduates (de Wit et al. 2015).

For example, in South Africa, the site of the teaching practicum under investigation in this chapter, post-Apartheid education policy has emphasised the role of universities in educating graduates about the value of difference and cultural diversity (DoE 1997, 2007). In other parts of the world, too, international student mobility programes in universities have been a key strategy in 'internationalising the student experience' (Arkoudis et al. 2012). International teaching practicums are a particular form of mobility programe designed to develop more culturally inclusive understandings and attitudes in graduate teachers (Cantalini-Williams et al. 2014; Maynes et al. 2012).

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Many claims are made by universities about the benefits of international practicums for pre-service teachers. Most recently, this includes the claim that participation in an international practicum increases the employability of graduate teachers (cf. York 2006[1]). There are benefits claimed for the university, too. Universities typically cite their international teaching practicum programes as evidence that they are an international player in the global education marketplace (cf. de Wit 2011; Parr 2012). For the purposes of this research, we name these two benefits—graduate teacher employability and university profiles—as central to a 'self-interest agenda'. A self-interest agenda is one that (in the first instance) focuses on benefits for teaching students' profiles (in terms of their employability in the marketplace of graduate teaching positions) and/or on benefits for the university's own profile (in the international marketplace of education). Such an agenda is particularly concerning where the host country for the practicum is a developing country. As Spivak (1990) shows, there is a long history of colonialist projects in which educational groups from privileged countries travel overseas to poorer regions of the world to 'develop themselves' with little regard for the damaging short- and long-term effects of their project on local communities (Spivak 1990; cf. Parr 2012). A totally self-interested international practicum would pay little heed to these effects.

On the other hand, and in tension with this self-interest agenda, universities often claim that international teaching practicums benefit students by prompting them to learn more about the needs of disadvantaged 'others' in international educational settings. In so doing, the students are supported in their efforts to look beyond their own self-interests and contribute to shaping a world that is more knowledgeable about and respectful of difference. At the institutional level, universities claim that such practicums are part of their efforts to fulfil their ethical responsibilities to 'the other' in a globalising world (Holmwood 2011; Kiely 2011). A practicum motivated by these benefits, we suggest, is informed by an 'ethical praxis agenda'. Our use of the term 'praxis' here draws from Kemmis and Smith (2008), who define it as theorised educational reflection and action that 'takes into account not only [short term individual] interests, … but also the long term interests of society and the world at large' (p. 4).

In naming these two agendas—self-interest and ethical praxis—we do not suggest that they exist as separate, mutually exclusive motivations, or that we believe an international teaching programe is either completely self-interested or based upon 'purely' ethical praxis principles. In fact, the literature suggests that these agendas often coexist in international teaching programes, in synergistic

[1]The Higher Education Academy in the UK offers a definition of employability that suggests it is not just focused on self-interest. For them employability is "A set of skills, knowledge and personal attributes that make an individual more likely to secure and be successful in their chosen occupation(s) to the benefit of themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy" (York 2006, p. 21). However, critical studies of 'employability' discourses report that the emphasis in much of the employability rhetoric is on the self-interest of the individual graduate and their capacity to secure a 'good job' with a good 'pay cheque' (e.g. Burke et al. 2016).

ways. Thus, an institution's efforts to brand itself as an international player might be a valuable side product of pro-actively supporting educational projects in international settings. Likewise, a pre-service teacher's learning about the importance of cultural diversity in educational settings might increase his/her employability, even though this was not the pre-eminent reason for undertaking an international teaching practicum. We do argue, however, that there are ethical and educational dangers when, for whatever reasons, self-interest agendas on the part of individuals or institutions over-ride ethical praxis agendas.

This chapter contributes to debates about international teaching practicums by identifying dialogic tensions and synergies in agendas underpinning Monash University's South African international teaching practicum. Through critically examining narratives written by the authors, who were co-leaders of the South African practicum between 2009 and 2015, we investigate how the practicum implemented both self-interest and ethical praxis agendas. Using dialogic theory (Bakhtin 1981, 1984) and narrative-based analytical methods, we critically tease out dimensions of these agendas, and we explain the role of particular forms of dialogue in grappling with such tensions on this international teaching practicum. We begin by outlining the model of Monash's South African practicum as it has operated since its establishment in 2009.

The Model of Monash's South African Practicum

The South African international teaching practicum is a partnership between the Faculty of Education in Monash University, Australia, the Department of Community Engagement in Monash South Africa (MSA), and a number of schools in Johannesburg, South Africa. Each year in August for the past seven years, a cohort of Monash pre-service teachers (PSTs),[2] accompanied by a Monash teacher educator mentor, has travelled to Johannesburg to teach in diverse schools and community settings for a three-week practicum. The practicum is open to pre-service teachers in the final stages of their university-based teacher education degree. It includes 15 days of formal teaching practice and several days of community, cultural and institutional orientation and engagement. The Johannesburg schools where the students are placed vary greatly in size, culture, resources and physical condition. Some are technology-assisted modern teaching spaces (with less than 20 students per classroom), while others consist of dilapidated rooms with bare concrete floors, torn blinds and broken windows (with over 40 students per classroom). At the lowest end of the resources scale, some classrooms are shipping containers that have been converted into makeshift teaching and learning spaces. The Australian PSTs are placed in professional learning teams of two or more in each school to maximise peer-to-peer dialogue.

[2]Numbers have varied from 9 to 21.

The PSTs' practice teaching occurs in two phases, allowing them to experience culturally contrasting education contexts. Phase 1 placement is in a materially well-resourced school (two weeks), where classroom and staffroom practices and protocols can seem similar to what the PSTs have experienced in their teaching practicums in Australia. Phase 2 of the practicum (one week) is profoundly different. The PSTs are placed in schools which are acutely lacking in material resources. For example, some schools are situated within a large informal settlement, known as Zandspruit, an area of extreme poverty not far from MSA, and one school is an under-resourced 'farm school' situated on the periphery of Johannesburg (see Parr 2012, for a more extensive description of that school). The expectation is that the PSTs' classroom teaching in both phases will be continuously monitored and mentored by South African mentor teachers and that they will receive regular feedback from these mentors, although for a variety of reasons this expectation is not always realised. The PSTs' learning is also supported by ongoing dialogue with an Australian teacher educator, who periodically observes their teaching and mentors them throughout their practicum. Members of the Community Engagement Department at MSA (including Craig Rowe, one of the authors) also play a mentoring role, maintaining a close dialogue with the PSTs, the Australian teacher educator and principals of the South African placement schools.

Transcultural Dialogue Across Difference

Elsewhere, we (Parr et al. 2016) have advocated for the value of particular forms of dialogue in this South African international teaching practicum, and we have shown how Monash students and teacher educators have overwhelmingly benefited from this dialogue. However, our experience and others' research suggest that a focus on dialogue alone does not always produce more competent or more ethically engaged graduates (Garii, in Walters et al. 2009; Hamel et al. 2010; Parr and Chan 2015; Santoro and Major 2012). A number of studies have inquired into international teaching practicums where PSTs have been severely discomforted by sustained interactions with people, cultures and practices that take them out of their comfort zone (see Faulkner & Keary's chapter in this volume). This discomfort is variously described as 'cultural disequilibrium' (Hamel et al. 2010), 'cognitive dissonance' (Lee 2011), 'culture shock' (Santoro and Major 2012) or 'friction' (Uusimaki and Swirski 2016).

In this section, we propose the term 'transcultural dialogue across difference' to describe a multifaceted conception of dialogue that underpins Monash's South African practicum. We believe this transcultural dialogue helps to reduce the negative impacts of PSTs and leaders working outside their cultural comfort zones. Transcultural dialogue is nuanced, deeply relational and complex. It involves far more than merely facilitating to-and-fro conversations between individuals or groups. One way to explain transcultural dialogue is to present it as deeper and more multidimensional than more technicist notions of to-and-fro conversations.

For example, transcultural dialogue across difference is enacted by people who seek out and value (rather than avoid) difference in or with their interlocutors. This difference may be in the classroom, in the community, in educational systems or in cultural practices. Our use of the discourse of transcultural dialogue across difference has obvious conceptual links with Bakhtin's (1981) notion of 'dialogue across difference'. This notion—similar, also, to Giroux's (2005) concept of 'border pedagogy'—has its roots in dialogic literature that theorises the educational value of *seeking out* difference, *learning about* it and *respectfully engaging with* it (Bakhtin 1981; Shor and Freire 1987). There are links here, also, to Boler's (1999) notion of a 'pedagogy of discomfort', which shows that it is possible to learn through shorter-term discomfort when engaging with difference. However, as Boler and the above studies show, there are no guarantees that discomfort, in and of itself, will produce learning. To illustrate how 'transcultural dialogue across difference' is operationalised on the South African practicum, we consider its relevance to individual PSTs, practicum leaders and the practicum programe as a whole. We start with individual PSTs.

When an individual PSTs apply to participate in the South African practicum, they are already beginning to engage in 'dialogue across difference'. From the earliest information sessions and promotional materials, the PSTs are aware that they will be travelling to and teaching in an unfamiliar international setting, that they will be teaching with and learning from unfamiliar groups of people, in unfamiliar institutions and cultures, and that it will be crucial for them to work collaboratively with Monash peers as they all seek to deal with this unfamiliarity. They begin to understand that each of these challenges will require entering into dialogue with the unfamiliar or different and that this is not easy. Almost all students in their application forms for the practicum appear to welcome these challenges, stating that they are 'looking forward to developing [their] classroom skills' or 'interested to travel to South Africa'. Both of these views appear linked to a more self-interested agenda on the part of the student. The former is focused on self-development as individual teachers, and the latter is referred to in the literature as a desire for educational tourism, where the would-be tourist is thinking of ways to fit teaching *around* their travel plans, rather than *vice versa* (Quezada 2004). In our experience, it is unlikely that an applicant would be selected for the South African practicum if he/she did not, as well as these self-interested agendas, demonstrate some concern for the ethical work of teaching in acutely under-resourced areas of South Africa and/or teaching in a country still struggling to move on from decades of state sanctioned apartheid.

From the moment they arrive in South Africa, the Australian PSTs are encouraged to enter into dialogue across difference in various forms. These include: *professional dialogue across difference* (as they negotiate ways of working with their supervising South African mentors, who may have very different backgrounds and teaching styles from mentors they have encountered in Australian practicums); *pedagogical dialogue across difference* (as they get to know their South African students, who have very different backgrounds and ethnicities from students they have taught in Australian classrooms); and *cultural dialogue across difference*

(as they grapple with all that is culturally unfamiliar in the everyday of their placement school and their living as a visitor in Johannesburg). It is worth noting that the Australian PSTs are called upon to initiate and sustain these forms of 'dialogue across difference' when they have only just begun to develop their teaching skills and knowledge in the more familiar cultural settings of Australia.

This dialogue on the practicum is not restricted to PSTs. For Craig, as the local South African co-leader of the practicum, his first connection with the Australian PSTs is when they arrive in Johannesburg. This is invariably a *cultural dialogue across difference*, as he gets to know the PSTs and responds to seemingly endless questions about South African cultural and educational practices. For Graham and Julie (in their role as Australian teacher educator mentors), their dialogue across difference on the practicums that they co-led began with the *cultural* and *pedagogical* work of preparing the Monash PSTs for different educational contexts before leaving Australia. It continued in an ongoing pedagogical dialogue around the PSTs' practice teaching while in Johannesburg, including one-to-one interviews before and after classroom observations and regular reflection sessions for the entire cohort of PSTs. While in South Africa, Graham and Julie entered into dialogue with leaders and teachers in different schools. This was a crucial part of their negotiating cultural and educational spaces for their PSTs to practise and learn within these schools (Parr 2012; Parr and Chan 2015; Parr et al. 2016; see also Santoro and Major 2012; Williams and Grierson 2016).

Finally, at the programe level, also, there is transcultural dialogue across difference. With every new iteration of the South African practicum, Monash University reviews and builds upon its relationship with international partners in South Africa. These include the Department of Community Engagement within MSA, and the many schools and community organisations whose students the Australian PSTs teach in their course of their practicum.

In summary, the South African practicum has been structured from the outset to open up and promote *transcultural dialogue across difference* in every aspect of the programe. This dialogue comprises the following four dimensions:

- *inner dialogue*, or individual reflection, promoted by the scheduling of regular opportunities for individual PSTs to reflect on their practice, to help them come to terms with culturally unfamiliar and sometimes deeply challenging experiences;
- *peer-to-peer dialogue* (both personal and professional) *between* the Australian PSTs while they teach in the Johannesburg schools and while they are living in close quarters with each other in guest house accommodation;
- *mentor dialogue* between the PSTs and their Australian and South African mentors; and
- *partnership dialogue* between the practicum leaders (Australian and South African) and the local teachers, principals, community leaders and university student volunteers in Johannesburg (Parr 2016).

Before presenting and critically discussing our three narratives, we outline below other dimensions of the methodology underpinning this chapter.

Methodology

We three authors operate from different campuses of Monash University (Graham and Julie on Australian campuses; Craig at MSA), and we have been leaders of the South African teaching practicum at different times over its 8-year history. Graham (a teacher educator from Monash in Australia) and Craig (Manager of Community Engagement at MSA) worked closely together to establish and coordinate the practicum in its early history (2009–2011), and Craig continued as the Johannesburg based co-leader of the practicum until 2015. Julie (also a teacher educator from Monash in Australia) collaborated closely with Craig when she co-led the practicum in Johannesburg in 2013–2014. The three of us have continued to undertake research into our leadership experiences on the South African practicum (see Parr et al. 2016; Parr and Rowe 2013) as part of our ongoing ethical commitment to improving our own understanding and the quality of the practicum through focused praxis work.

We received approval from the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee in 2013 to conduct this research. Our chapter draws on narrative-based traditions of research in education which have proliferated since the turn of the century. In particular, we make use of the powerful theorising of narrative in educational research by the likes of Harold Rosen (1985) and Jerome Bruner (1990). Drawing on this theory, Doecke and Parr (2009) propose that 'narratives in all their diversity and multiplicity make up the fabric of our lives' (p. 66), and they argue that an important part of making sense of educational experiences is the analytical teasing out of how that fabric is woven together. Our 'teasing out' in this chapter involves presenting and critically discussing narrative texts about the South African practicum, and using dialogic methodologies to explore how the narratives 'speak to each other'. We ask questions such as: How does each narrative represent and make sense of our experiences? What experiences are similar across different narratives? What experiences are different? Are there tensions between or within the narratives? What is the nature of these tensions?

In the next two sections of the chapter, we present these narratives, starting with Craig's. Craig writes about a time when the Australian PSTs, on the second day of a practicum, were challenged in multiple ways to dialogue with difference in terms of unfamiliar food, culture, travel protocols, student relationships, technology and geography. Our main focus here is to emphasise the multifaceted nature of the transcultural dialogue we discussed above. After a brief analysis of Craig's narrative, we present and critically discuss two other narratives, one by Graham (from 2009) and one by Julie (from 2013) which illustrate synergies between self-interest and ethical praxis agendas. But first, Craig's narrative.

Exploring the Notion of Transcultural Dialogue

Negotiating a Cutlery-Free Braai, a Stick Shift and a Faulty GPS (Craig)

> The first 48 hours of the Monash PSTs' time in Johannesburg are always devoted to an intense program of induction into South African culture, history and education. Typically, the induction involves the PSTs grappling with their first authentic South African braai (a form of barbecue), featuring an array of meats, chakalaka (a sauce made of tomatoes, peppers, carrots, beans and spices) and pap (a maize-based porridge looking a little like mashed potato), all eaten without cutlery. As an induction into braai cultures and practices this particular year, we chose a restaurant within a huge informal settlement of over 60,000 people two kilometres from the MSA campus. To share the experience, I had invited along several student leaders from MSA who spoke impressively about the NGO projects they led while studying at MSA, as part of their extra-curricula educational engagement with struggling groups in the local community.
>
> Immediately after their cutlery-free braai and still processing the stories of the MSA young leaders, the Australian PSTs followed us over unfamiliar and sometimes pot-holed roads to be assigned to their rental cars. The process was going well until it became apparent that one of the cars provided by the local rental car company, despite our request for automatic only cars, turned out to be a manual transmission with a 'stick shift'. The PSTs assigned to this car had had little experience driving with a stick shift. Following a few hushed words from inside the car, the PSTs emerged to assure Graham and me that they would be fine. They would "work it out somehow".
>
> Then it was time for the customary cautions to all PSTs about driving in Johannesburg: about the suburbs to avoid because of security concerns; about the importance of keeping your doors locked and your windows wound up when waiting at intersections because of the danger of carjacking; and a quick check of the portable GPS devices allocated to each car. A few hours later, when I thought all challenges of the day had been successfully negotiated, an agitated voice of a Monash student called on her newly acquired cell phone. Their GPSs had stopped working, and could I please navigate them back to their guest house accommodation? I couldn't help until I knew where they were starting from, and that wasn't easy for them to say! Where were they, indeed? To make matters worse, Johannesburg was being deluged at the time by one of our regular late afternoon cloudbursts.
>
> Last I heard, a carload of somewhat frazzled PSTs was happily welcomed 'home' by their peers in their guest house accommodation. Reunited with their peers, there was already plenty to talk about as together they sought to make sense of the parts of Johannesburg they had experienced and to speculate about the challenges ahead of them: teaching in an unfamiliar country, in unfamiliar schools, with an unfamiliar curriculum and unfamiliar students whose cultural and historical backgrounds they were only beginning to learn about….

Craig's narrative illustrates the richness and the complexity of the transcultural dialogue across difference that the Australian PSTs were required to undertake from the earliest days of their time in Johannesburg. He shows them negotiating a range of challenges through a combination of inner dialogue and peer-to-peer dialogue and partnership dialogue, in an experience which was invariably different for every

student. For some of these white middle-class students, it was a serious challenge to convince themselves (as individuals and as a group) that they could cope with eating barbecued meat and sauce with their fingers at a restaurant, and then wash up their own plates afterwards! A relatively trivial challenge one might say, but each cultural challenge adds an element of complexity in those precarious early days of an international practicum.

The conversation with the young South African leaders during the *braai* meal prompted some Australian PSTs to radically re-evaluate their preconceptions of leadership and the culture into which they were entering. The understanding and sophistication of these young leaders managing their very own NGOs when all of the odds were stacked against their succeeding became a little more real as young South Africans and Australiana chatted over *chakalaka* and *pap* about their respective experiences and their hopes. For some Australian PSTs, these conversations moved the notion of dialogue across difference beyond the trivialities of food, to a region of deeply felt experiences and aspirations. For others, though, this was yet another challenge in a day that had them continually on the edge of anxiety. They lurched from a braai restaurant where they were out of their culinary comfort zones, to stories of intimidatingly impressive MSA peers, to then face the prospect of having to drive a 'stick shift' manual car in the unfamiliar geography of Johannesburg. Then, just as they might have been feeling reassured by the presence of a very Western artefact in the form of a GPS, the technology failed them, and for some minutes they wondered if they would ever meet up with their peers at the guest house. They needed to engage in dialogue of a different kind again with a practicum partner, Craig, whom they were only just beginning to get to know, to guide them to their desired destination. For Craig to be able to do this, he in turn needed to listen carefully as they described where they were, in order to guide them home safely.

Little were the Australian PSTs to know that the kinds of inner, peer-to-peer and partnership dialogue they had enacted in that one afternoon were slowly but surely preparing them for the pedagogical dialogue they would need to initiate and participate in over the weeks ahead. When teaching in Johannesburg classrooms, whether in the better resourced schools in Phase 1 or in the under-resourced schools in Phase 2, they would be called upon to dialogue across difference every minute of their teaching time in South Africa.

We now present Graham's and Julie's narratives about particular Monash PSTs who undertook the South African practicum in 2009 (Chris) and 2013 (Jimmy). As in Craig's narrative, we show Chris and Jimmy engaging in *dialogue across difference* as they grapple with a range of discomforting professional, pedagogical and cultural challenges. However, our main focus here moves to identify various self-interest and ethical praxis agendas that can be seen underpinning their actions on the practicum. Ultimately, their 'agendas' can be seen as a synergistic mixture of self-interest and ethical praxis.

Self-Interest and Ethical Praxis Agendas 'Unpacked'

Concerns Both Large and Small (Graham)

Chris was part of the very first cohort of Monash PSTs on a South African practicum in 2009. He was a mature aged student, with a *curriculum vitae* that included significant experience in industry and education before enrolling in a one year pre-service education course that would be a platform for him to build his teaching career. In his application for the South African practicum he explained that he had travelled around South Africa some years before, and he saw this practicum as "a wonderful opportunity that would enable me to gain skills that would not be possible to learn locally". Chris's gentle and quietly spoken manner was balanced with a solid confidence, a willingness to work collaboratively with his peers, and a determination to make an ethical contribution to all of the education settings he encountered on the practicum. From early in Phase 1 of the practicum, Chris was already emerging as a respected and well-liked leader amongst his peers.

It was some surprise to me, then, to receive in the first week of his Phase 1 placement at an elite and very well resourced independent school a text from Chris requesting an urgent meeting with me. He wished to discuss a disturbing incident he had witnessed in the classroom where he was spending most of his time. Chris and I arranged to meet in a quiet corner of an otherwise bustling library at MSA.

I listened as Chris recounted to me disturbing stories about the harsh treatment of a Year 9 coloured student—whom I will call Baako—by Chris's white male mentor teacher, climaxing in a particularly upsetting incident that day. The details of the conversations and incident are not appropriate to relate in this chapter. Suffice to say that when I heard Chris's version of events I was as disturbed as Chris obviously was.

My first instinct as coordinator of this very first pilot practicum was to immediately seek a conversation with the school leadership about the mentor's behaviour and to consider terminating Monash's partnership with the school. But I felt it was also important for me to respect Chris's stated desire to negotiate a working relationship with his mentor and his students in that classroom. I have to be honest and say that I also had in mind Monash's longer term partnership with the school. At that stage, I still harboured the hope that our partnership with the school might have a positive influence on some of the professional practices and cultures in the school that were hard to fathom from my perspective. For his part, Chris was reaching out to me, his Australian mentor lecturer, not so much for a solution to the dilemma, but to dialogue openly and reflectively about a range of options that might be open to him.

It emerged that Chris's concerns were both large and small. He was worried about the effects of bullying on Baako who appeared powerless to respond in the classroom; and he was concerned about Baako's long-term attitude to school, to authority and to white male teachers. Since commencing this placement, Chris had already had some positive interactions with Baako, and he hoped to be able to contribute—perhaps for just two weeks—to his feeling valued in the classroom as a learner rather than being relentlessly taunted and bullied, as Chris saw it.

By the end of the two weeks, Chris had been able to negotiate a way of working with a mentor with whom he had very little in common in terms of attitudes to cultural difference. He spoke warmly of Baako's positive learning during those two weeks, and he reflected on Baako's transformed demeanour in the classroom. My own difficult conversations with the school's leadership were left until after our students had completed their placement. In recent years (after further problematic incidents) a decision was made to discontinue the partnership, so that Monash PSTs are now no longer placed in this school.

'The Usual Approaches Won't Work Here' (Julie)

Phase 2 schools in Johannesburg test even the most confident pre-service teachers. In the third week of the practicum, they seem to become sharply aware of their difference in South Africa. For this week, PSTs teach in severely under-resourced schools, which have some inspirational teachers but also appear to be lacking in fundamental education infrastructure. Common first impressions are of dust, chaos, local student wariness, and little support from local teacher mentors. In these circumstances, PSTs typically begin to question whether they have the resources, both personal and professional, to respond adequately, and anxiety becomes palpable amongst the group.

In the second of the two practicums I coordinated in Johannesburg, in 2014, concern grew amongst the PSTs when they hit Phase 2 of the practicum that the usual pedagogical approaches wouldn't work in these classrooms. The until-now cohesive cohort of PSTs became nervous and fractious, as stories of corporal punishment and discipline problems in the schools emerged.

Jimmy Cheng (not his real name) would have none of that. Small of stature, Jimmy wore glasses, had braces on his teeth, danced like an angel, was sometimes extroverted and flamboyant, but otherwise communicated a quiet sense of self-belief. In the weeks leading up to the start of the practicum in Australia, Jimmy had repeatedly shown he had a serious commitment to social justice and the needs of underprivileged communities in society. In South Africa, he galvanised disparate groups and could turn grumbling factions into enthusiasts through his positive disposition.

Jimmy's teaching method in Australia was Performing Arts, although this was not part of the curriculum in the Johannesburg schools where he was placed. Prior to enrolling in a teacher education degree, Jimmy had been a dance practitioner and he had experience in community development projects. So I should not have been surprised when I learned he was planning a dance performance in his Phase 2 school. It was his proactive response to the feeling among his PST peers that 'the usual approaches won't work here'.

I was visiting Jimmy's school on the day of the dance, ready to lend my support if the project collapsed. It turned out to be a daring performance—interpretive dance in the gym, delivered unselfconsciously in front of a large class of disbelieving 15 year olds. It could so easily have gone wrong, but Jimmy's commitment to his art form and his strong relational skills won genuine applause from an audience, who must have wondered at first what on earth they were witnessing.

Other PSTs emerged from their Phase 2 placements despairing for the future of these children's learning. In Jimmy's final written reflection on the whole practicum experience, however, he saw cause for optimism: 'The children of South Africa … strongly believe in the value of education for their personal and communal development,' he wrote. 'They taught me that each student has their own individual strengths.' He went on to question any easy sense of 'teacher success' on his part. Through these reflections, he was writing his way to a deeper and more critical sense of his western-centric teaching intentions in the Phase 2 school:

> It was wrong for me to think that [my South African students] could not dance when they were attempting to do contemporary [dance]. … I needed to utilise their strengths in teaching them new things. It was easier for the students to learn western line dance and hip hop dances, [when I realised that] they were similar to the students' cultural dances. I used these dances to expand their movement vocabulary.

Graham's and Julie's narratives provide contrasting but complementary perspectives on the self-interest and ethical praxis agendas underpinning their teaching and learning in South Africa.

Chris was not alone amongst his peers in articulating his self-interested goal to 'gain good skills' as a PST on the practicum; likewise, his stated hope to 'make a contribution' to a developing country's education endeavours (part of his ethical praxis agenda) was not uncommon in our experience of interviewing PSTs to participate in the practicum. What was not so common, but clear evidence of an ethical praxis agenda, was his desire to persevere in an already acutely discomforting placement relationship with his mentor, and to purposefully but professionally challenge the 'way things were' in this classroom, especially as regards Baako's distressing experience of education and his white male teacher mentor's role in this. Significantly, Chris's decision to persevere was made through engaging in dialogue with Graham his Australian mentor and partner in this dilemma, and a good deal of inner dialogue and mentor dialogue as he contemplated and negotiated his options every teaching day of his Phase 1 placement.

It might have been so much easier for Chris either to fall into line with his school-based mentor's ethically questionable practices or to abandon the challenge altogether and move to another school. In all likelihood, both options would have enhanced his practicum report and potentially his employability on the back of this good report. And yet, as Graham relates, following two weeks of tricky dialogue with his South African mentor, and pedagogical dialogue with Baako and the other students in that classroom, Chris emerged having fulfilled his goals in terms of Baako's apparently 'transformed demeanour' and his own ability to negotiate a way of working in this problematic setting. No doubt, this was made possible by the range of dialogic strategies he enacted, but all of this was driven by his ethical praxis agenda, which prompted him to engage in an inner dialogue with the practices, theories and principles he had developed through his pre-service education studies.

Interestingly, the decision (by Graham in that first year) to continue to dialogue across increasingly problematic difference with that Phase 1 school as a partner suggests a degree of self-interest on the part of Monash as an institution. One might interpret this as Monash wanting to persevere with the school partnership for the longer term, despite short-term disturbing ethical issues emerging. However, persevering with attempts to dialogue across difference also suggests elements of ethical praxis, a commitment on Monash's part to support the transcultural partnership through a fragile period in its development. This perseverance was rewarded with short-term positive outcomes for Baako's and Chris's confidence and identity in the classroom, although as time would show the prospects of longer-term growth in the partnership with Baako's school were *not* realised. The time came, a few years later, when the relationship could no longer be supported and Monash discontinued its work with this school.

In Julie's narrative, we see *dialogue across difference* of quite a different nature. Jimmy began the South African practicum with a commitment, honed in his university-based teacher education course in Australia, to marginalised learners.

Like Chris, Jimmy was already a competent teacher when he arrived in Johannesburg, inhabiting the classroom with a firm sense of confidence and purpose. His pre-trip reflections were also similar to Chris's:

> Through participating in the SA global practicum, I hope to see and experience how community development and education interact to empower citizens of a developing nation. I have studied and researched about it during my undergraduate degree, and now I want to experience the impact of international development work and teaching toward social justice and human rights for a developing nation.

Jimmy's desire to 'experience the impact of international development work', and later his enthusiasm to show off his expertise as a dancer with the students in his Phase 2 school, might be interpreted as self-interest. But it is not possible to understand his learning, teaching and development as a PST without also appreciating his profound ethical commitment to community development that came from his undergraduate studies. In Julie's presentation of Jimmy's story, there is a telling shift in focus from aspirational pre-service teacher keen on developing his employability to reflective professional learner. By the end of the narrative, it is clear that it is the South African children and the communities they represent who are at the forefront of Jimmy's thinking—he considers *their* strengths and what *they* can teach him as much as what *he* can teach *them*. He critically reflects on his initial judgement of what he *had* thought was the African students' deficits and comes to understand rather that the deficit lay in his own cultural conceptions. These are the kinds of realisations that we three authors have seen so often when Monash PSTs engage in sustained dialogue across difference on this practicum. In Jimmy's case, this involved drawing into productive dialogue the theory of strengths-based learning he had been studying through his course and his discomforting experiences in Phase 2 of the practicum when some of his peers were inclined to lose sight of the potential of dialogue across difference.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that international teaching practicums managed and supported through universities can facilitate culturally diverse groups coming together to address local and global educational challenges. Projects like the South African teaching practicum can assist in building more culturally inclusive understandings and attitudes in tomorrow's teachers. This chapter has also shown the complexity of the undertaking and raised concerns that should be in the mind of all participating PSTs, leaders of such practicums and institutions that offer them as part of a teacher education course.

There are moments in the narratives we have shared and discussed here that suggest elements of self-interest agendas on the part of PSTs and the institution hosting the South African practicum. These are evident in the students' aspirations to use the practicum to develop themselves, their profiles and their employability as

graduate teachers, and in the leaders of the practicum persevering with partnerships in the international practicum project even when ethical issues about those partnerships were emerging. However, we have also illustrated how these self-interested elements can be linked with a commitment to ethical praxis, on the part of the PSTs and the institution. This is evident in the PSTs' respect for and appreciation of 'others' from whom they have so much to learn (in the case of Jimmy) and in their desire to work with and for these 'others' in the hope of making a difference (Chris and Jimmy). And it can be seen in the ongoing institutional support for and resourcing of a project that builds mutual respect and appreciation for 'the other' and continues to support the educational work reported on in these narratives.

We have constructed this chapter in dialogic ways, bringing different voices, stories and agendas into productive dialogue with each other. We have used Bakhtin's discourse of 'dialogue across difference'—with respect to professional, pedagogical and cultural differences—to capture the complex ways in which the Australian PSTs and we as leaders have attempted to promote synergies between the contrasting agendas. The term 'transcultural dialogue across difference' has been coined to explain the ways in which this dialogue across difference has been implemented, involving inner dialogue, peer-to-peer dialogue, mentor dialogue and partnership dialogue. Yet our illustrations of these forms of dialogue are mindful that a commitment to such dialogue is no guarantee of ethical practice. The key, we believe, is when this dialogue is underpinned by ongoing engagement with the professional knowledge that the PSTs and we leaders are continually developing through our involvement in a university-based teacher education course.

There are tensions between agendas of self-interest and ethical praxis in probably all international teaching practicums. And a narrow focus on self-interest on the part of an individual PST or a university offering an international practicum would be deeply problematic. But these two agendas do not need to be seen in isolation from each other. The three narratives and our discussion have shown how there are valuable synergies when a practicum programe and individuals in that practicum are aware of the dangers of narrow self-interest and yet are willing to engage in genuine transcultural dialogue across difference and reflection about the possibilities of ethical praxis.

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Chapter 5
Going with the Flow: Pre-service Teacher Learning in, About and with Community

Robyn Babaeff

Prologue

> 'Kia Orana' is a salutation consistently used across the Cook Islands community.
>
> 'Kia Orana' is both a blessing and a wish for good fortune.
>
> 'Kia Orana' is the essence of our people and islands.
>
> The 'Kia Orana' values embody this essence and reflect our aspirations for our islands.
>
> Our visitors will learn and come to appreciate our values, and share these experiences with the world!
>
> http://www.kiaorana.cookislands.travel/.

The spirit of 'Kia Orana' was flowing back and forth as we were greeted by the small group of teachers, many of whom were mentors to our pre-service teachers in their schools. They were about to captivate us with their singing—a fund-raising event to support their travel to Australia. The jam session began with drums pulsating, and harmonious voices totally engulfed the space. As I stood at the beach bar and bistro overlooking the tranquil waters of the South Pacific, I was immersed in the beautiful harmonies of music that I was familiar with in the Western world. This time, however, there was a difference—the drums, ukuleles, guitars and beautiful tones of Maori-Polynesian voices. In a very emotional moment for me, on the fifth song, deep rhythms of a beautiful rendition of 'We are the World' drifted across the space. I was captivated and astounded—nothing accurately portrays the array of feelings within me in that moment. I had to step into the background to dry my eyes and to compose myself—the moment had literally brought me to tears. As I stepped forward to join the others in my group, I contemplated what had just happened to me. As I looked again to the performance, I watched as our pre-service

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teachers were grouped and moving together, and the voices and instruments of the Cook Islands teacher group seeming to flow and connect within and among them. There was some kind of 'together' happening, and it absolutely overwhelmed me. The teachers were clearly united and represented such a quintessence of what this enchanting space embodied as a community. Those gathered were so much more than performers and observers. For me, it felt like a phenomena of 'community' that was revealing itself. For me, this was so much more than a moment of learning —it was an irrevocable moment of insight into human richness and connection, which generated an emergence of something new to my sense of self as a teacher educator. Such a powerful affective moment inspired me to inquire: How does experiencing the essence of a community transform those who actively contribute to and participate within the community? And what do we learn for and about ourselves from such encounters, personally and professionally?

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the processes of my re-conceptualizing the notion of community in my own learning and that of the pre-service teachers who participated in the Cook Islands International Professional Experience (IPE). Community is often defined as an interactive group of people, united by language, traditional cultural practices, and the everyday activities and actions that align to values and morals. A community also unites to establish and achieve everyday connections for ways of being and doing in their life context. From my experiences as leader of the Cook Islands IPE, I have developed new perspectives on what participation in community can bring to our learning and have contemplated what that means for ourselves and others as teachers and learners. In the Cook Islands IPE, what is familiar is challenged through cultural, social, and institutional differences in teaching and ways of being.

The Importance of Community and Culture in the Cook Islands

During my two years of participation in the Cook Islands IPE, I came to see and appreciate the sense of community that permeates all aspects of life in the islands. For example, I was struck by the government and community plans for reigniting Cook Islands Maori language in schools and among the community; the shared moments when we attended church and were emotionally touched by the beautiful voices singing; and a multitude of other learning opportunities such as designing and making the traditional dress fabric of the *pāreu* [sarong]. These were all a mix of traditional and contemporary practices in the community and were so enlightening for us to observe and to participate in. Many changes are being implemented by the Cook Islands Ministry of Education to ensure that the close sense of

community and connections with culture among Cook Islanders is not lost. For example, aspirations for higher qualifications of teaching staff and accrediting schools for their educational programs, with the intention of providing high-quality education for an understanding of the world and the Cook Islanders' place in it, rather than accepting the inevitable population decline that comes from a one-way exit from the islands. Furthermore, there is an aim to broaden the scope for current students' career pathways, to avoid adolescents feeling they have no direction or future in the Islands.

My experiences on the Cook Islands IPE helped me to recognize the importance of an attitude of '*going with the flow*' and watch how participation in school and community activities could facilitate all kinds of deep learning for pre-service teachers, including their sense of self as beginning teachers. The aphorism '*go with the flow*' now holds new and significant meanings for me, as it captures the relaxed and informal nature of the Cook Islands way of life. I found this quality develops in myself, and I observed it in our pre-service teachers through so many meaningful group discussions and individual contemplations.

The Cook Islands IPE

The year 2015 was the 21st year of Monash University pre-service teachers undertaking their professional experience in the Cook Islands. The significance of this ongoing relationship between the Cook Island community and Monash University became very apparent to me from the early days when I was establishing a sense of my own knowing about the community and pre-service teacher engagement. In 2015, the Cook Islands Ministry of Education invited the Monash team to an official welcome on the first day of the placement. Ministry staff were awarded a well-deserved certificate of appreciation from Monash University for their ongoing collaboration and support of our pre-service teachers over many years. The official welcome also indicated that they valued the pre-service teachers' contributions to the school system and was the beginning of our journey of discovering new ways of being in an unfamiliar space of education and life. Three weeks later, at the farewell dinner for school principals and teacher mentors, the value of the Monash University—Cook Islands collaboration—was once again affirmed. One of the principals stated: '*I have students from other overseas universities, but it is different with these Monash students* (as he gestures around the room filled with Monash PSTs). *I have had Monash students for many years, they bring so much to us; my teachers* [mentors] *with Monash students always, always change in big ways after they have worked with every one of these [Monash] students.*' Moments such as these emphasized for me the community perspective and the importance of interrelationships in education. I felt a connection with people I had never met before, in a place I had never been before. I had not anticipated so much richness to my own learning and that of our PSTs—a newness to learning, being, doing, and understanding difference.

Teaching and Learning in Connection with Community

Thomas and Mucherah (2014) explored self-efficacy of pre-service teachers through immersion in unfamiliar cultural environments. The immersion programs provided ongoing experience in social and cultural environments that pertained to culturally diverse and low-income background 'minority children and families' (p. 370). These particular community groups differed greatly to the pre-service teachers' own communities. The pre-service teachers were assigned a community representative to mentor them through their community involvement. Thomas and Mucherah argued that 'to develop teacher efficacy, one must face situations with which they are uncomfortable and learn the power to overcome them' (p. 369). They maintained that connection with those from within a community enables this empowerment. Furthermore, they argued that greater cultural interpretation and authentic participation develops outside the classroom students' school life. Practice that is immersed beyond the classroom and into the events and values within a community creates a holistic approach for pre-service teachers' engagement in their students' development, not only through the school, but also through understanding the students within their family and community too. It can be a distinguishing attribute of teachers' self-efficacy. Thomas and Mucherah highlighted the importance of pre-service teachers' consistent opportunities to interpret reflections for learning about themselves through open conversations with and about the place of community in their learning.

Likewise, Nistor et al. (2015) discussed the socio-emotional and interpersonal perspectives of community that bring cohesion and a sense of belonging for individuals in connection with particular communities. The ways in which individuals contribute to and participate in community is more than learning how to do particular actions. It comes back to how we learn as individuals to be ourselves, and how we choose to contribute and participate. The processes of 'doing' self include 'the ways in which people respond to challenges and conflicts in their lives, how they internalize, interpret, and also further develop the sociocultural rules and standards of what it takes to be a human being'(Stetsenko and Arievitch 2004, p. 494). Conflict can occur within one's sense of self when seeking to find a sense of belonging in community. Conflict between community belonging and a sense of self is more particular in place and space when cultural and linguistic paradigms differ in regard to social engagement (Babaeff 2013).

Developing Narratives of Learning

The pre-service teachers' stories and reflections presented in this chapter are situated in three areas of community—their allocated schools, their participation in activities with the broader Rarotonga community, and the Monash University pre-service teachers' own unique community of learners. In this study, data were

collected from pre-service teachers during spontaneous reflections, which surfaced almost daily, and which then were expressed more deeply in their written journals, formal interviews, and group discussions. The reflections were rich, frequent, and varied in event, but all seemed to express learning and new perspectives in relation to themselves and teaching. Of all the stories shared, I have selected four that provided significant links to new learning and understanding in relation to participation in the classroom, school, or local community. The participants were Kate, Chad, Brad, and Joel. Kate attended the 2015 IPE for her final three week professional placement requirements during the last year of the Bachelor of Education in Primary/Secondary teaching course, with a specialization in music. Chad also attended the 2015 IPE for his final professional placement of the four-year Bachelor of Education (Secondary), with his methods being English and history. In 2016, Brad and Joel were both specializing in physical education and outdoor recreation, with Joel in his second placement for the first year in the Masters of Education and Brad in his third year of a Bachelor of Education. Both these pre-service teachers were involved in preparing and teaching in and out of the classroom, including content that differed to their prior teaching experiences.

During this IPE, there is no choice to move out of the Cook Islands community. Day and night they are teaching, living, and connecting with and within the school and local community, and with each other. When pre-service teachers are doing their professional experience placements in their home contexts, they can leave their allocated school and go back to their familiar support networks and social community. This is not possible when an eight-hour flight distances the pre-service teachers from their established communities, from which they usually gain support for the successes and challenges that inevitably arise during professional experience. Interestingly, internet access is also not as accessible as they are familiar with.

In the following sections, I narrate the pre-service teachers' experiences of learning by using excerpts from interview data that highlighted their learning through being, doing, and interacting in and with the Cook Islands community. I also discuss how their reflections about their learning prompted thoughts in my head about my own learning as a teacher educator. Through developing stories of the Cook Islands experiences of community connection, links to learning with and within community arose by connecting stories of past, present, and future. The narratives reflect the pre-service teachers' learning as dynamic, as they express their shift in learning and identity through their past to the present and for some into the future.

Learning *in* the School Community

Throughout the Cook Islands IPE, many of the pre-service teachers reflected on the interpersonal approaches they observed between themselves and their mentors, and with the students in their classrooms. There seemed to be a general consensus that the interpersonal approaches between teachers, children, and pre-service teachers

were relaxed, inviting, accepting, respectful, and warm, and that 'going with the flow' was very much reflected in the attitudes of many. The PSTs made comparisons between their local (Melbourne) and Cook Island professional experiences and noted the different dynamics in their relationships with their mentor teachers. For example, Chad noted that he had

> Never had relationships with anyone like this before in my [professional] school experiences. Mentors [here] are different with pre-service teachers– it made me think about how I would be as a mentor… It was always "here is the space, use it how you want to, and integrate what you need to – just go for it"…Lots of feedback. Mentors saw us as associate teachers. I became more confident as I was treated as teacher not as a pre-service teacher. I felt like an equal. I never felt like I was imposing on anyone. I got more confident in my teaching abilities and the way I think and do, and everything in general.

Reflections such as this showed that Chad was learning about himself and was beginning to discover his identity as a teacher and as a mentor teacher himself in the future. Social cohesion through the interpersonal (Nistor et al. 2015) and the mentor/pre-service teacher relationship suggested that Chad was beginning to see himself as part of the teaching profession, now and as he may be in the future. The comparison made by Chad between his experiences at home and those in the Cook Islands suggests that completing his final placement in an international context prompted him to see himself with more confidence. He appeared to secure his belief in himself that he could and would achieve his ambitions as a teacher. Feeling like 'an equal' to his mentor provided expansive scope for learning, as he reflected that 'lots of feedback' was given, and that he felt valued and respected by his mentor for his teaching practice. Nistor et al. (2015) determined that a sense of community mediates acceptance of knowledge sharing and is likely to foster 'membership [that] becomes more valuable and meaningful, and members accept each other more readily' (Nistor et al. 2015, p. 261).

The experience of community in the relationship he developed with his mentor also seemed to create significant learning for Chad in his approach with the classroom students. He reflected on his experience to consider what this means to him and for his understanding of himself as a teacher. He stated that

> I could build the classroom the way I wanted it and the relationships with the students were so real, so I could just get on with it…. In terms of my teaching practice, I am very implicit and I learnt that I need to be more explicit, so I can really give the students a sound focus and direction. Working with students was a real eye-opener: relationships matter, so then we don't have to fight every step of the way, so can really focus on the teaching. I've never had relationships with anyone like this before; mentors or [classroom] students.

The reflections that Chad shared persisted with me, and really confirmed for me the importance of 'going with the flow.' For my own professional learning, seeing this in action and hearing it in reflections indicated how students began trusting themselves more, and how it increased their confidence to see and put into action different approaches to teaching, sometimes spontaneously. It seemed they were learning new ways and developing different techniques for teaching and trusting themselves to take risks. I affirmed with the students the need to 'go with the flow'

and to embrace the challenges and anxieties that they might have been feeling as opportunities to learn about teaching, and more specifically about themselves. I found it inspiring to be conversing with individuals who shared their angst in particular situations. These moments of sharing what had occurred, experiencing a dawning realization of their own achievements and potential, were like watching learning in motion. The learning was not only about how to teach, but appeared to be a new way of seeing themselves. I found that as a teacher educator, my role of being an interested and empathetic listener and acknowledger, encouraging them to go with the flow of the school and the classroom, seemed to aid the pre-service teachers' processing about their own teaching and learning.

In another example of the impact of the prevailing culture of the school community on pre-service teacher learning, Joel had been initially concerned about clarity of expectations in terms of his teaching practice. He expressed a need for all to be planned as soon as possible. In my conversations with him, I suggested on a number of occasions he just 'go with the flow' to consider what was presenting for the next step—to see and feel the ambience of what was happening and to move with it. Joel did not initially embrace this approach, and he sought specific direction from his mentor on each lesson. I provided Joel with encouragement to not put too much pressure on himself. After his first week of placement, Joel came to see the value of taking a more relaxed approach to his teaching and he became aware of a change. He recalled that:

> At first I thought that 'go with the flow' was so clichéd. As time passed I realised it was really true, it helped me find confidence in myself…that I could really look at and listen to what was happening and take it from there. Early on I had felt [that the mentor] teacher should be telling me what to do…but then I could just go with the flow, and it was working. I felt more confident in my teaching and making quick, related decisions, I realised I can do a whole lot more than I thought I could.

Chad and Joel were not the only ones who felt the culture of the school community permeate their thinking and learning as pre-service teachers. Brad also found his teaching approach developed spontaneously in his classroom. Brad explained that a more relaxed approach brought more than he could have anticipated. Clearly, he felt his teaching became expansive and authentic:

> In the Cook Islands they are a relaxed culture and it flows into their education system – bare feet [in the classroom] represents this…I compare [this] to my Australian education experiences [that] had more structured outcomes and objectives with high results…[This] lessens the focus and time for developing passions and interests. Written goals rather than just experiencing waterfalls and rivers in the outdoors [like in the Cook Islands]. My mentor was amazing, it didn't matter what I was teaching so long as learning was taking place. I had a free rein to do what feels right, more freedom to move with where the kids were at. It seemed so meaningful to work on an interdisciplinary approach – maths, statistics, sports, the land and geography – all with kids so engaged. It seemed like profound learning experiences – teaching how to learn. Some structure but not over structured. I'm definitely going to work this way from now on…Going with the flow 100% gives a different flow – I don't want to feel boxed in by expectations of planning to perfection [and] miss other important doors that may open for meaningful learning…[I am] looking at how I can bring this to my teaching.

These narratives illustrate how the relaxed spirit of the Cook Islands community flows into the essence of teaching and learning, and how the pre-service teachers embraced this style as they moved through their placement. They developed more confidence in themselves to flow with their own teaching style as they connected to the more relaxed mode of the islands. What was initially a conflict for what *should* be happening became internalized (Stetsenko and Arievitch 2004) and is now, for these pre-service teachers, a more natural way to be.

Learning *About* the Local Community

In her learning about teaching in the Cook Islands, Kate discovered the importance of wider social and cultural values of the community to the learning of students in schools. Her desire for authentic learning went beyond the classroom to embrace the wider community concerns about the lack of Maori language in schools. As a music teacher, Kate attempted to connect with the government's desire to reignite Cook Island Maori teaching. During literacy week, Kate designed an activity in which the students presented the words of a song, firstly in English and then in Cook Islands Maori. As a group, the students were asked to write and perform the chorus to the song '*What a wonderful world*' in both English and Maori. Kate knew that music and movement was such a culturally embedded semiotic process in the Cook Islands, so she utilized this cultural practice, and the desire of the community to preserve their Maori language, into her teaching. In working with this unfamiliar language and cultural context, Kate started to see herself not only as a pre-service teacher, but also as a learner. She was teaching her students, but at the same time, learning how to be culturally responsive and respectful of the community in which she was teaching. Kate recalled:

> The main thing that I took away from the experience was… [that] it's a different culture, it's a different language some of the time, [and] just very different to what I'm used to…[What] really has shaped me, as a teacher, is that I was forced to be a learner. Sometimes during previous placements it was always… 'alright I am the teacher, I'm the one who needs to be doing the talking and the teaching, and giving the information to the students.' But now… I've begun actually really listening to what the students have to say a lot more …it's really interesting to take on board what they're saying and actually listening to it more. And being in that position where I'm not just the one who's in charge and the one that knows it all, it's the students who know quite a bit as well. I've begun to take this on. So that's definitely the main thing I took away from that experience - that two-way learning.

Through awareness her being in an unfamiliar context of the classroom and wider community, the taken-for-granted assumptions about teaching that were evident for Kate at home were not present in the Cook Islands. Kate's engagement as a teacher in this community altered when she came to know the students through her daily interactions with them. Her awareness of the wider community goal of preserving the Cook Islands Maori language became an active influence for her own teaching content. Kate spoke about how the government and local community were anxious

to increase the teaching of the Maori language, and how this had implications for her teaching. She stated that:

> At the Ministry of Education they made a big point of saying that their Maori language is slowly drifting off. In their households they're speaking a lot of English between the parents and their kids, so they really want to put that back into education and make it a big thing. So that was a real focus for me, as well making sure that they were practising their language. That's where I started developing my unit plan and lesson plans…I think [students] having that feeling of [dance] movement as well, it helped their confidence because it gave them something else to focus on. So it was combining all those elements of music and all those elements of movement and sound…really developed their confidence, as well. And I think it was mainly the cultural sense that showed when they were really close together and they supported each other. I think that's their culture and that was all through their classroom… they would look out for each other.

Kate's experiences in the Cook Islands showed her how important it is for pre-service teachers to take into account the cultural heritage of their students and to build on this background in their teaching. Another significant experience for Kate was her attendance at a community fund-raising event:

> I think one [experience] that really stood out for me was attending the fundraiser that the group of my [school's] teachers went to, and it was a great relaxed night, and they were up there singing and performing like it was second nature to them, which it probably was. But for us it was something so new and so special…such a beautiful sight to just see them all laughing and smiling, and singing and playing their instruments…I'm quite a musical person myself, so coming from that background I go, "oh wow… I'd love to be part of that every day." And that was seen across the whole island. They're very musical… [and] they like to bring music in when they're socializing, and when they're at home they often perform or sing together. It was really moving.
>
> I think that's one of the really important things that you can take away from being immersed in another culture…seeing how they express themselves and how different things are built into their traditions and their culture like singing or music… It has really changed how I teach, how I see students, how I see other teachers, and what I want to do in my teaching, as well… The Cook Islands experience has [given]me an understanding that by experiencing things differently, you can bring that in [to teaching] and link it to your understanding of…[their] everyday life. It's opened my mind up to all new possibilities.

Throughout Kate's story, the reflections formed a very emotive perspective of what she was learning through her engagement with the community. Kate appeared to be reflecting on a transformation of her thinking about teaching. She was intrigued by the sustaining of home languages and was surprised that she was able to achieve so much through her teaching in relation to the Maori maintenance program. More than bringing Maori to the classroom, Maori had been brought to Kate. The language is not simply a two-way learning experience—for Kate, new thoughts of culture and language had surfaced.

Her experiences in the Cook Islands not only impacted on Kate's teaching and learning while on placement, but have laid the foundation for her future teaching career. One year after her Cook Island IPE, Kate contacted me to discuss how inspired she was from her experience and to tell me that she was now involved in post-graduate research in relation to community languages and maintaining sources

of heritage. Kate's sharing during the interview and then re-connecting with me one year later to share where her learning with the community had taken her made me reflect on what learning about community means. I have come to see that enriching experiences offered by unfamiliar places and spaces can create aspirations for further knowing and create new possibilities—inspirational encounters can create unforeseen pathways for the future. After the 2016 IPE, this was affirmed for me once again with three of our pre-service teachers returning to the Cook Islands in 2017 to commence their graduate teaching year, after successfully obtaining teaching positions there.

Learning *with* the Local Community

Providing pre-service teachers with the opportunity to contribute to and learn within local communities during IPE enables the learning from their past experiences in education to be utilized in their current teaching and engagement with the local community. Brad reflected on a particular community connection with which he became involved, through a school outreach program for the youth of the Cook Islands community. This event involved helping his students prepare for a school-in-community suicide prevention strategy. Brad expressed that it was quite an intense and confronting experience, in which students from across all year levels were supported in the classroom to develop speeches for 'UMATTER,' an inter-school program that aimed to reduce the high youth suicide rate in the Cook Islands. Brad was involved in supporting students to prepare and deliver speeches on the topic. He described his involvement and the impact on his learning as a teacher in the following way:

> The community event was for suicide awareness. I was told that in the last four years there were 26 young male suicides, huge for this island's small population. UMATTER is a community event [that] involved preparing in classroom teaching each day in the weeks leading up to it. Students were writing their own speeches by themselves. We were supporting them to feel like confident participants in their community, [that] they have a voice. [It was] very raw and emotional for 12 year olds to be given such a deep and meaningful task. It all left me with an incredible feeling and so much wanting to be a part of this community. Groundwork [classroom teaching and learning] from start to finish saw the students confident to deliver speeches powerfully. It was so inspiring to see them becoming community leaders [and] inspired me to want to keep giving more…On the night the student speeches were presented it touched the community with tears – it really felt [that] community bonding in a tough time was happening.

Brad's words of wanting to give more and being inspired after watching his students' successful speeches clearly shows he had developed a meaningful connection with his students and the broader community. Hallman (2012) explained there should be a commitment for preparing pre-service teachers, not only for the school environments, but also for understanding that teaching is 'beyond the walls of the classroom and into the world' (p. 241). The community and the students certainly

showed Brad a whole new world, one that overwhelmed him as he came to understand it all, and once again learning was a two-way, reciprocal flow.

Another way in which connections with the wider Cook Islands community were developed outside of the schools was through our involvement with the local Scouts association. We were invited to be involved in a scout activity—a guided cross island hike, led by members of the scout group, many of whom knew our pre-service teachers from their schools. We were told there was no cost but could contribute a donation for their attendance at the New Zealand jamboree. When the hat went around for our collection, a substantial amount was collected, and the 'Chief' (Scout leader) expressed how overwhelmed he was at the contribution, so much so that many of their scouts could now attend the jamboree. We all attended the Monday evening Scout meeting to give the donation and to express our appreciation for the guided walk. Before we went, scout leader Ben asked if the students would like to bring an activity idea to the meeting. They spontaneously devised a game which was a rugby/Australian rules football game, and a very engaging match ensued. Once again, the idea of 'going with the flow' was in place, as the pre-service teachers responded spontaneously to the invitation to organize a game. This time, however, it reached a different community in the Cook Islands—the Scouts. This was our final week and even though I was officially the leader of our pre-service teachers at this time, beyond the initial connection with the Scouts, the leadership devolved to the pre-service teachers themselves as they contributed to the Scout group activities. Our pre-service teachers were leading and engaging in community activities way beyond any stated requirements for successful completion of their placement. From this activity, the pre-service teachers developed a broader understanding of Rarotonga's history and geography, and a new network of community connections was established. There was a relaxed atmosphere throughout the afternoon with lots of spontaneous engagement with the Scouts, and the pre-service teachers were showing real interest in the extra-curricula activities of these boys. As the pre-service teachers became involved in an out-of-school activity, it brought a different sense of knowing about these young people and their country. The hike to Rarotonga's highest point, the 'Needle,' was a learning experience for the Monash IPE community, as we were learning about the land, language and culture, and about communities past and present. It certainly was an experience of learning *in*, *within*, and *about* community, from so many differing perspectives.

Conclusion

My two visits to the Cook Islands as leader of this IPE have been a substantial learning journey for me. Through my own reflections, and on hearing the many stories from the pre-service teachers, I came to see how teacher education can be enriched by these experiences. By presenting these stories of learning and experience, the interpersonal influence on learning is highlighted to show what this means

for discovering one's own strengths and for learning different ways to approach teaching. There was an affirming 'flow' throughout the stories about one's self and the potential for action in the future. This was not only for the pre-service teachers, but for me as well. I ask myself: How can I, as a teacher educator, continue to support these processes of learning when we are not in a community of significant difference internationally? How can I continue the learning about and with community when I am in my familiar home context? These questions have stayed with me in my teaching ever since.

Supporting pre-service teachers to embrace difference with confidence in an authentic and purposeful manner becomes possible when immersed in spaces of teaching that are different to our own. Building positive relationships for active and relevant contributions creates a different sense of self for one's own teaching identity and capability. Reflections on what is new and different create a pathway for reflexive action. Change and confidence in approach to teaching can happen as pre-service teachers bring difference, self, and others proactively to their learning and consciousness. There is always difference between schools, even in the local context. Any difference can be embraced as an opportunity for learning, affirming or reflecting upon for change and growth. Supporting pre-service teachers to believe in their own learning from the past, and their ability to learn and develop in present moments, can bring a strong sense of self as teacher and pathways to a future previously unimagined. A major influence for me as teacher educator is the opportunities for pre-service teacher thinking about self and difference without too many preconceived ideas—in other words, to *go with the flow*.

Epilogue

Once again, I felt emotionally overwhelmed as I listened to beautiful sounds of harmony. However, there was a difference this time. We were not in the bar at the beach, and the harmonies were coming from our pre-service teachers. They were clearly connecting as a community of appreciative learners. We had invited all the mentor teachers and school principals to a thank-you dinner, and 'thank-you' came flowing through song in the Australian classic Downunder. The harmony of all 24 pre-service teachers was pitch perfect, and the words were altered to connect with their Cook Islands experience of beauty and learning through an intercultural experience. Even more so, there was Maori flowing through the songs as well. 'Kia Orana' was flowing through voice and action. As the presentations and words of appreciation concluded, I was not alone in feeling emotionally overwhelmed. Members of the audience were also wiping a tear, and openly and enthusiastically expressing that they had learnt a great deal themselves, through the pre-service teachers' contributions to their schools and community.

The farewell thank you dinner was clearly representing the reciprocal relationships and deep appreciation of one community to another, and between communities. Deep interconnection was present. Now, on their return home, the pre-

service teachers continue to connect through social media with each other, and with their Cook Islands associates. Our journeys may differ now, but the relationships and engagement with the Cook Islands schools and community have created relationships that will be with those involved for many years to come.

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Chapter 6
Mentoring-Learning in a Cross-Language and Cross-Cultural Framework: Australian Pre-service Teachers and Israeli Mentor-Teachers

Janina Kahn-Horwitz, David Mittelberg, Roberta Bell-Kligler and Rachael Gelfman Schultz

Introduction

This chapter is a narrative-based account of a three-week international professional experience in Israel for pre-service teachers from Australia, which took place during the winter of 2016. It involved six local Israeli schools, where Hebrew or Arabic was the language of instruction, and the pre-service teachers were guided in their experience by mentor-teachers from these schools. We show how the pre-service teachers gained theoretical and practical experience in the field of sustainability, and how they responded to opportunities for encounters—both structured and informal—with local Israeli pre-service teacher peers from Oranim College.

Three sets of voices are heard in the stories we report on here. These include the Australian pre-service teachers visiting unfamiliar Israeli schools on their IPE, mentored by Israeli mentor-teachers. Also represented are the voices of the Israeli mentor-teachers mentoring the Australia pre-service teachers in the familiar environment of their own schools. And finally, there are our own voices, the authors of this paper who, in collaboration with their Australian colleagues, designed and supervised this IPE.

This was the first time that Oranim College has hosted an IPE from Australia. While the idea of an IPE for pre-service teachers from abroad meshed well with our

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vision, since this was the first time we actually did it, we were apprehensive. Our qualms ranged from issues of traversing the language barrier to logistical arrangements as well as possible cultural tensions. The newness, and indeed strangeness, of the program existed certainly for the pre-service teachers in three interrelated dimensions—cognitive, normative, and social—as they entered schools with different cultural codes, where they could neither understand nor converse in the prevalent language, and where the climate in the classroom was foreign to them. The schools, also, agreed to take part in the IPE, but it was not without some trepidation on their parts that they accepted the Australian pre-service teachers. The Israeli mentor-teachers who had never functioned in such a role with teaching students from abroad were apprehensive especially about issues of language. The situation was made more complex by the fact that some of the visiting pre-service teachers were placed in Hebrew-speaking schools, while others went to Arabic language schools. This decision was taken jointly by us with our Australian colleagues. We thought it would be a good way for the students to experience different sectors of Israeli society.

Literature Review

Unlike domestic professional practical experiences for pre-service teachers in Israel, the international dimension of this program necessarily involved an encounter with language and cultural strangeness in everyday life and in the professional context. The IPE in Israel for students from Monash was by definition embedded in a cross-language and cross-cultural encounter within multiple layers of guest–host relations. All three narrative voices in this study, the Australian pre-service teachers, their Israeli mentor-teachers, and the authors of this paper from the Israeli college International School attributed meaning to this cross-language, cross-cultural IPE experience. How is this web of goals and interactions to be understood and interpreted? Much can be gained from work done in the last 25 years in the domain of transnational cultural tourism and voluntourism (e.g., Pearce and Coghlan 2008; Lev Ari and Mittelberg 2008; Mittelberg and Palgi 2011; Sasson et al. 2011). The former relates to interaction in a world of foreign language, culture, and customs, and the latter relates to working professionally in that pre-defined context for a predetermined *temporary* stay. Studies regarding pedagogies of discomfort (Zembylas 2010) have helped us as authors to appreciate how the Australian pre-service teachers, far from home, struggled to feel comfortable in the host country and function effectively in a school culture that was quite foreign and strange.

To traverse the chasm between disparate cultures, we utilize in this chapter a phenomenological conceptualization approach. This approach seeks to explain the intersubjective process where guests and hosts interact in a paradigm that does not advantage one culture over the other. Mittelberg's (1988) utilizing of the dimension of "strangeness and familiarity" is especially apt since strangeness is not only a

cross-cultural phenomenon but an aspect of humanity's universal everyday life. In fact, the boundaries of the taken-for-granted world are found precisely at the point where the familiar becomes strange, while it is expanded only when the strange is transformed into the familiar. Thus, the phenomenon of transcultural contact and change can be appreciated within a broader context of social interaction rather than as a contest between cultures (Mittelberg 1988, p. 28).

Within this strangeness, we can identify three interrelated dimensions—cognitive, normative, and social. In the cognitive dimension, the stranger must comprehend the new order to make a nomos out of the chaos and must learn the new symbols of the culture in order to live within it. In the normative, the stranger is required to internalize the norms of the host society, so that they become meaningful. Finally, in the social dimension, the stranger must bridge the social distance between self and hosts, thus moving from outsider to insider of the new group (Mittelberg 1988, p. 26). In our field of analysis, teachers and mentors both need to cope with the other's foreign language, to learn the ethical codes and value practices of the school and classroom culture of each party, and, finally, to build affective relationships that help bond the teachers and mentors to each other as they encounter and cope, to different degrees, with the unfamiliar world now thrust upon them.

The power of international travel as a facilitator of educational intervention and professional development particularly within the Israel experience has long been recognized (Mittelberg 1988). Traveling to a foreign country is a disruption of one's daily context and casts habits of thought and behavior into a new light (Verplanken et al. 2008). Travelers confront the existential challenge of constructing familiarity out of strangeness along cognitive, normative, and social dimensions. The impetus to explore new perspectives and attitudes and to learn new behaviors always begins with this type of confrontation with information that disconfirms assumptions, expectations, or previous self-appraisal (Lewin 1951; Schein 1996). The literature suggests that while critically important, however, the encounter with strangeness and disconfirming information is not sufficient to induce most individuals or groups to undergo the process of change. Indeed, tourists often choose to travel and experience the host country from within a constructed "environmental bubble" that assuages the threatening aspects of the unfamiliar and disconfirming. The environmental bubble serves both to preserve some familiarity within a strange environment and to familiarize the traveler with strangeness (Mittelberg 1988). However, once inside the Israeli classroom, the pre-service teacher from abroad is called upon to emerge from the safety of the bubble so that the prospect of restructuring attitudes, expectations, and behaviors often engenders anxiety about the potential for exposure of incompetence and challenges to self-esteem and self-efficacy.

Travel outside of one's homeland in the company of a mixed group may provide the ideal setting for the juxtaposition of comfort and discomfort. In the Israeli IPE, the Australian pre-service teacher participants explored radically different perspectives in the company of a supportive group made up of local peer pre-service teachers, Monash faculty IPE mentors, local mentor-teachers, Oranim faculty IPE

facilitators, and Oranim pre-service teachers. In designing the IPE, the intention was that this mixed supportive group would be especially helpful for pre-service teachers wanting to experience and function within a foreign setting. It was felt that the safety net provided by this mixed group could help pre-service teachers in IPE programs navigate the disruption inherent in international travel, work, and volunteering. Through this, the Australian pre-service teachers could gain an insider's view, making the unfamiliar more accessible and less threatening.

Methodology

This research focuses on 16 Australian pre-service teachers from the Monash University's Faculty of Education who undertook the IPE in Israel, their Israeli mentor-teachers, and the four Israel-based authors of this chapter who designed and coordinated the IPE program. Of the 16 pre-service teachers, two were male and 14 were female. Ten were undergraduate, and six were graduate students. Regarding their specializations, six specialized in early childhood education, four in primary education, and nine in secondary education. Thirteen were Australian citizens, and three were international students. Five students were of Jewish heritage, and nine students had never visited Israel before. All of the students had travelled outside of Australia before.

Of the four authors of this chapter from the Oranim International School, the first three named are also academic faculty. The fourth directs evaluation and research at Oranim International School. Along with other members of the International School, they led the design and implementation of the IPE. All aspects of the project, including the research itself, was done in collaboration with the team from Monash.

The decision to place the student-teachers in both Hebrew and Arabic language schools was taken jointly. In Israel, there are separate school systems for Arab and Jewish students, both of which are supervised by the Israeli Ministry of Education. Differences between the systems are manifested in terms of resource allocation and infrastructure, teacher-training (which generally takes place in separate teacher-training colleges for Arab and Jewish teachers), and language of instruction. However, the curriculum (including mathematics) is the same in both systems, as are the matriculation examinations and nationally standardized achievement tests. Arabic and Hebrew are the languages of instruction in the respective systems. In most Jewish schools, students are not obligated to study Arabic as a second language, while Hebrew is a mandatory subject in all Arab schools.

The Israel-based team contacted 12 schools in the city of Haifa and northern Israel about the possibility of accepting the Australian IPE students. All schools had either hosted pre-service teachers for their local practicum or were connected to Oranim College of Education through other projects. Six schools were ultimately chosen, following their agreement as well as the Israeli team's assessment of their suitability. Two schools (one primary and one high school) served a population of Arabic-speaking school students, three schools (one kindergarten, one junior high

school and one high school) served a population of Hebrew-speaking school students, and one kindergarten was bilingual, in that both young Jewish and Arab children attended the kindergarten and were taught in both languages with a greater emphasis placed on Arabic due to their being less use of the Arabic language in the communities where the Jewish children lived. At the bilingual kindergarten, all the mentor-teachers, both Jewish and Arab, spoke both Arabic and Hebrew, with different levels of English proficiency. Mentor-teachers at the Jewish schools spoke Hebrew as their first language with different levels of English proficiency. Mentor-teachers at the Arab schools spoke Arabic and Hebrew and had a high level of English proficiency as they were all English language teachers.

A mixed methods approach was employed in this research. Quantitative data were gathered by administering to IPE pre-service teachers post-program questionnaires, which began with closed questions regarding participant background details and their satisfaction with different program components. Descriptive data and frequencies were calculated for the quantitative data. The questionnaires also included open-ended questions that added a qualitative component to the survey research. All questionnaires were administered anonymously.

Additional post-program data were collected from the pre-service teachers at two points. First, at the final summing up session of their 15-school day international practicum in Israel, coordinated and run by the authors of this paper. On this occasion, the Australian pre-service teachers provided written feedback regarding their perceptions of the optimal skill set and the intercultural and language competency skills required of mentor-teachers in a cross-language and cross-cultural framework. Second, six months following their IPE experience, back in Australia, the pre-service teachers wrote responses, anonymously, to two open questions within a closed social network group: (1) "To what extent have you (pre-service teachers) used in your current practice teaching what you have learned from your IPE?" and (2) "To what extent have your experiences with your IPE mentor-teachers impacted your present practice teaching?"

Further qualitative data consisted of one-on-one in-depth interviews with the Israel mentor-teachers that were conducted one month after completion of the IPE. These interviews explored the mentors' perceptions of the cross-cultural and cross-language mentoring the pre-service teachers in their schools. All qualitative data from both pre-service teachers and mentor-teachers (including written responses and transcripts of interviews) were analyzed using thematic approaches as described by Denzin and Lincoln (2005).

The conceptual framework underpinning the research is phenomenological (Creswell 2009). This means that we did not set out assuming to know the experiences of the participants or the meaning they would make of these experiences (Bogdan and Biklen 2003), including the impact that the IPE would play on their developing identities. Rather, we attempted to gain entry into their conceptual world in order to understand the meaning they themselves constructed (Geertz 1973).

As is characteristic of qualitative research, the authors of this study were the main instruments for data collection and analysis (Merriam 1998, p. 7). We listened

carefully to the participants, "for their stories" (Lawrence-Lightfoot and Davis 1997) and to their stories. In the tradition of phenomenological researchers, we probed for multiple perspectives, looked for patterns, and ultimately analyzed the data. Through the research process, we simultaneously collected and analyzed data, trying "to build toward theory from observations and intuitive understandings gained in the field" (Merriam 1998, p. 7).

Narrative Study

The field of interpretive qualitative research includes a number of possible ways to present our findings. Creswell's (2007) discussion of how the type or approach of qualitative inquiry shapes the design or procedures of a study convinced us that narrative research was a most appropriate choice. Within narrative research, our analytic strategies were commensurate with Polkinghorne's (1995) definition of "analysis of narratives" (p. 12), which involves the identification and deep description of themes that hold across stories. Pinnegar and Daynes (2006) write about how, during narrative research, a relationship between the researcher and the researched may develop, leading to learning and change for all parties. Indeed, as individuals professionally invested in the success and impact of this IPE, it was crucial to us that we hear and understand the comments and reflections of the pre-service teachers and mentor-teachers. As we have said above, this was the first time we, the faculty of the Oranim International School, were hosting an IPE. Thus, the opinions and feedback of both the pre-service teachers and mentor-teachers, their words and their insights, were of the utmost importance to us as designers, leaders, and researchers of this and any future IPEs.

While we remained committed to paying attention to details in the stories themselves, our main focus was on analyzing the themes that emerged across all of the data. We present now the findings of this study organized in the following themes: negotiating issues as they emerge; the importance of the pre-service teacher and mentor relationship; pre-service teacher perceptions of mentors: universal dimensions of the pre-service teacher and mentor relationship; cross-cultural dimensions of pre-service teacher and mentor relationships; cross-language experiences: barrier or opportunity.

Findings

Negotiating Issues as They Emerge

Before the pre-service teachers arrived from Australia, Janina and Roberta (the first and third authors) visited the six schools with our Monash IPE coordinator, Angela.

During these conversations with Angela, Janina remembers feeling deeply concerned about the language barrier:

> I understood that language barriers during the Monash IPE in Italy were successfully overcome because of Italy's Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) policy whereby different content areas in schools are taught in English. Israel does not have a CLIL language policy. I was wondering if relying on the English foreign language abilities of the school students and the mentor-teachers as well as using body language would suffice (Janina, personal reflection).

We appreciated even then the need to prepare ourselves to negotiate and resolve the challenges of this IPE *as they emerged*.

The Crucial Importance of the Pre-service Teacher—Mentor Relationship

In all forms of data we collected, pre-service teachers and mentors repeatedly referred to the importance and complexity of the relationship that developed on this IPE between pre-service teachers and their mentors. We will go on to identify numerous themes regarding mentoring-learning, but we wanted to make a clear definitive statement early on that this relationship appeared to be pre-eminent in all participants' minds when we asked them to reflect on their experiences on this IPE. We believe that some of the sub-themes within this larger theme of the mentor-teacher and pre-service teacher relationship can be understood as universal, meaning that they could apply in a monolingual as well as a cross-cultural, cross-language context, while other themes can be seen as specific to the international, cross-cultural, cross-language context of this Israeli IPE.

Pre-service Teacher Perceptions of Mentor-Teachers and Practice Teaching

On the student surveys, students rated different universal aspects of their relationship with their mentor-teachers: A very high 88% of Monash students reported that they gained knowledge and skills from the experience that would contribute to their development as a teacher, while 57% reported that their mentor-teacher assisted them to reflect on their teaching practice and 44% reported that their mentors assisted them in preparing lessons to a great or very great degree. On the other hand, as perhaps is to be expected, only 38% reported that they participated to a large or very large extent in school curricular activities such as school concerts, meetings, and excursions (Fig. 1).

Monash pre-service teachers discussed their relationship with their mentors as one of the highlights of their IPE. They appreciated and benefited from observing

the mentor-teachers. As one student wrote: "The different teaching methods and approaches in this placement, gives me opportunities to think about my own philosophy." Another wrote: "Israel has been one of the best experiences of my life. It has been amazing to be able to work with the teachers … and watch the way they interact with the children and the lessons they plan. Thank you for allowing me to participate!".

Pre-service teachers described in positive terms their relationships with mentor-teachers. One wrote: "I had a very inspiring and motivated mentor at my school and this really made the experience for me." Another wrote about the "ability to engage with teachers in an international context." Monash pre-service teachers also appreciated seeing the differences between Israeli and Australian teachers. One wrote: "The most important thing I think is to know how the education system works in different places and how teachers educate children in different ways." Another wrote about "the ability to see a completely different way of teaching."

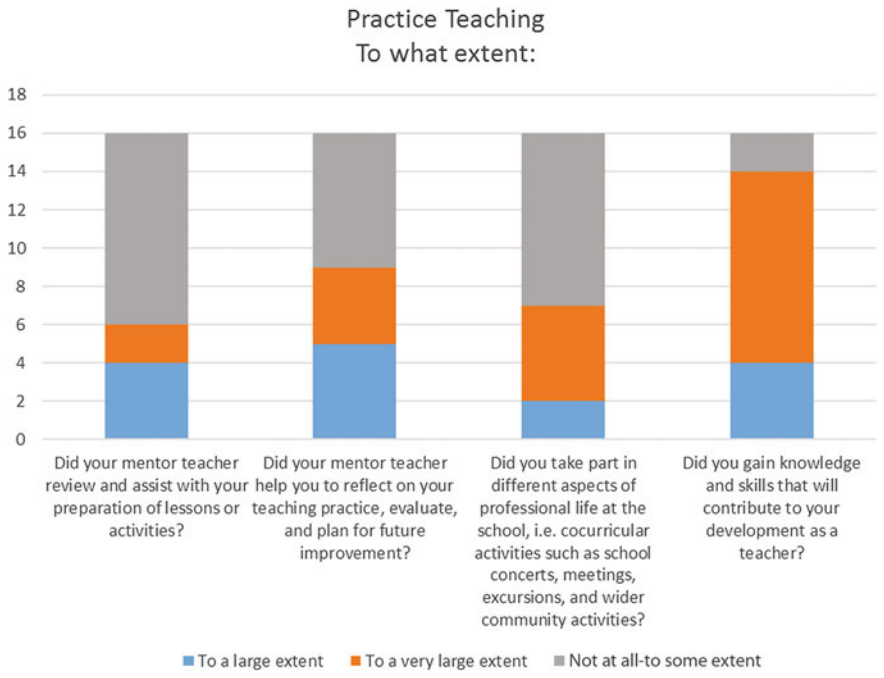

Fig. 1 Student perceptions of mentor-teachers' impact on their professional experience

Universal Dimensions of the Pre-service Teacher and Mentor Relationship

In the pre-service teacher surveys, Monash pre-service teachers repeatedly emphasized the importance of open dialogue between them and their mentor-teachers. Pre-service teachers would advise incoming IPE participants to: "Open the dialogue between you and your mentor-teacher as early as possible!" and "Make plenty of times to meet with your mentor-teacher throughout the program to make sure they understand your expectations and you understand theirs." Pre-service teachers were eager to learn about the mentor-teacher's content and style of teaching. As one student wrote, "[the mentor should be] willing to talk you through their lessons to show you how and why they teach the way they do." Another wrote, a mentor should have "time to sit down either casually or formally to talk to the pre-service teacher about his/her own teaching methods, pedagogy, and anything that can gain a better understanding of him/her."

Pre-service teachers saw the time of the mentor-teacher as very valuable and the issue of time came up in different contexts. In the immediate post-international practicum feedback, most pre-service teachers (11 in total) mentioned the importance of receiving feedback in a timely fashion. This would provide an opportunity for improvement before the pre-service teacher taught again. One student noted that effective mentor-teacher communication was enhanced when a mentor-teacher "makes time to debrief and provide feedback after a lesson." Another pre-service teacher mentioned how important it was "to have time to talk about the lesson plan, teaching and give any constructive feedback" with the mentor-teacher.

The importance of the mentor-teacher being organized and also being a facilitator between the pre-service teachers and the rest of the school were points mentioned on the immediate post-international practicum questionnaire by half of the pre-service teachers. One wrote in broad terms about the role: "Taking responsibility for all the student's teaching and overall involvement at school: Collaborated with the other teachers and knows what you are doing outside of their class. For example, English language classes or someone who introduces their mentee to other possible networks."

Included here was also the ability and the preparedness of the mentor to challenge the pre-service teacher in a supportive manner. The questionnaire responses that support this theme included comments like: "willing to challenge you but help you at the same time"; "be helpful but provide challenge[s] at appropriate time[s]"; "encourage [the] pre-service teacher to try out their ideas"; and finally, "someone who utilizes a mentee's individual strengths for the task at hand."

All 16 pre-service teachers wrote about the communicative and supportive abilities of mentor-teachers: They valued a mentor-teacher who "listens, wants to know your expectations and needs." Other descriptions of a valued mentor included: "[being] friendly"; "[being] welcoming"; "[being] kind (willing to include pre-service teacher in the classroom)"; "[being] patient"; "[having] the ability to build relationships with students"; "being available to chat generally, not just for

5 min after class specifically about the class"; "invit[ing] you to events outside of school"; "makes you feel that they want you at the school"; "caring [including] asking about the pre-service teacher's feelings and thoughts"; and "[being] someone that can break down the traditional barriers of professional conduct—e.g., someone who goes the extra mile and takes a genuine interest in the livelihood of the mentee." In response to the open-ended questions posted six months after the international practicum, one pre-service teacher wrote: "I was extremely lucky to have a mentor-teacher who showed me kindness, understanding and love. She constantly checked in with me to see how I was going mentally and offered help wherever she could."

For pre-service teachers, certain personal qualities were valued. They discussed such attributes as being "passionate," "insightful," "inspiring," "a good educator," "approachable," and "lov[ing] teaching and students." Part of these characteristics included being professional: "tells us about the students (kids who are bright [and those that] will need help)," and demonstrating professionalism that comes with experience: "[being] relaxed about when [and] how to teach." Other characteristics included being flexible and reflective, "adaptable," "open-minded," and "open to different teaching styles," and significantly, being "someone who can accept when they are not correct."

Several pre-service teachers highlighted the idea of "relationship" as providing a platform for development in a less typical sense in that they gained more confidence to manage in a new and unfamiliar "teaching landscape." It is worth quoting one pre-service teacher's response at length:

> I wasn't constantly shadowing [my mentor-teacher] and she wasn't constantly offering me advice and opportunity[es]. Yet as a result, I took it upon myself to have conversations with many other teachers, shadow them, teach their classes and receive advice from them. I essentially created a placement experience for myself that didn't need me to rely solely on one teacher, but rather seek opportunities from all areas of the school. In doing so I integrated into the staffroom culture a lot better and faster and I received a greater educational experience. I believe this experience affected my mentality going into my most recent placement, as I walked into the staffroom on day one with a lot more confidence and sought advice and opportunities from all areas of the school.

Connected to the above theme was the quality of mentor-teacher collegiality, mentioned by four pre-service teachers. One expressed it this way: "Most important is that they see and treat you as a colleague. That doesn't mean to say they don't have responsibility or authority, but that they respect that you will very soon be sitting alongside them drinking coffee in the staff room." Another spoke about the mutuality that comes about through collegiality: "You can help them as well as they can help you."

Cross-Cultural Experiences in Mentor-Teacher and Pre-service Teacher Relationships

In the six-month post-international practicum written answers, all five pre-service teachers wrote about communicative and supportive qualities of their mentor-teachers, and they emphasized these qualities within their cross-cultural and cross-language contexts. Universal qualities became context and culturally specific in this IPE because in the Israeli milieu, many of the mentor-teachers were home room teachers and so were engaged in educating in the broadest sense, taking on the role of personal mentor and confidant for pupils in their class, including taking a specific interest in their personal, emotional, and academic well-being. This role is considered to be one of the most important aspects of teaching in the Israeli setting where, as one mentor-teacher put it, "[The pre-service teachers] were exposed to our [more relaxed] discipline, less rigid rules, our culture. Our manner of communicating is quite different to other cultures—we are very much more open with one another… with the advantages and disadvantages that this brings." From the other perspective, we present a range of responses by different pre-service teachers, which illustrate the particular ways in which they appreciated their mentor-teachers' qualities:

> The major thing I learnt from my mentor-teacher was about positive student relationships … [she] encompassed a holistic approach to teaching looking out for students' development as well as academic achievement. This was done through personal conversations as well as whole class activities.
>
> [My mentor-teacher was] an incredible lady who loves her students, is loved by all her students. She is considerate of students' academic and emotional needs, and also reminded me to take care when dealing with sensitive family topics if there were sad stories behind a certain student. She built such strong relationships with the students that [made] her reliable and approachable, which also helped her teaching.
>
> [My mentor-teacher] taught me to engage and build up a rapport with [the pupils] on a personal level, in any country a deep understanding of your students' backgrounds is imperative to engaging and achieving their potential.

One mentor-teacher reported that her pre-service teacher was surprised at how pupils would come up after the lesson to chat with her about topics not at all related to the lesson. While common in Israel, she perceived that this informal teacher-school student relationship was less familiar to her pre-service teacher from Australia who, during her practicum, came to appreciate and approve of it.

A second but related cross-cultural theme specific to this IPE related to developing a greater sensitivity to cultural and linguistic diversity. Five pre-service teachers discussed being understanding and compassionate within a cross-cultural and inclusive framework. Their ideal mentor-teacher was "understanding of cultural differences and general difficulties teaching in another country," "willing to talk about the country—what to see and do, how it is different—[to] give advice re: culture, people and places," "understanding of different cultures," and, finally,

"understand[ing] that we may have different teaching styles in Australia, and embrac[ing] them rather than asking us to change."

Mentor-teachers told us how not only the pre-service teachers but also the Israeli pupils developed a greater sensitivity to and appreciation of cultural and linguistic diversity. A kindergarten mentor-teacher spoke about how the children in his class gave his pre-service teacher an enthusiastic welcome including exposure to an unfamiliar writing system: "They hung an Australian flag on the door, wrote 'Welcome' and her name in English." A junior high school science mentor-teacher discussed the teacher/educator in the Israeli context:

> She [the pre-service teacher] saw what it is like to be a teacher in the Israeli context. I am responsible for my class and don't only teach them science. She was [taken aback by] the warm relationship between teachers and pupils… how pupils come to the teacher at the end of the lesson and talk about personal issues.

A high school history mentor-teacher related the impact of the pre-service teacher from a different culture giving another perspective, a perspective that he (the history teacher) could not give: "He spoke about the conflict in Northern Ireland and this was compared to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict—each time according to a different theme… that conflict has been peacefully resolved. This gave the pupils a very powerful message."

Cross-Language Experiences: Barrier or Opportunity?

As mentioned above, cross-language themes in the IPE included challenges associated with language. In the pre-service teacher questionnaires, most reported struggling with the language barrier. It was a source of both challenge and growth for them. In response to the question, "What was it about the IPE program that challenged you?", seven out of nine students nominated the language barrier. Similarly, in response to the item, "Please suggest how you will take this experience back to your studies, your teaching, and/or to your community," they stated what they had gained in a variety of ways. For example, one student wrote: "Whilst the experience was challenging due to the language barrier, I also felt that it was one of the greatest of my life." Another wrote: "After experiencing three weeks of body language communication with children, I have realized how important it is."

Monash pre-service teachers suggested different tools for addressing the language barrier challenge. Some raised the question of whether the Israeli mentor-teacher should be an English language teacher (EAL) or a teacher in the pre-service teacher's specialty. One wrote:

> Maybe having two mentors one an English language teacher the other in our specialism—I found it really interesting being in English classes because I got to gauge where the students' English levels were and I could actually understand [the] majority of the lesson.

Others suggested that if the mentor-teacher is not an English language teacher, the pre-service teacher could still get help from other English teachers in the school. Several students responded in the form of advice for future Australian pre-service teachers on this IPE, such as "Try and get involved with the English department of your school because it may be too hard to organize to teach your subject area." Another pre-service teacher recommended:

> Get to know the English teachers at the school they're a great resource/don't rely on the school to provide resources, all of it is in Hebrew, I just had to go on pictures I saw on the slides the scientific language they use is not similar to English/the [English] language levels within the class range from fluent to very basic, use the fluent students/teachers to help you.

For pre-service teachers in early childhood settings, the language challenge was daunting, as the young children did not know any English. One early childhood pre-service teacher wrote: "I would just advise them that the younger ages have little to no English and to consider how they will engage with them despite this." Another suggested: "If you are going to kindergarten, it would be helpful if you can learn some simple sentences beforehand."

In the written feedback on mentor-teachers gathered at the end of the program, two pre-service teachers raised the theme of language regarding the mentor-teacher. One wrote:

> My mentor was very helpful this time even [though] she was not good at English. I would suggest that having a mentor who speaks English could be very helpful for both. As when doing teaching, planning, evaluating and even [for] general conversation. I would say effective communication would help a lot.

Another pre-service teacher spoke about a desire to have a mentor-teacher who would be "willing and able to teach in English [or at least] partially in English."

Interestingly on the six-month post-questionnaires, pre-service teachers related to the cross-language experience as making them more sensitive to teaching English as an additional language (EAL) in their home environment, for the benefit of all. Two of the five pre-service teachers reflected in this way:

> Teaching in a context where English is not the first language spoken to most students has allowed me to adapt my teaching style to further target the engagement levels of EAL students here in Australia… My verbal prompts and questioning techniques have since become much more coherent and structured, which I have observed benefit class discussion for all learners (both EAL and non-EAL).

Similarly,

> The program allowed me to experience school through the eyes of an EAL learner and provide scaffolding for EAL learners.

Another wrote about how being in a different cultural and language setting provided her with a platform to adapt her teaching in situations where concepts are difficult to understand—describing it as being similar to learning in another language:

> I needed to adapt my teaching style to account for the language barrier. This involved creating highly visual lessons as well as finding simple ways of explaining more difficult

> concepts. These practices and experiences came of use when back in Australia during my most recent placement even though the language was the same, certain concepts and ideas that I was teaching were as foreign to the students as if I was teaching them a second language. Therefore, using basic methods to explain difficult concepts and creating visual lesson plans really allowed my teaching goals to be achieved.

Israeli pupils study English as a Foreign Language (EFL) consistently, usually beginning in the third or fourth grades, but students have a wide range of English levels depending on their ages, schools, and language capabilities. Mentor-teachers, as well, have a wide range of English levels, and both these factors affect how they approach the language challenge. Mentor-teachers related to the language challenge differently, depending on the age of their pupils, their pupils' English levels, and their own English levels.

For example, Steven (a pseudonym) is a mentor-teacher who teaches history at one of Israel's most elite high schools, a Hebrew-speaking school where the students have relatively high English levels. He has a doctorate in history and did his postdoctoral fellowship in the USA. As a result, he is very comfortable with the English language. The relative proficiency in English of Steven and his students enabled the Australian pre-service teacher to teach at a high level in English, together with his mentor-teacher. Steven switched to teaching in English as a way of coping with the language barrier. He reported the success in this way:

> My lessons are never conducted in English. However, I taught in English, he [the pre-service teacher] taught in English, and the pupils managed very well… despite the fact that not all of them were so proficient in English. They couldn't wait for him to arrive. They really connected to him. They were not ashamed to ask him to reword what he had said if they didn't understand…

Together, the student and Steven explored complex subjects, comparing and contrasting the conflict in Northern Ireland (where the pre-service teacher had lived in the past) and the Jewish–Arab conflict in Israel.

In contrast, during her interview, Tamara (also a pseudonym), a mentor-teacher who teaches mathematics in a junior high school and who knows little English claimed that she would not have agreed to mentor had the pre-service teacher not been proficient in Hebrew (Israel's official first language). Her pre-service teacher was the only Monash pre-service teacher who was able to speak Hebrew fluently. Tamara explained: "She [the pre-service teacher] would never have been able to cope for so many hours if she didn't understand and speak Hebrew. In addition, the pupils would never have been able to cope with a lesson in math taught in English."

While in the case of Steven, openness to cross-cultural and cross-language exchange (on both his part and the part of the school students) merged with a willingness to teach and learn in English, Tamara questioned not only the effectiveness of bringing a pre-service teacher who does not speak Hebrew, but also the effectiveness of the cross-cultural exchange that comes with bringing an international pre-service teacher. She saw the cross-cultural dimension as more of a barrier:

> We are very attached to our culture… to the place where we are located, to the ways of teaching we have been exposed to over the years. From this short [experience], I don't believe that someone can really make a switch and change their approach.

For example, although her pre-service teacher enjoyed the close, personal interactions between students and teachers in Israel, Tamara doubted whether the pre-service teacher would be able to bring this kind of interaction back to her work in Australia where, she believed, the approach is different. This mentor-teacher could be seen as bringing a rather rigid perception of the notion of cross-culturalism in an IPE. She perceived it as an opportunity for the pre-service teacher to acquire new approaches and perspectives to transport back to the Australian teaching setting.

Mentors and pre-service teachers in early childhood settings, where the children do not know English at all, faced a different set of language challenges. One kindergarten mentor-teacher described both the success and frustration experienced by her pre-service teacher: "She had such a wonderful connection with the children, but when a child would come and talk to her and she was not able to understand anything that he said, this was frustrating." The same mentor-teacher created a mini-dictionary for his pre-service teacher "so that she would have some basic useful terms," although he admitted it was primarily symbolic as her connection was through activity and not verbal.

Conclusion

In this IPE, guests and hosts confronted strangeness in the task that was ascribed to them, and neither pre-service teachers nor mentor-teachers remained entirely in their cultural comfort zone. As they engaged with each other, both personally and professionally, familiar assumptions were challenged. Both pre-service teachers and mentor-teachers were pulled beyond their own understanding of teaching and teacher-training itself. Most poignantly, this was expressed in terms of the cognitive deficiencies of lacking a common language within which to teach and to learn on the part of pre-service teachers and their school students as well as by the pre-service teachers' mentors. Despite frustrations, it seems that the journey of transforming the strange to a new base of familiarity was a learning and growth curve for all the participants, enhancing their self-confidence as teachers and their ability to encounter a new world and learn from it. In that process, the dimension of social familiarity was critical as mentor-teachers' expressive and social skills indeed assuaged the threatening aspects of the unfamiliar. This empowered the pre-service teachers to find a new (body) language with which to converse with the school students in their classroom learning thus the universal meaning of diversity and its inclusion, in every classroom, everywhere. Moreover, the mentor-teachers and we, the Israeli facilitators, played key roles in seeking to bridge the incongruities

between teaching and schooling in Israel and Australia as well as the problems of cross-cultural understanding that were language dependent.

From listening and observing, we noticed universal, cross-cultural, and cross-language themes emerging and augmenting one another. The universal themes possibly illustrate fundamental principles underlying the relationship between mentor-teachers and pre-service teachers. Alongside these, cross-cultural and cross-language themes describe challenges and rewards emerging within the parameters of an IPE. In this IPE, the language spoken in the schools by mentor-teachers and school students is not the language familiar to most of the pre-service teachers, and the culture is different from that in the home country of the pre-service teachers. Both mentor-teachers and pre-service teachers express a powerful message about this cross-cultural and cross-language international practicum. The norms of culture and language that are usually taken for granted in universal and traditional mentor-teacher pre-service teacher roles are stretched, and boundaries extended as each side attempts to learn about the other within a mainly supportive collegial framework. Mentor-teachers have the opportunity to take on more than what traditional mentoring affords, as they assist foreign pre-service teachers to navigate their way in a foreign setting, thereby practicing their profession while becoming more familiar with the foreign. The pre-service teachers bring into the lives of the mentor-teachers and their school students an unforgettable experience of a foreign country, foreign culture, and foreign language while negotiating meaning in the process.

In this chapter, we have reported how the Monash pre-service teachers described both the challenges of negotiating a school environment where they did not know the language, and where the culture was foreign, as well as the rewards—the personal and professional growth that they experienced as a result. They spoke about gaining cross-cultural skills and having the opportunity to reflect on their own approach to teaching. Some mentioned how they intend to bring home and apply what they saw in the Israeli school, especially regarding the teacher–student relationship. Our findings indicate that for all the strangeness experienced by those involved, and indeed perhaps because of it, there were significant benefits. The pre-service teachers enjoyed a supportive system as the result of the complex and collegial network formed between the Oranim College team, the Monash IPE coordinators, the Israeli schools, and their mentor-teachers. Their identities, both personal and professional, were enriched. The pre-service teachers commented about being more accepting of diversity and having increased confidence in and respect for different ways of interacting. As Polkinghorne (1995) proposes in his analysis of narratives, themes held across all of the stories we related here. Not a few pre-service teachers indicated that they would incorporate key cultural learnings in their teaching back home and would certainly integrate aspects of what they were exposed to in the Israeli classroom. This multiple-tiered, complex, web-like network formed by the individuals and institutions involved seems to have been critical to the outcome of the experience, with each one bringing unique aspects. This collaborative web sustained those who took part, even during challenging moments.

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Chapter 7
Building Intercultural Competence and Professional Confidence Through Collaboration in an Italian IPE

Libby Tudball and Michael Phillips

> In my school professional experience during my Master of Teaching in Australia in 2015, I felt that my mentors viewed me and other Chinese international students as a problem. My shyness was seen as lack of capability. But here in Prato, my mentor sees me as an asset and appreciates my skills, so my confidence has grown. I speak Mandarin, so I can communicate with the Chinese kids whose families work here in the textile industry. But I also connect well with the Italian students. I can see them responding to my teaching, so I'm offering to take more lessons for other teachers as well. I'm learning more about planning and using approaches to teaching from my own past, as well as new ideas I'm trying through each class.
>
> Normally I sit back and don't offer my opinions, but I soon saw that here, when I meet with my peers and Monash mentors to reflect on the day, it's expected that we open up, talk about our experiences and support each other. We don't have these daily opportunities to talk in Melbourne. I'm thinking of coming back to teach in Italy after I graduate, as I've learnt some Italian language and culture in classes Monash provided here in Prato. I know now that I'm adaptable and passionate about teaching. I love being here as it has taken me completely out of my comfort zone. I've really grown and changed. After this, I can teach kids anywhere in the world and know that I'll be fine. (Yin 2016)

Introduction

This excerpt is from an interview during Lui Yin's three weeks International Professional Experience (IPE) in Italy. It provides a snapshot depicting growth in her professional confidence and intercultural competence achieved through deep reflection on her learning, one of the core aims of this kind of international program

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in teacher education. Our observations and research focused on pre-service teachers' (PSTs) learning during this international practicum have shown us that not all students involved in this program achieve the same growth as Lui Yin claimed, since students have different experiences depending on a range of factors. Her thoughts are consistent with Bolton's (2005) view that 'to be effective, reflective practice requires an openness to having our understandings challenged and an acceptance of new aspects which may alter our views' (p. 276). Similarly, Tangen et al.'s (2015) research is finding that 'studying abroad has the potential to both enlighten students about others and … raise awareness about oneself and one's own cultural and pedagogical knowledge' (p. 24). Lui Yin's story shows what Boyd and Myers (1989) call 'transformation' involving 'fundamental change in one's personality involving the resolution of a personal dilemma and the expansion of consciousness resulting in greater personality integration' (p. 269). Lui Yin told us she began to open up, to see and expand her capabilities through the experience of success, positive feedback and support from her school and university mentors and peers. These factors empowered her to take risks in her own professional learning journey. It is interesting that her growth was enhanced through this practicum because her fluency in Mandarin language and Chinese nationality gave her value as a teacher that was not recognised in the domestic Australian context. In Prato, her presence as a PST was viewed differently by her mentors and peers, and the expectations and opportunities she encountered were markedly different from her practicum experiences in the environs of Melbourne. In fact, Lui Yin's own past intercultural experiences as a globally mobile student enabled her to have empathy with young Chinese and African learners, many of whom were struggling to adapt to life in this Italian town dating back to medieval times. Mezirow (1991) argues that for change to occur in people's 'meaning schemes (specific beliefs, attitudes, and emotional reactions)… they must engage in critical reflection on their experiences, which in turn leads to a perspective transformation' (p. 167), their is something which we found Lui Yin and many other PSTs achieve in international practicums.

In this chapter, we provide a brief contextual discussion from the literature on how IPE experiences can be situated in a macrosense within the evolving concept of the internationalisation of education, highlighting the scope, purpose and potential learning benefits from IPE for PSTs in these times where international experience is seen to be a highly desirable aspect of higher education (see, e.g. Tangen et al. 2015). We then further explore findings from our interviews and narratives that capture the learning experiences of PSTs involved in the practicum between 2014 and 2016. (Note that pseudonyms are used throughout the chapter). We continue to draw on various theoretical frames to analyse our teacher and student collaboration in building intercultural competence, and making sense of our PSTs' learning through the Prato IPE. Both positive learning and challenges are discussed through narratives of the outcomes of daily experiences constructed by us and our students, and what these experiences reveal about the impact of varied factors influencing individual PSTs' personal and professional learning. While the findings show that not all PSTs develop the same degree of intercultural competence and evolving

sense of teacher identity and confidence as Lui Yin, most are able to demonstrate and articulate aspects of their learning to be teachers through negotiating a range of situations during their practicum experiences. It is evident that complex factors influence their individual journeys, so in this chapter, we explore narratives from the PSTs about how various experiences have helped them to 'move to adopt or establish new ways, and finally, integrate old and new patterns' (Boyd and Myers 1989, p. 268). We have intentionally selected PSTs who have had mixed success in their learning, as well as narratives that provide multiple perspectives on experiences in this IPE context.

Establishing Our Collaborative Learning

Both authors of this chapter has been leaders of the Prato IPE program in the Tuscany region of Italy, where Monash University has a Centre that supports the development of engagement in local schools and community. The Centre provides a broad range of academic and extra-curricular activities for our students including a language and culture program, opportunities to engage in conversations with local residents and home visits to interact with families. These activities extend our students' capacity to understand the local context and make meaning from their experiences. Being leaders of the Prato practicum provides daily opportunities for us to actively collaborate with our students in an intense and collegial way through both academic and social interactions, and most students have willingly agreed to engage with us in our research. We make ourselves available to converse, co-plan, share stories and reflect on the PSTs' learning each day, something not possible when our students are scattered over a large metropolitan area in Melbourne.

Pinnegar and Daynes (2007) argue that in narrative research where stories are captured, a relationship between the researcher and the researched can develop, leading to learning and changed ways of thinking and acting. This is certainly the case in Prato where we begin working with our students before they travel to Italy, providing insights into what to expect in local schools and curriculum, including through the lens of previous students who share their experiences. After the students arrive, we formally invite them to engage in narrative research with us, and provide explanatory statements and consent forms if they choose to be participants in taped semi-structured interviews during and after the practicum in Prato. We build our conversations as the PSTs begin to understand the local culture, and settle into observing, then teaching in preschool, primary and secondary schools, many of which are in historic centres of learning dating back to the twelfth century. Each student negotiates difference in their own way as they experience the cultural community, the schools and our evolving group dynamics, as we live, learn and work together.

From the first day of the IPE, we meet together to engage in narrative inquiry as a way of understanding the diverse experiences that unfold. We are involved in what Clandinin and Connelly (2000) call 'collaboration between researchers and

participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus' (p. 20). The sense of the researcher and the researched begins to blur as we each engage in this regular practitioner inquiry within our learning community. Our PSTs develop 'praxis', in line with Freire's (1970) view that it is not enough just to talk about narratives. The next step must be taken to move beyond reflection on learning, in order to understand practice critically, and then to use new theoretical understanding formed to act and plan to further enhance practice. As university mentors, we know that we play a critical part in this process in creating the opportunities, expectations and questions that will prompt and extend our students' thinking about their practice. This sometimes occurs in one on one conversations, and at other times through establishing peer interaction activities in varied ways including formal group debriefing and informal conversations in Italian cafes and bars.

Drawing on Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) call for collaboration in different places over time, we have found it particularly valuable to use these conversations to establish collaborative exploration of what happens and how students are feeling and learning from their experiences at different times in the journey, including during their days in school and in living with their peers and within the Prato community. This kind of narrative inquiry can act as prompts for the PSTs to think deeply about their own practice. For some students, this is their first travel abroad, while others are seasoned travellers. But the variables impacting on their learning are far more complex than for the tourist who observes and moves on, since the practicum demands keen observation of cultural nuances in the professional context of schools and schooling, and the negotiation of language in the classrooms. We encourage both formal sharing through students' written reflections and individual taped interviews that form part of our narrative inquiry. We also engage in informal sharing and discussion of the challenges, joys, frustrations and learning that unfold over three weeks, as the students continue to make sense of their experiences and how they impact on their own professional self. As Lui Yin shows, this unpacking can have a powerful impact as each individual focuses on their own emerging professional identity in varied ways.

Theoretical Frames Informing Our Narrative Inquiry

In the next section, we introduce various theoretical ideas and concepts with reference to international experience and themes pertinent to our narrative data analysis. First, we discuss Mezirow's (1991) views on critical reflection and transformative learning. This is followed by sections explaining links to the notions of internationalisation of education and developing intercultural competency that are now often featured in the literature as desirable outcomes of IPE (Tudball 2012).

Transformative Learning

In our introduction, which focused on Lui Yin's story, we included Mezirow's (1991) views on critical reflection and 'perspective transformation', which he describes as

> …[a] process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world; changing these structures of habitual expectation to make possible a more inclusive, discriminating, and integrating perspective; and, finally, making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings. (p. 167)

As leaders, we see reflection as important for individuals to grow during a teaching practicum, but are constantly aware of the varied ways that individual PSTs respond to their IPE. Based on findings from empirical studies, Taylor (1998) suggests that not all learners are predisposed to engage in transformative learning. In Prato, we noticed that our PSTs' accounts of their learning differed depending on their daily experiences and their own capacity and openness to learn and change, or to develop their practice through reflection. Taylor (1998) argues that meaning structures are frames of reference drawn from each individual's cultural and contextual experiences, which influence how they behave, interpret events and choose to act. Mezirow (1995) claims that through experiencing a 'disorienting dilemma' (p. 50), new responses or transformation of views can develop. For example, Massimo, one of the pre-service teachers who learned Italian language, as he grew up with his parents and grandparents, was comfortable about cultural differences in Prato, a leader in the group in negotiating menus and shopping, and very positive about his school experience in the first few days. But as he moved into a focus on teaching lessons, he realised that having cultural confidence in Prato was not enough. He lacked the content knowledge required to teach a senior school science unit on 'cloning' and the confidence to plan as well. His anxiety was only resolved through sitting down with his peers and university mentors to explore resources and possibilities for his classes in the following days. This commitment to share learning continued throughout the three weeks and was, in Massimo's words during the practicum,

> …one of the most critical learning opportunities in my learning to be a teacher so far… Coming to the realisation that I was floundering shocked me, but knowing that I just had to reach out and ask for ideas, meant that the help from some of the other students and my mentors stopped me from drowning. I know I seemed really confident at first, but that was about different things.

Lui Yin knew that she could no longer sit back and avoid interaction with her peers, and she found that in becoming more socially connected and ready to share, her professional learning also continued to grow. Massimo felt lost until he realised how important collaboration could be. Drawing on theoretical frames that make explicit the importance of reflection, sharing these views with students, and then

making sense of learning through the telling of stories and narrative inquiry is a powerful way of making meaning explicit.

Internationalisation of Education

Against the backdrop of the globalisation of education and particularly salient in the context of the continuing interest in notions of the internationalisation of tertiary institutions, the link between studying abroad and intercultural competence has been increasingly documented over the last twenty years (see, e.g. Jackson 2012; Knight 2004). Bremer and van der Wende (1995) define internationalisation as developing 'curricula with an international orientation in content, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally/socially) in an international and multicultural context, and designed for domestic students and/or foreign students' (p. 10). Benefits we see of IPE programs include the personal and professional growth of PSTs. We argue that being engaged in a program where our PSTs are expected to teach in Italian schools, where the main language, curriculum, culture and expectations are at times marked by substantial differences from previous experiences, provides particular learning challenges and opportunities. There is evidence that immersion in a different culture and language can enhance language proficiency and cultural proficiency (Jackson 2008; Medina-Lopez-Portillo 2004), and can provide outcomes in terms of interpersonal skills, which are becoming increasingly sought after for professional development (Olson and Kroeger 2001).

Knight (2003) broadens thinking about this learning, stating that 'Internationalisation …is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension' (p. 2) into higher education. Increasingly, universities across the world have focused on how elements of the internationalisation of education at the tertiary level can develop graduate attributes in students which reflect a sense of professional and intercultural capability, global citizenship and preparedness for life and work in their own contexts and in the wider world. These graduate capacities are now deemed to be desirable by universities across the globe. They are also reflected in the Erasmus + program (European Commission 2013), where international experience, developing foreign language skills and intercultural competencies are advocated as a means of enhancing graduate employability. There is recognition amongst educators that in this age of globalisation, students should have knowledge of global concerns and the skills and capacities to work in varied contexts, so they develop the characteristics and dispositions to be global citizens (Messelink et al. 2015; Tudball 2005, 2012). Conversations with the growing group of Monash Faculty of Education colleagues who have led IPE programs reveal an increasing body of knowledge demonstrating that our students can utilise by sharing stories about their growing professional and intercultural confidence (see, e.g. Parr and Chan 2015).

Other literature in this field acknowledges that international learning experiences can be an effective means of enhancing global citizen identity and cosmopolitan ideals (Hendershot and Sperandio 2009). Williams' (2005) research on intercultural adaptability and sensitivity documents the positive impacts on students' intercultural learning in the context of specific short-term exchanges. But as discussed above, in our experience of working with multiple cohorts of students, we have found that the extent of achievement of the kinds of competencies and learning connected to 'internationalisation' is highly dependent on the student's degree of open-mindedness, willingness to embrace and learn from new experiences, the nature and success of the reflective learning experiences they are engaged in and their willingness to see teaching as a collaborative practice.

Intercultural Competency and Learning During IPE

Intercultural competence is, at its core, concerned with communication and has been defined as 'the ability to communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations and relate appropriately in a variety of cultural contexts' (Bennett and Bennett 2004, p. 149). However, Byram's (1997) view is that intercultural competence also encompasses 'knowledge of others, knowledge of self, skills to interpret and relate; skills to discover and/or to interact, valuing others' values, beliefs and behaviours, and relativizing one's self' (p. 34). In our work with PSTs in Prato, there are multiple opportunities for this learning, but as in the development of teaching abilities through the practicum, we have found that the extent of development of these competencies is highly determined by how each individual responds to the circumstances that arise. John, for example, a mature age Master of Teaching science education PST, involved himself in every possible opportunity to interact and learn through his Prato experiences, which moved constantly between personal and professional learning. In an interview at the end of the second week of the practicum he said,

> This experience has helped me to find skills that I didn't know I had. I have tuned into my Mentor teachers' expectations and thought more deeply about my planning for classes than ever before. When I realised I was struggling to plan, I knew I could ask my university Mentors and peers for help. Italians are still in secondary school when they are eighteen, so it's been weird to go and have a coffee with them in the school's café bar … it's more like being in a university and the students seem older …and cool. It's more casual, yet education focused. In the specialist science school where I'm placed, I've been challenged to think about how I can negotiate language, use a lot of visuals to communicate, and slow down and check that these quite mature students are really understanding. The relationships between teachers and students is very warm. My mentors have welcomed us into their homes for a traditional family lunch, so I'm learning about local cultural expectations through so many experiences that are different from being on a practicum in the Australian context.

Fiona's response to being in Prato was at the opposite end of the spectrum. As leaders, we had reservations about her capacity to 'fit' in the IPE, since in her

application interview she was reserved and awkward amongst her peers and appeared to lack personal confidence. While these personal traits did cause us to question whether Fiona would be well suited to a placement in a different cultural and communal experience, her referees urged us to accept her into the program to give her a chance to grow and learn. Despite our best efforts to work with Fiona, our concerns were confirmed. She failed to show significant development in building 'knowledge of self, skills to interpret and relate' (Byram 1997, p. 34). She did not connect with her colleagues in the way many others did. Additionally, her relationships with her mentor teachers and the students in the school appeared more distant than the relationships formed by other PSTs. These differences were not only noted by us as leaders of the program but also by other PSTs. One of the other students placed in Fiona's school who tried to offer support suggested that *'being in Prato, on her first trip overseas away from family support added to her anxiety about her teaching'*. She refused to taste Italian food, engage in the conversation evenings with locals or join in group trips to neighbouring towns. While we continued to offer support, our concerns remained, evidenced by this extract from one of the authors' journals:

> I am worried about Fiona. In observing her class at the primary school today, I saw that she is not relating to her Mentor, or the six year olds she is teaching. She is more focused on sticking posters on the wall than engaging with the kids. It's about the products, not the learning. She didn't notice when half the class had nothing to do and just quietly opened their books to read …I'm sure she is homesick and unhappy. I've tried to debrief with her, but she puts up a brick wall.

Deardorff (2006) argues that developing intercultural competence can be a lifelong journey, which suggests it is not the result of a single experience, such as study abroad or international placement. When Fiona came to the reunion a month after the Prato IPE, she still remained an observer of rather than a participant in the group, but it was encouraging that she chose to come to travel to the city to meet with her peers. In order to address a lack of consensus on terminology in regard to intercultural competence, Deardorff (2006) conducted a research study resulting in agreement amongst leading intercultural scholars on a common definition of 'intercultural competence' as 'effective and appropriate behaviour and communication in intercultural situations' (p. 33). Deardorff (2006) propose the following visual model (Fig. 1), now well acknowledged as a useful framework to analyse, and potentially assess, intercultural competence. One of its main merits is highlighting that becoming an intercultural person is a process, in which knowledge (such as sociolinguistic awareness) is only one prerequisite, while self-reflection and mindfulness are required to develop openness, curiosity and respect, qualities that appeared under-developed in Fiona at this stage, but which can be very helpful in learning to be a teacher.

Deardorff's (2006) model promotes the view that new knowledge and skills, including adaptability and empathy, are required before a person can communicate effectively in an intercultural situation. The model resonates with the 'developmental model of intercultural sensitivity' (DMIS) developed by Bennett (1986),

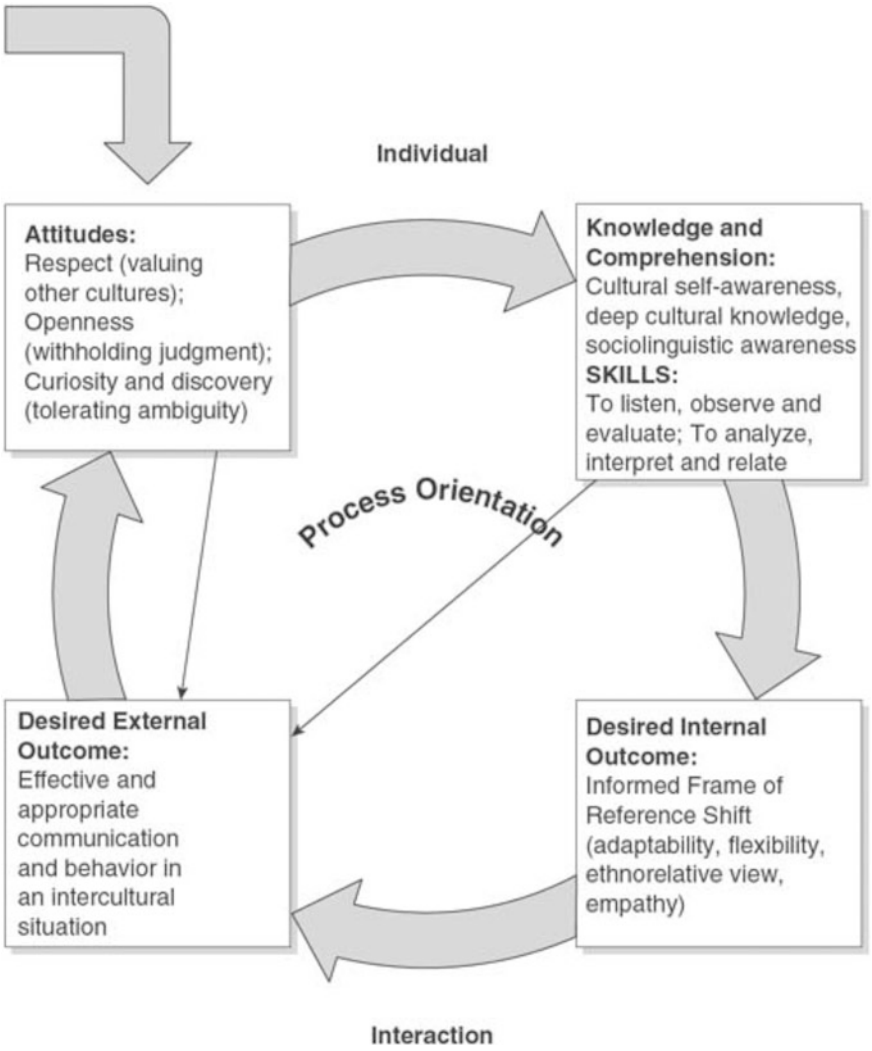

Fig. 1 Deardorff's (2006) Model of intercultural competence (p. 256)

where he define three ethnocentric stages ranging from *denial* (when people think that there is no other way than their own), to *defence* (when people think that their own way is the best one), to *minimisation* (when people tend to consider that, despite differences, other people are like them). The next three stages, under the label of *ethno-relativism*, are *acceptance* (when people recognise that values and behaviours can be different to their own), *adaptation* (when people are adding new behaviours to be more effective) and finally *integration* (when people are able to fluently adapt their behaviour according to the cultural context they are moving in).

In regard to this theory, when someone who is insufficiently prepared for an overseas sojourn experiences severe culture shock, the reinforcement of ethnocentrist tendencies is likely to encourage individuals to stay or to even go back to Bennett's 'defence stage'. Fiona remained firmly in this stage, whereas Lui Yin, Massimo, John and others in Prato confidently *adapted* and *integrated* into their new contexts in both their personal and professional experiences.

Anderson et al. (2006) use Bennett and Hammer's (1998) *Intercultural Development Inventory* (an instrument tied to the DMIS) in a pilot study to assess the intercultural sensitivity of student teachers. The IDI was administered before the students travelled abroad and then again four weeks later when they returned to the USA. Their findings illustrate individual differences amongst the students, but find overall that short-term study abroad can have a positive impact on cross-cultural sensitivity. Bennett (2004) argues that

> The crux of intercultural adaptation is the ability to have an alternative cultural experience. Individuals who have received largely mono-cultural socialisation normally have access to only their own cultural worldview, so they are unable to experience the difference between their own perception and that of people who are culturally different. (p. 74)

It was extraordinary for us as leaders to realise that for the five Chinese international students in our group in 2016, their opportunity to be involved in the Prato professional experience opened up friendships with the other Australian students in the PST group in more meaningful ways than what they had encountered in the whole previous year of their studies in Australia, where they tended to rely on other Chinese students for support.

In spite of scales such as the DMIS (Bennett 2004) providing a useful way of capturing students' development through new cultural experiences, we are convinced that Bennett's linear depiction of learning shifting from denial to acceptance and adaptation is likely to be variable in the Prato programs, depending on factors such as individual students' personal characteristics, prior experiences and adaptability, as well as the nature of the programs in which they are involved. It is to be expected that some students will take a more active and sensitive interest in cultural differences and develop relationships within the local community that can act as more powerful proponents in facilitating the growth of their 'worldviews' (Bennett 2004, p. 74) and capabilities. For several students, the visit to family homes to share a meal helped them to feel part of the local community. Others found that interacting with parents who could speak English gave them insights into their students' backgrounds and family expectations about learning.

We found in 2015 that one cohort of four students, whose intercultural and professional learning and confidence development was interesting to observe, was the group of Italian descent PSTs who had scholarships for the IPE based on their heritage and applications showing that without financial support they would not have been able to apply. Each one of them experienced an obvious re-connection with their cultural heritage and pride in being Italian. They formed a group who went to small cafes where they spoke in Italian and explored local cuisine, but they also shared their insights with the wider group. Grabov (1997) views transformative

learning as an 'intuitive, creative, emotional process' (p. 90), and it was clear this was true for these students. Taylor (1998) also argues that people's meaning structures are based on the totality of individuals' cultural and contextual experiences that influence how they behave and interpret events and how they choose to act. He believes that individuals change and grow as they add to or integrate ideas through learning. As leaders, we could see significant growth in our students' capacities across the three weeks.

Developing Professional Confidence

In thinking about these models and our leadership, we agreed that learning through an IPE is both an individual and a collaborative process, but the level of personal and professional learning that is achieved is highly variable amongst every cohort. Gloria, an older Masters of Teaching student in her 30's, was placed in a highly acclaimed music college in Prato. She commented that for her this experience caused her to question her sense of professional confidence, but being in Prato provided her with opportunities to develop her skills as a music educator. She said in an interview in Australia after the practicum,

> I was humbled by the Master musicians I was able to observe and learn from in a cultural context where musical skill is highly prized. …At the same time I was using my own previous skills, I was learning new approaches. I looked at myself differently, sometimes more reflectively than ever before, perhaps because of the deep conversations you gently forced us to have with you and amongst our group. At home, I can't converse meaningfully about what has happened in my teaching, as there are not the same opportunities to debrief with family and friends who aren't teachers, but in Prato we all wanted to share what happened during the day. I had the chance to co-teach at Gramsci School on Australia Day with other students who took an integrated approach to teaching about our culture through songs. We co-planned, team taught and talked about our learning and how the students responded. It didn't all go well as we had about 100 students in a big, noisy hall, which isn't what we planned for, but it just made us think about how we could do it differently another time.

Karen and Sally, two PSTs in the Prato practicum group in 2015, were placed at Gramsci Keynes 'Liceo scientifico', a type of senior secondary school in Italy designed to give students the skills to progress to any university or higher educational institution. Students can attend the school after successfully completing middle school. Karen and Sally initially struggled with the complexities involved in negotiating communication and language, and working out what their mentors wanted them to do. They found that in Italy, PSTs are put in full charge of the classroom, so identifying lesson objectives and learning intentions, where they were unsure about the curriculum and what students had learned before, was not easy. Their school mentors were happy for them to team teach, so for the whole three weeks they co-planned. In an interview Karen said,

> I wish I had the opportunity to co-plan back in Melbourne when I had a mentor who, frankly, expected too much of me in my first practicum. I was floundering and so unsure of how to start and then develop my lessons with some kind of balance between me lecturing the students and then involving them in learning. Here, Sally and I talk about what we want them to learn, how we will teach, what resources we could use, and our roles during the lesson. We bounce off each other really well and then circulate to support the students in their tasks.

Other PSTs team taught and commented on how this helped them negotiate 'disorienting dilemmas' (Mezirow 1991), such as how to teach when students have different levels of understanding, or when there is no access to the Smartboard technology they had come to rely on in teaching. Stefanie and Ashleigh both used their own laptops in the school. They took the whole class into a space with Wi-Fi access, pre-tested the students' understanding and divided them into ability groups small enough to be able to see their computers for maths learning using online games. They shared this idea with peers who then also teamed up to use similar approaches. David, who was placed at Mazzoni, a secondary middle school, was only at the end of his third year of his education double degree studies, so his previous practicum experiences largely involved observation of classes. He was unsure about how to plan his teaching strategies and engage the Italian students, who seemed to him to be more mature and knowledgeable than students he had observed so far in Australia. He commented,

> …I relished the opportunities in Prato to be frank about what I didn't know about sequencing learning. I got involved in dialogue with my mentors and peers who helped me grow and increase my knowledge of the complexities of teaching. For me, I think the big hurdle I overcame in this practicum was developing confidence to have a go, learn from my mistakes and then move on. I have not actually written a full plan for a lesson before this, and realised that it does make a difference when you really have thought about what you will do to get the students involved in their learning.

Susan, another Chinese international student in the Prato group, struggled with many aspects of the practicum in the first week; but most marked was her own lack of professional confidence and concerns about her capacity to plan and use a range of teaching and learning strategies in the classroom. But she very quickly asked us for help. We suggested forming a group where the three PSTs teaching Mandarin language classes in different schools could work together to help plan ideas for Susan's classes together. We agreed that this could then be continued to provide support for each other over the practicum. We started with being clear about the learner needs in Susan's class. On hearing that half the class were mother tongue Mandarin speakers and the other half locals speaking only Italian, our discussions moved to exploring how to plan for differentiated learning and engagement. Susan told us she would have access to data projectors and the Internet, her classes would be an hour long and her mentor teacher was happy for her to choose any content and approaches that would encourage all the students to be involved, something that he had been failing to do. Susan's interview comments revealed how successful this process was in achieving her own 'perspective transformation' and helping in

'making choices or otherwise acting upon these new understandings' (Mezirow 1991, p. 167):

> I really did not know what to do after watching a few of my mentor teacher's classes. It was awful watching the ten fluent Mandarin speakers sitting there politely and quietly while the rest of the class learned how to count to ten. I knew something had to be done, but my mentor teacher is not qualified and was hoping I'd be the one to help him with ideas. He agreed to take on an Australian student teacher…which I'm not…to see how you/we teach! The others in our group (PSTs) and you (author) filled me with ideas in our sessions together. Getting the Chinese kids to teach the Italians was amazing. After using the translated sheets with hip hop song lyrics from YouTube clips, to simply enjoy hearing and using Mandarin, meant that they had fun… they began to mix together, more apparently, than ever before. We still had to go back to more basic phrases and the really hard character learning, but it worked to get them involved. Their own teacher told me he will continue to use this peer teaching and differentiated approach. He admitted that he knew he wasn't doing anything for the Chinese students at all. When he saw how I planned two sets of activities, but joint things as well, he was pretty inspired as well.

Susan moved rapidly through Bennett's (1986) adaptation and integration DMIS stages, and her 'knowledge of self, skills to interpret and relate, skills to discover and/or to interact' (Byram 1997, p. 134) blossomed. She also formed better relationships within her peer group after reaching out for support and found that she had skills and ideas to share as her professional confidence grew. When one of the authors later acted as a professional referee for Susan for her first teaching appointment, it was clear that the deep knowledge of her skills and capabilities, formed through involvement with her in the planning group and multiple observations of her teaching that Prato Mandarin class, was pivotal in her success in getting the job.

Conclusion

The many narratives captured through our conversations, interviews and field notes from PSTs involved in the Prato program demonstrate that personal and professional learning occurs on multiple levels and in diverse ways through IPE. The students showed that since the Prato placement school settings are characterised by some similarities, but also at times marked differences from their previous experiences, the PSTs have opportunities to develop 'intercultural inquisitiveness' and many 'gained cultural and linguistic knowledge in interaction' (Messelink et al. 2015, p. 7). For some students, there were shifts in their 'frame of reference' (Mezirow 1997, p. 6) and for many (including Lui Chin, Susan, Karen, Massimo, David and John) 'transformative learning' occurred. In relation to Bennett's (2004) DMIS scale, there were substantial shifts and evidence demonstrated by most students showing increased 'adaptability' as the programs evolved. In our joint experience of five Prato IPE programs, our sense has been that few students in the cohort of nearly a hundred students have so far remained in total 'denial' of difference, reluctant to embrace and participate in local culture and to learn through

immersion in the local schools. For most, their confidence and professional learning about teaching in varied contexts showed remarkable growth. Granted, our application and selection processes do help to ensure that the students we take on these programs demonstrate sociability, good communication abilities and a well-articulated rationale for wanting to be involved. We also require them to have had some success in their previous practicum experiences 'at home' and to be willing to work collaboratively. However, we do know that variable individual student learning depends on a range of factors including the personality and personal confidence of the students, their level of knowledge of the content they teach, their capacity to plan for learning and to respond creatively to learners' needs in the schools. Their experiences are strongly influenced by the connections they do or do not form with their peers and mentor teachers, and the degree of open-mindedness they have about the cultural context. Fostering a learning environment where pre-service teachers can build intercultural competence, teacher confidence and identity requires 'establishing an environment that builds trust and care and facilitates the development of sensitive relationships among learners. This is a fundamental principle of fostering transformative learning' (Mezirow 1991, p. 7).

In their narratives, many students say that when we as program leaders form open and positive relationships with them and gently encourage their engagement in reflective conversations, they see the value of dialogue about daily scenarios that contribute to their development as PSTs. We have learned that problem solving 'in the moment' can be a constant challenge and highly dependent on the practicum contexts, locations, characteristics of schools, beliefs and attitudes of mentor teachers, and other complex factors. The timely nature of this problem solving sits in contrast to our experiences of professional experience in Melbourne where students often do not engage in conversations about their experiences until weeks after the event and they return to the university campus for classes. We have learned that stopping, thinking, questioning, seeking the student's views before offering ours, expecting them to reach their own conclusions on what should happen next and listening to other views in our ongoing collaboration, can help them to reach their own authentic learning and create rich opportunities for mutual learning for us all. The evidence of the increasing demand for student places in the Prato teaching program and the expansion to two programs each year is testament that word is spreading amongst students of how worthwhile this program is. The Prato IPE program creates rich opportunities for peer learning and support, close mentoring from university program leaders and school mentors, along with deep reflection on evolving daily experiences that can lead to transformative learning. We leave the last word to Lui Chin:

> It's nearly a year since my Prato practicum. Looking back, there are some things I did in the classroom there that I'd never do now, like getting the students to repeat things after me in a rote learning kind of way, and maybe a bit too much having the children all working in the same tasks…some of them without much learning focus.. It just reminds me that learning about teaching doesn't end. But that boost to my confidence and the friendships I formed have been so valuable. I'm still keen to go back, still learning Italian and see that international experience as a really special time for me to grow.

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Chapter 8
Outside in: Learning from an International Professional Experience Program

Pearl Subban and Allie Clemans

Introduction

This chapter explores the experiences of a group of 13 Australian pre-service teachers (all female) and their academic leaders on a three-week international professional experience program in Johannesburg, South Africa. The placement occurred across three different schools with each pre-service teacher in two of these schools, ensuring that they experienced contrasting educational and cultural spaces over the course of the three weeks. The authors (both teacher educators from Monash University in Australia, who were actually born in South Africa) present a series of short reflective cases of three of the pre-service teachers, and we discuss the significant learning and development of these students as a result of their three weeks in South Africa. These cases illuminate how the Australian pre-service teachers journeyed outside the familiarity of their 'home' country to be in South Africa and proceeded to dance between what they perceived as the sameness of the two countries and the differences between them. This choreography appears to have prompted the students to reflect closely on their own practice, to re-consider their identity and place in the world of teaching, and to come to understand the tensions that intersect in their desires to make a difference.

We begin by presenting a narrative focusing on the journey of the pre-service teachers from Melbourne to Johannesburg, including their induction by local students and professional staff in Monash South Africa (MSA) and an early teaching experience in a special program called the Saturday School set within MSA. We juxtapose this with a section which focuses on our perspective on the South African

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professional experience program as academic leaders travelling with the pre-service teachers. Following this, we present the reflective cases of Jackie, Karen and Martine, and finally discuss key themes and findings that emerge from them. But first, the journey of the pre-service teachers from Melbourne to their early days in Johannesburg.

Departure and Arrival: Pre-service Teachers' Perspectives

Perhaps the last thing on the minds of the pre-service teachers setting off to Johannesburg, South Africa, was the tedium of airport check-in, the laborious security checks and the interminable waiting at airport gates, amidst hundreds of other travellers. Despite these frustrations, their eyes reflected nothing but the excitement and anticipation they felt at the prospect of interacting with another country, and a friendly Rainbow Nation of diverse people. This excitement, mixed with considerable anxiety for what was to come, generated animated chatter among the group when they were finally in the air. (This chatter would draw censorious glances from fellow passengers attempting to sleep during the fourteen-hour long haul across the Indian Ocean, but this was the least of the pre-service students' concerns.) When one question tumbled over another about Johannesburg schools, protocols and expectations, we two academic leaders tried to draw the students back to the information and documents the pre-service teachers had already been given. These included: the 'Professional Experience Guide' (a document developed by Monash's Professional Experience team in Melbourne that set out expectations for all stakeholders in the International placement); the 'Graduate Teacher Standards' (from a policy document published by a federal government funded body that accredits teacher education programs in Australia); and the "Briefing Guides" (prepared by mentors on previous IPEs). This helped to calm some of the anxiety, but it did not and could not diminish the glow of enthusiasm lighting up their eyes.

Our arrival into Johannesburg saw an exhausted group of bleary-eyed plane travellers emerge into O.R. Tambo International Airport, against a backdrop of the African sun setting in the distance. The day might have been ending in Johannesburg, but the adventure for us all had only just begun. Once again, there were frustrations to deal with in the tedium of customs and waiting for luggage on endless carousels. But in no time at all, these frustrations were behind us, and we found ourselves ensconced in the safety of a minibus (typically known as a taxi in Johannesburg) driven by John G, who had been the official bus driver for every group of Monash pre-service teachers since the first group arrived six years previously.

It is worth pausing in our narrative, for a moment, to talk about some of the history of Monash's South African professional experience program. It began in 2009, born out of a conversation between a teacher educator in Australia and a colleague in MSA (Parr and Rowe 2013). Johannesburg, or "Joburg", had been the most logical choice for an international professional experience for pre-service teachers in South Africa, due to its locality and the positioning of the sister campus, MSA, only forty minutes

outside the city centre. The three-week teaching stint was intended to provide the Australian pre-service teachers with a snapshot of both sides of the South Africa coin. Two weeks were typically spent at a school that bore some similarities to schools the pre-service teachers had taught at in Australia, and for the third week, they commuted to and from a school in a regional setting of outer Johannesburg.

The professional experience in South Africa consequently encapsulates multiple layers, and it is hoped that these layers will help equip pre-service teachers as they prepare to enter the teaching profession. There is the exciting challenge of acculturating, about skilling oneself, and also skilling those around. It becomes a journey of building upon, questioning and sometimes setting aside previous ideas about teaching and learning, and this includes the fragile and delicate positioning and identities of teachers within a wider global context. The literature suggests there are important benefits to the pre-service teacher of increased confidence, and personal and professional growth (Pence and Macgillivray 2008). Perhaps most apparent with experiences such as these is the nurturing of an identity, that is best thought of in quite fluid terms. This teaching identity changes and flows constantly. It is evolving, professional and personal, but somehow due to its nature, very public too (Connelly and Clandinin 1999; Flores and Day 2006). The literature also suggests that changes in individual identities and personas occur in quite public ways during the course of international professional experience programs, when pre-service teachers are working and living with each other for three weeks. As academic leaders, we are reflecting on this, as John's minibus stops at the accommodation centre after the long drive from the airport. This centre will be our home for the next three weeks. We note that the glow in pre-service teachers' eyes is different now—undimmed, but somehow warmer.

As the pre-service teachers enter the accommodation, they cannot avoid noticing the famous quote of iconic Nelson Mandela, inscribed proudly on a large picture frame at the entrance: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world". Literally and figuratively, all of the pre-service teachers want to change and be changed. The doors to their minds are surely open to this change, or they would not have embarked on this great adventure into the unknown. Each pauses as she passes the words, seemingly inspired by, and perhaps even a little in awe of, Mandela's words. In a way, this quote can be seen to frame this international professional experience for these students. Despite weariness after the long flight, the prospect of imminent change is keenly felt by those who stepped aboard that Qantas jet in Melbourne a mere 24 hours ago.

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The following day we travelled with John again to the MSA campus, where we were met by MSA professional staff along with student volunteers from MSA's Community Engagement department. The African sun was hot, but the air was not quite foreign. There were smiling faces everywhere, welcoming us, as our hands met in friendly connection. They would lead us through a day of induction to South Africa. "Blessed are the flexible," they quipped, "for they shall survive," which seemed to be received with a combination of reassurance and perhaps a little foreboding. The South African greeting, "Howzit", became familiar, and started to roll

off the tongue of the newly arrived pre-service teachers. This was also a time to get to know a range of unfamiliar language, derived from the eleven official South African languages. The pre-service teachers heard about "boerewors" (a form of sausage), "pap" (traditional porridge made out of maize meal), "bakkie" (a small open truck), "tekkies" (trainers/sports shoes) and "slap chips" (french fries). Part of their initial engagement with the differences of South Africa involved trying out these different words and imaging themselves into a context when they might use them.

Pre-service teachers Amy and Karen, arms linked, grinned sheepishly at each other, as they suspected a local student alongside them was swearing in Afrikaans. The tirade, directed at his ill-functioning laptop, drew sympathetic glances and perhaps even commiseration at the familiar plight of a university student across the globe. Amy and Karen were friends already. They attended the same classes in their teacher education course back in Australia and were both aiming to teach the same subjects on their great South African adventure. Early in the induction day, they exuded optimism and great enthusiasm. "Bring it on," they seemed to say.

And yet as the day unfolded, Amy appeared to become a little more cautious, as she took in new knowledge and understandings about Africa and as she wondered about those aspects of Johannesburg schools that were as yet unknown to her. She sensed that her interactions with the Johannesburg teachers would be a huge learning curve for her, one which she did not plan to take lightly. There was much to absorb from such encounters. She was heard to say: "Our minds should be like sponges taking it all in." Another pre-service teacher, Bella, agreed with her, but with a wicked grin. She laughed off the idea of the sponge. The sponge idea did not work for her because of what she called "synapse elimination". "The Biology teacher!" others were heard to say, laughing uproariously at her clever wit.

At lunchtime, Jackie and Martine discovered a common interest in sampling great South African food, courtesy of a delicious lunch that the people from MSA had prepared for us during our induction. "Chakalaka", beamed the caterer, holding up a spoonful over Jackie's plate. Jackie's head bobbed in immediate and enthusiastic approval, as the red tomato chutney was poured over the contents of her plate. There was no time for individual tasting or selecting. We were all one and we would all eat the same food. Martine also approved. The tastes were "unique", but "divine", she purred, as she worked her way through "boerewors and pap" with relish.

And so the induction day ran, in fast and furious African splendour, away from us. At the end of the day, an MSA young leader had told us about the Saturday School, a program for children at risk in local community schools which was hosted within the MSA campus, and the Monash pre-service students would be participating in this tomorrow morning. The children from surrounding communities would be brought by bus to the campus for a meal and lessons in literacy and numeracy. It is an outreach program, engaging parents, MSA students and teachers in an initiative that would hopefully lift school engagement and indeed school completion rates in this part of Johannesburg. School on Saturday did not sound like fun and may in fact be viewed as drudgery in a different setting. But the rationale behind the Saturday School was interesting for us all to hear about; we

were intrigued to learn more about this form of partnership between the local communities and the MSA campus.

When we arrived back at the Saturday School building on the MSA campus the following day, volunteers in bright orange T-Shirts were there to meet us at the door, smiling, the same ready welcome in their eyes. Any questions about how the children in the school would consider attending school on a Saturday morning were blown away when we heard the laughter and merriment in the children's' voices as they marched up three flights of stairs to the Saturday School "classrooms". The morning began with lively song and dance, African voices booming through the corridors of academia, as traditional and contemporary dancing blended into a delightful chorus. The Monash pre-service students were mesmerised. Learning had clearly begun in earnest, but who were the teachers and who the learners?

A Sunday morning briefing, early the following day, brought the pre-service teachers and us academic leaders together again; this time, heads were bowed over textbooks, worksheets and lesson plans. The delight of the previous day was briefly replaced by palpable anxiety about the expectations of teaching on the first day in South African schools. After the intensity of the opening days, Karen was now a little teary, as homesickness and the prospect of everything falling into a heap became all too real. But soon the books and lesson plans were put aside for a few hours, while the whole group took an all-day excursion to Soweto. This promised to put the anxieties all back into perspective.

The South Western Townships (more commonly known as "SOWETO") is a sprawling proliferation of closely compacted dwellings, as far as the eye can see. Twin power chimneys, once used to provide electricity to the area, welcomed our minibus as we drove into the section of Soweto we were scheduled to visit. It was the presage to Nelson Mandela House, the home of South Africa's first democratically elected president. The house had been turned into a museum, and the students were in awe. It almost seemed like we were trespassing. The curators of the house museum had done a brilliant job to retain its authenticity and the feeling of being lived in. The experience of walking through the rooms where a young Nelson Mandela and his equally young wives had lived was surreal, even jolting. The pre-service students' minds seemed to be transformed, renewed, whether consciously or subconsciously…. Sitting in the comfort of John's minibus on the way back to our accommodation centre, there was plenty to think about as the students prepared for their first days in Johannesburg classrooms.

Departure and Arrival: The Academic Leaders' Perspective

As leaders of this program, we experienced the international placement experience in South Africa amidst tensions. We were open to, and enthusiastic about, the possibilities for change that awaited the students. At the same time, we recognised that the notion of "study abroad" as a contested concept (Anderson 1991). It signals the changing landscapes through the process of globalisation which pervade late

capitalism (Harvey 1990). We acknowledged Appadurai's (1990) assertion of the new "…global cultural economy as a complex, overlapping, disjunctive order, which cannot be any longer understood in terms of existing centre-periphery mode" (p. 296). Appadurai's five scapes attest to relations which do not look the same from every angle of vision but which are deeply perspectival constructs, inflected very much by the historical, linguistic and political situatedness of different sorts of actors. We felt these perspectival constructs as leaders because we, too, viewed this experience as both returning "home" and entering a "host" location as we prepared for and engaged in the international professional experience program in South Africa.

As migrant academics from South Africa now living in Australia, we two academic leaders were travelling abroad and yet also travelling home. We accompanied the pre-service teachers as a group of Australians who were arriving as outsiders in South Africa, and yet we entered the country as both insiders and outsiders. As we drove from the airport, our students' eyes soaked up what they saw. Ours fixed on what used to be familiar. As the students heard South African-isms with ears of unfamiliarity, we smiled at words that were long unused but which were swiftly recognised. And yet, our familiarity was not equally experienced between the two of us either. Our familiarity was mediated by our different skin colour, the different racial categories to which we were assigned as youths in South Africa, and the experiences, prospects, cultures and mobilities that were consequently available to us when this place was our apartheid home. It was these layers of difference that were understandably invisible to our younger students, yet we felt them keenly in these early days back in South Africa.

As academic leaders, we were sensitive to the way in which the host country was positioned for these pre-service teachers as an international study location, an exotic place whose heterogeneity they were seeking to understand at the same time as they sought to understand the differences between practices in their home country and this host country. We knew, too, that this could unwittingly influence their learning in the host country when, indeed, they might encounter practices that they might judge as unfavourable from their "outsider" perspective. It was always possible that their study abroad experience could easily reinforce distance and difference rather than facilitate the connection that it rhetorically promised.

Our roles as academic leaders were driven by competing aspirations. Explicitly, we wanted to promote the way the immersive experience could nurture the pre-service teachers' global competence and enhance their employability. Equally, we appreciated how the program offered a chance to engage with the unfamiliarity of these different educational settings to accentuate particular skills sets and personal attributes to build their resilience. Implicitly, we sought to support our students' experiences in this international location so that they were able to develop "a sensitivity to history's footprints in everyday life" (Doerr 2016, p. 55). In these three aspirations lay divergence. We promoted this international experience as one which could strengthen their prospective employee biographies to respond to the "supercomplexity" of the changing world of work (Tynjälä and Gijbels 2012, p. 219). This meant that we ran the risk of differentiating between the home and host country too simplistically or differentiating in ways which too easily portrayed

the South African learning experience as an extension of the Australian one. We wanted the students to learn about the social, political and cultural differences by encouraging their growing sensitivity, as outsiders; we wanted them to learn about the layers of difference within South Africa that we had learnt about on the inside (albeit many years earlier). We danced between our own perspectives of sameness and difference, and, by so doing, we shaped our students' perceptions in our quest to achieve different ends.

In leading this South African international professional experience program, we were hopeful that the criticisms levelled at teacher education programs, that they do not sufficiently challenge the candidates' personal perspectives through the creation of experiences that differ substantially from their own background (Putnam and Borko 2000; Tarc 2013), would be overturned. We complied with calls for the preparation of students with new pedagogies to nurture their "global consciousness" (Mansilla and Gardner 2007, p. 56) and to build their skills in working with people of different cultural backgrounds (Suarez-Orozco and Qin-Hillard 2004). The literature claimed that exposing students to alternative perspectives and cultural contexts could result in a questioning of personal identity, values, beliefs and mindsets, and could offer significant results in terms of personal growth, self-efficacy, maturity, enhanced intercultural competence and transversal or employability skills for students (Jones 2013). Working within this program, we encouraged these outcomes at the same time as we yearned for the students to deeply understand the layers of difference that mediated educational outcomes in different cultural and educational settings.

Learning in Practice

Travelling from outside of South Africa back into it, we as academic leaders were poised to teach amid our good intentions and somewhat contradictory aspirations. So, too, there were differing aspirations and goals amongst the pre-service teachers who had travelled into South Africa and prepared themselves for teaching in South African schools. The three reflective cases presented as part of the research were constructed from interviews held with participants, in both individualised and focus group settings. They describe significant and complex instances of practice and reflection for a few of these pre-service teachers. These are followed by a discussion section in which we as academic leaders, who travelled with the pre-service teachers, interpret these experiences and evaluate the lessons learnt through their learning to teach.

Case 1: Trust and indifference

> Jackie was possibly the youngest member of the group, although her enthusiasm for being in South Africa more than made up for her youth and inexperience. She was forthright about her reactions to South Africa, admitting that she had experienced thoughts of coming to a land to teach what she knew, but realising, almost upon touching down that she was the

one who would be learning. She correctly maintained that her lack of foresight was confronting and forced her into a new dimension of thinking, a new paradigm, of what it really meant to be a teacher. She conceded that there was a great deal to be gleaned from the South African system, that teachers in that country often deal with challenges which those in more developed countries would never have to consider. She recalled the day she taught a lesson on money and currency to a Year 5 Maths class, in which she circulated both South African currency and Australian currency. The students in her group were in awe of her trust of them, with many wide-eyed throughout the activity. On another day, Jackie had developed a lesson which included her sharing her devastation on the passing of a friend who had died from cancer when she was at school, and the trauma that followed for both the family and herself. She was almost horrified to note the nonchalant air of acceptance on the part of some of the students, as death, even in children so young appeared to be commonplace to them. She had the sense that students had become desensitised to pain and trauma, and this was upsetting to her on multiple levels. Stepping back from the incident, Jackie acknowledged that she was unprepared for the 'worldliness' of the children, of their 'street smartness', which forced maturation upon even the youngest. She conceded that her lack of knowledge and limited understanding of the social and cultural dynamic in South Africa did not adequately prepare her for teaching there. Upon reflection, she ought to have been more culturally sensitive to student needs, and even revealed that her 'money activity' may have been perceived as self-aggrandizement, in a community where need and poverty were so dominant.

Case 2: Nothing but relationship

Martine was a vivacious and animated pre-service teacher, with an incredible zest for her role as teacher and indeed for adventure. In the first weeks of the professional experience, while teaching at her first school, she appeared, for all intents and purposes, the model pre-service teacher. She embraced all things with an open mind and fervour. After her first days at her second school in the last week of the professional experience, however, Martine was silent and introspective. Her Australian peers knew immediately that something was wrong. In her first lesson at this school, she was confronted with 55 Year 7 students in the one classroom, many of whom shared desks and, for the most part, they appeared content with this situation. There were no high-tech facilities, two of the windows in the room were broken, and the floor had been stripped away due to use and lack of maintenance. A chalkboard at the front was scarred and marked, offering a very poor resource for teaching. There was no talk of photocopying or printing – such amenities did not seem to exist here. Confronted by eager faces, wide eyed and curious, Martine was lost for a few moments, and her South African mentor teacher seemed to have left the room. She recalled that her first reaction was to cry, and then to leave. Instead, it took all her courage to look up, and begin talking to her students. This did not involve bells and whistles. Here she needed to be a teacher as there were no flash resources, no teaching aids or technology. She did not have the safety of her specialism. All she had was the hearts and minds of her students, and it was her role to teach. Upon reflection, she better understood the need for improvisation, for thinking on her feet, and of being creatively inventive in the work of a teacher. She was relieved that the students were attentive and compliant – 'Half the battle won,' she grinned later. In moments during her placement in that second school, she believed she transitioned from a struggling pre-service teacher thinking of running away, to a real teacher adept at responding to her students' needs, aware of the need to increase her knowledge, of how to respond to difference. Such was evolution from potential quitter to victor, during her South African experience.

Case 3: The gap within

Karen was a widely travelled individual, who had often spent time abroad with her parents on mission trips. In undertaking a professional experience in South Africa, she was aware that she was crossing cultural boundaries and that she may be challenged by being outside her comfort zone. She admitted later that she had arrived in Johannesburg with a sub-conscious assumption that she would be making an impact on the classrooms she faced. A confident teacher, with a strong classroom presence, she was initially undaunted and undeterred by the large numbers of students in a single class she was teaching. She thought the content on accommodating diversity she had learnt within her teacher education course back in Australia would equip her appropriately as she set out to teach here in Johannesburg. It was true that she possessed sound classroom skills. However, as the days wore on, she realised that the adaptions required by her were intrinsic, not merely extrinsic. The subtleties were noticeable only to her, but she became aware that a fundamental change was occurring not just in her teaching methods but also in the way she thought about her identity as a teacher. The South African classrooms, she later explained, trundled on as they always did, but she was the one who was slowly changing. She discovered soon that she lacked the knowledge that would allow her to feel comfortable about this situation, that what she came to see as her "arrogance" soon set her apart, and prevented her from acclimatising appropriately. Her self-perception and self-awareness began to evolve, compelling her to feel a degree of vulnerability. As a consequence, her personal boundaries were challenged, prompting her to seek ways of acculturating with more deliberate intent. Karen saw that her awareness of her cultural capital, and the limitations of that cultural capital, framed her world in markedly different ways. She came to see her South African students and the teachers in her schools, and indeed the people in the communities she visited, as resilient and hardy, capable of surviving the harshness of life, while having a degree of acceptance of whatever they were forced to work with. She confessed that the 'gap' she originally perceived was not in the schools or among her students, but in herself. Although she admitted that she did not feel out of her depth, she realised that the nuances of difference induced an altered state of mind in her. Looking back, she conceded that a 'different mindset' earlier on in her professional experience would have offered a different lens on her teaching, which may have widened her opportunities to acculturate sooner.

Learning in Practice: A Discussion of the Reflective Cases

What, indeed, can be gleaned from a teaching experience overseas? Much of the literature enthusiastically claims that it shapes and redefines teachers' worlds, their thoughts and experiences. Was it Seneca who said that travel and change of place brings new vigour to the mind? As academic leaders on this international professional experience program in South Africa, we believe that culture, in its broadest sense, is fundamental to such encounters abroad, and one cannot frame any narrative on teaching overseas without a consideration of this element. Additionally, the concept of a "shared" experience becomes integral to a professional experience of this nature (González et al. 2005). The pre-service teachers we travelled and worked with in Johannesburg came to see that the schools they taught in were reflections of both the society they were situated within, and a specific cultural framework (González et al. 2005). In South Africa, we have seen that the complexity of this phenomenon is enhanced, as the schools draw students from varying

backgrounds and races. The history of a country once divided on racial grounds, with the concept of discrimination embedded into everyday life, continues to mark schools, although perhaps not as intensively in the present day as a decade ago. This complex and multifaceted country, with its complex and multifaceted educational institutions, presented its own intricate dynamic to the Australian pre-service teachers. It was within this complexity that they had to find a space to teach and to learn.

Perhaps the most jarring experience for them was recounted in Jackie's case, situated during the final phase of the experience in Johannesburg, which took students into a relatively rural location and to a school that was over populated, under-resourced and in need. A "fight or flight" mentality might have pervaded the pre-service teachers' initial responses, and they chose not to flee. Their fight involved rising to the educational challenges they were confronted with. It was in this response that we saw their personal vision of themselves as teachers emerging. They assumed responsibility, in a space that felt very "foreign", a place in which they wondered if their impact would really be felt. They urged each other forward. As the days unfolded, and their stories became richer with new experiences of both disheartenment and success, it was evident that "culturally responsive" actions, undertaken as intentional steps, steered them forward (Villegas and Lucas 2002). In post-school briefings, their stories were often told with emotion that did not indicate failure, but the urgency of a need to make a difference in their students' lives while they could. These briefings helped give shape and ownership to their experiences, both personally and professionally. It allowed time and space for re-framing of encounters they had not expected, but which now buoyed them as pre-service teachers. They realised quite profoundly that their vision could not be limited to how *they* once saw the world, or their teaching. They needed to expand their vision to include the multiple viewings of their students and their worlds.

In all three cases, the pre-service teachers demonstrated an awareness, perhaps even a consciousness, that their world views were being altered. They began to develop a more solid understanding of themselves as professionals, learnt amidst the differences which presented themselves in this "foreign" context, yet these emerged as affirming and not jolting. Like other studies of international mobility experiences for pre-service teachers (e.g. Biraimah and Jotia 2012; DeVillar and Jiang 2012), findings after experience in Africa or Asia have shown participants becoming more reflective of their developing skills, which required an incorporation of global and multicultural perspectives. They also felt they had become more culturally aware and sensitive (Chinnappan et al. 2013).

The perspectival shifts articulated in Jackie's and Karen's cases, as they began to recognise the multiple ways in which their experiences could be interpreted, indicate growth in their cultural sensitivity. Jackie's encounter with the trusting but indifferent group of Grade Five students opened her eyes to how money and death were constructed by social and political contexts beyond the classroom. Similarly, Karen was challenged by her students, and her own knowledge of teaching within the South African context. She realised that she could not afford to be arrogant about what she had come prepared to teach, but to open herself to the idea of what

she was able to learn. Jackie and Karen came to recognise how culturally responsive teachers can adopt a new lens of understanding, as they attempt to seek greater insights into their students, their understanding of the world and their background. In such contexts, it is impossible to separate home and school, as each plays out in the other. Jackie and Karen like so many of their peers on this professional experience became more aware of where how they needed to draw both home and school into their teaching and learning.

Martine's case shows how she developed new ways of seeing her professional identity. While she had begun the professional experience clinging to her specialisation to define her as a growing professional in Australia, through her South African experience in which she taught across primary and secondary classrooms, and with very few material resources, she learnt that her aspiration to educate was more significant than the content that she taught and that it was relationship building which was the best way to achieve this.

The narrative accounts we have presented here give a sense of the way the pre-service teachers began to appreciate perspectives of culture and multi(cultures). Biraimah and Jotia's (2012) analysis of the longitudinal effects of a study abroad program on teachers' content knowledge and perspectives identifies the significance of culture in fostering rich learning environments. For the pre-service teachers learning in South Africa, the richness of the experience was often founded on a particular difficulty or a sense of trial, which threatened to take away their confidence, but from which they were able to learn and appreciate how the multiplicity of cultures and cultural understanding could be a positive element in their teaching. Briamah and Jotia (2012) call for "…educators to recognise that individuals often cling to their own beliefs in an effort to maintain and sustain their self-identity, a notion of great importance to educators teaching within culturally diverse classrooms" (p. 451). In these culturally rich classrooms in South Africa, the pre-service teachers in these narrative accounts did not defiantly cling to their beliefs or cultural conditioning. They allowed the cultural context to reshape them slowly.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have shown how one group of 13 pre-service teachers from Australia engaged in an international professional experience program in South Africa and began to see and understand the layers of difference in this historically and culturally complex country and in their own identities. In our representation of their cases and our discussion of them, we have drawn attention to our unique perspective as Australian academic leaders on the program: we were both insiders returning to our home country and also outsiders (like the pre-service teachers) making sense of a country that has continued to change in our absence. Keying into these pre-service teachers' reflections on their experiences, articulated through the cases, allowed us to show how the students believe their participation in this international professional experience program enhanced their understanding and

provided perhaps "…denser and richer professional development, than those taken on 'home' soil" (Salmona et al. 2015). The direct acculturation experiences in South Africa, as described above, played a significant role in preparing teachers, easing them into the demands that world be placed on them as they enter the profession.

For example, the expectation that teachers should be culturally competent, and would engage with, relate to and teach a diverse range of students in classrooms, is challenging to achieve. Population changes in Australia have heralded the need for teachers to be aware of and accommodate diverse backgrounds in their students. As of 2015, nearly half of Australia's population has a parent who was born overseas (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016), and the Australian school student population is increasingly reflecting the wide diversity of cultural backgrounds that historical migration patterns have reinforced. The pre-service teachers in this study evolved through their varied experiences, while confronting them through their engagement with the social and cultural dynamics of the classrooms in which they taught. They found themselves taking risks, forcing themselves out of their comfort zone, sometimes by choice, and at other times, because there was no other alternative.

The professional experience program in South Africa became a global experience in which "the infinitely varied mutual contest of sameness and difference" played out for the visiting pre-service teachers and academic leaders who were engaged with it (Appadurai 1990, p. 308). For the pre-service teachers who journeyed to South Africa to undertake professional experience, the challenge posed to their ways of knowing and experiencing the world at home in Australia, both professionally and personally, influenced and coloured the personal and professional learning that was achieved away from home in South Africa.

The international professional experience became a way of knowing and clarifying and learning. The pre-service teachers developed more confidence in and clarity about their roles as teachers and as learners, and they were able to build upon their repertoire of skills and professional understandings that would potentially allow them to promote this as distinctive in their employment biographies. Being situated outside of the familiar and "sameness" of a domestic professional experience opened up powerful prospects for professional growth, for both academic leaders and pre-service teachers alike.

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Chapter 9
The Influence of an International Context on a Teacher Educator's Knowledge, Practice and Identity

Michael Phillips

Beginnings

My career as an educator began in the early 1990s as a graduate teacher working in secondary schools in Melbourne, Australia. Throughout my time as a secondary teacher, I witnessed the increasing role of digital technologies in my own classroom practices and those of my colleagues. My interest in this aspect of teachers' practices led me to further study and ultimately to take up a role as a researcher and teacher educator at Monash University in Melbourne. My research and teaching focus on teacher knowledge and how this impacts on practices and connects with educational technologies, particularly examining the interplay between technological, pedagogical and content knowledge. While some research has considered the ways teachers develop their technological, pedagogical and content knowledge (e.g. see Mishra and Koehler 2006), this chapter illustrates the influence of context on the knowledge that may be valuable in different settings by examining my experiences leading an International Professional Experience program in Prato, Italy. Through these experiences, my understanding of my identity and practices as a teacher educator shifted from a focus on knowledge, particularly the interplay of technological knowledge with pedagogical and content knowledge, to deeper considerations of context.

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A Chance to Work in Tuscany: What Can Be Hard About that?

On 22 April 2015 I received an email that quickly gained my attention. My colleague Rosalie wrote to me letting me know that:

> In Jan-Feb 2016, I'll be leading the Prato practicum. Libby 'taught me' as her apprentice last year, and I need to teach an apprentice this year. The apprentice would be in charge for Jan 2017 and would skill-up 'their' apprentice to lead in 2018. I need to locate a person who is teacherly, scholarly, organised, pleasant, flexible, tireless, resilient—basically prepared to roll up their sleeves and deal with no matter what!
>
> Now, don't be scared but I've thought quietly for quite some time that you'd be the best possible apprentice …

While I was flattered with Rosalie's assessment, I was somewhat unsure about my capacity to lead such an undertaking. Until relatively recently, I had been working as a secondary school teacher and leader with many of the 15 years that I had spent working in schools as a Physical Education and Outdoor Education teacher. As such, my reservations were not in regard to my ability to be able to deal with, as Rosalie mentioned, 'no matter what'. I was more unsure about my emerging skills as a teacher educator.

The Prato practicum was part of the broader International Professional Experience (IPE) program that had been running for a number of years in the Faculty of Education at Monash University. The IPE program had been receiving very positive and powerful reviews from both staff and students and had recently been expanding in terms of the number of locations in which programs were situated. I had heard of the program running in Prato, Italy, which Libby had begun in 2014. This program was based out of a Centre that Monash had established in the second largest city in Tuscany, about 20 min north-west of Florence and in a short period of time, the program had been able to establish strong connections with a variety of local early childhood centres as well as primary and secondary schools.

Speaking with students that I knew who had been on placement in Prato, I developed a general sense of the program. Highlighting differences between Italian and Australian schools, these students discussed generally traditional approaches to teaching and learning, limited access to technology and, most obviously, language challenges as contextual features that shaped their experiences in Prato. Both students and staff who had been in Prato as part of the IPE program also mentioned that it was facing up to these situations that generated lateral, creative and resourceful thinking, which is part of what made this experience so beneficial.

It was for these reasons that I was unsure about my capacity to lead such an undertaking, despite Rosalie's suggestion that she thought I could do this work. My concern was focused on both my capacity as a new teacher educator and the areas in which I had specialised in this new direction in my professional life—educational

technologies, associated teacher knowledge and subsequent decision-making. These areas did not appear to fit easily into the contexts in which pre-service teachers would be working in Prato. I was concerned primarily with my capacity to be able to provide the participating pre-service teachers with the support, guidance and direction that would ensure their development as teachers in the making and also to continue the success of the program in this emerging setting.

Despite these reservations, I replied to Rosalie and indicated that I would be keen to be her apprentice and I was excited about the opportunity to work with and learn from Rosalie and, indirectly, from Libby—two highly experienced teacher educators who I respected immensely. Besides which, the thought of spending a month working in a Tuscan town 20 min from Florence also had its appeal!

The months following my reply accepting Rosalie's invitation were busy with student selection interviews, checking character and professional references, and the final selection of 36 students from an initial pool of more than 120 applicants. By the end of July we were well placed to finally divide our 36 successful applicants into two groups of 18 students. The first group would travel in early January and work with Rosalie for three weeks, while the second group would travel in late January and work with me for the following three weeks. While the student groups did not overlap in Prato, Rosalie and I did have the opportunity to spend a weekend together in which we conducted a very thorough 'handover'.

Coming to Understand the Italian Context

Sitting in a café in Prato as Rosalie's 'apprentice', I was now becoming somewhat nervous as the 'master' was providing me with a large amount of information about the various processes that she had put in place. Many of these were logistical and pragmatic in nature and covered essential information about the roles of various staff at the Monash Centre, where the nearest doctor's surgery was located, how to purchase bus tickets and the like. This information was very important but was the type of thing I was used to discovering when working in different contexts. The information that was to follow was what reminded me about my emerging identity and capacities as a teacher educator.

Rosalie, and Libby before her, had developed a routine of making themselves available to students everyday for a few hours in the afternoon and early evening in the Monash Centre to allow students to drop in and chat about developments in their day. In addition, a tradition of 'group meetings' that followed a 'master class' format had also emerged out of our shared practice over the past few years. These 'master classes' were based around the concerns, challenges and successes students communicated to staff in their drop in sessions and were designed to provide guidance, direction and support for common challenges. While I was comfortable being able to suggest different approaches and ideas that students might be able to undertake in Australia, doing this in a country in which I had next to no language skills, little cultural understanding that I could draw on and no experience in Italian

schools was somewhat more of a challenge. Given what I had already heard about Italian schools, particularly regarding their generally traditional approaches to teaching and learning and the limited access to technology, I was not sure that my areas of expertise, developed through my research and my teaching in Australia and outlined in the next section, were going to be much help to the students that I was about to work with in a very different context.

My Understanding of Teacher Education: Enhancing Professional Knowledge, Practices and Identity

My work in the five years prior to my experiences in Prato had taken me from the secondary school settings in which I had become comfortable and familiar to a research and teaching pathway. As a teacher educator and researcher at Monash University, I had become increasingly involved in teaching and leading large, general teacher education subjects. My work teaching general units, which focuses on teaching and learning, gives me the opportunity to consider different forms of professional knowledge required by educators. The knowledge separating classroom teachers from content experts has been the focus of academic attention for sometime. Of particular note is Shulman's work (Shulman 1986, 1987) which indicated that both a knowledge expert (e.g. a physicist) and a teacher (e.g. a physics teacher) have high levels of content knowledge. A defining characteristic of the physics teacher, according to Shulman (1986), is that unlike the physicist the physics teacher also possesses pedagogical knowledge. Shulman (1986, 1987) argued that expert teachers have a unique form of knowledge that Shulman called Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK).

In addition to this focus on PCK, the remainder of my teaching and research centres around the use of educational technologies as part of classroom practice. Through this work I have become aware of research which extended Shulman's conceptualisation of PCK. The particular knowledge required for effective technology integration in classroom settings has been an area of academic investigation for some time (e.g. see Mumtaz 2000; Selwyn 2011). Like other teaching practices, the use of technology in classroom practice is characterised by complex, contradicting and changing interdependencies between technological, pedagogical and content demands that are mediated by the situated social contexts that bound teachers' practice (Archambault and Crippen 2009; Cox 2008; Mishra and Koehler 2006; Mumtaz 2000; Shulman 1986; Somekh 2007; Straub 2009). The complexity of the complex relationships between these technological, pedagogical and content demands and the varying results reported by research suggest that simple ideas expressed by many simple adoption or diffusion models do not adequately address the complexity of teachers' pedagogical uses of digital technologies. More recently, teachers' use of digital technologies has been examined through an extension of Shulman's (1986) work, resulting in the development of the technological, pedagogical and content knowledge (TPACK) framework (Mishra and Koehler 2006).

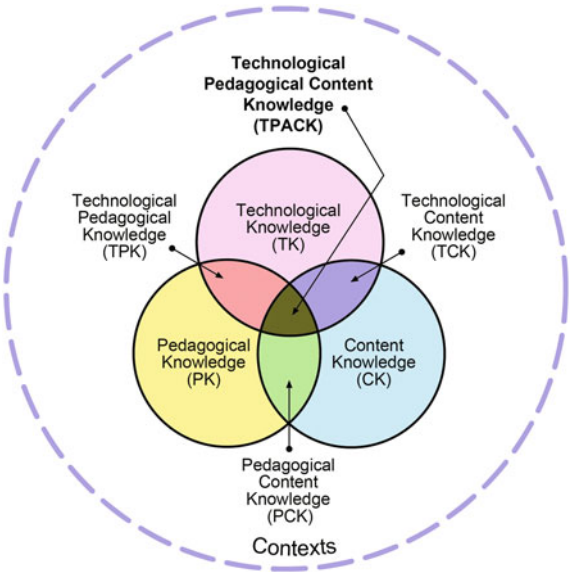

Fig. 1 The TPACK framework from http://tpack.org/

TPACK, as illustrated in Fig. 1, has become a well-known theoretical framework that has reshaped contemporary understanding of the forms of knowledge required by expert teachers. Mishra and Koehler (2006) argue that effective teachers need to understand the relationships between technological, pedagogical and content knowledge and the most effective teachers sit at the nexus point of all three knowledge forms. Following Mishra and Koehler's (2006) development of the TPACK framework, hundreds of studies have used this framework to explore the knowledge development of both in-service and pre-service teachers and the resulting impact on technology integration in classroom settings (Graham 2011).

Much of my identity as a teacher educator and academic researcher is associated with my expertise and developing international reputation with this framework. My work in this area had, prior to my IPE experiences, focused not only on the knowledge teachers require to successfully integrate technologies into classroom practice, but also on the contextual influences within a school that shape the enactment of that knowledge. While being aware of different contextual levels, my work had particularly considered the micro- and meso-level contextual factors in individual classrooms and schools. My experiences in Prato not only required me to consider new contextual factors at the micro- and meso-levels but I also needed to think more broadly about macro-level factors such as educational system structure, socio-cultural understandings of the place of education in a society and the development of national curricula.

Working in Italian contexts in which educational technologies were used in very different ways compared to Australian settings therefore shifted my focus as a teacher educator from technological knowledge and the way it blends with both content and pedagogical knowledge to questions about the forms of knowledge

more generally required by individual teachers. The technology-rich contexts that had been a hallmark of the contexts in which I had worked as a teacher educator were not part of the educational landscape in Prato. This contextual change disrupted many of the beliefs that I had developed in previous years and had become taken for granted assumptions. More significantly, my work with pre-service teachers in Prato allowed me to consider the ways this knowledge was enacted and shaped in these new classroom contexts.

My recent work (Phillips 2016a, b; Phillips et al. 2016a, b; Phillips et al. 2017) reflects this change in focus, by highlighting the importance of context in understanding teacher knowledge and practice. The shift to a focus on knowledge and context requires teacher educators and the pre-service teachers working alongside them to consider the forms of knowledge that are essential for competent classroom teachers and the broader cultural contexts in which this knowledge is developed and enacted. The remainder of this chapter illustrates the shift to a focus on context rather than a focus on TPACK through a series of events that unfolded when working with pre-service teachers on an IPE program.

The Context of This International Professional Experience program

The IPE program which is the focus of this chapter ran over a three-week period and involved 18 pre-service teachers from the Faculty of Education at Monash University who worked with one academic staff member. This group were a mixture of seven undergraduate and 11 postgraduate pre-service teachers all about to commence the final year of their teaching degree. Through the selection process described earlier in this chapter, we were able to select a group of 18 students that were resilient, committed, engaged and they were all excellent teachers in the making. These students were placed in two primary schools and five secondary schools in Prato.

Together we were able to explore language, cultural and pedagogical influences that removed many of the 'taken for granted' assumptions that can underpin a professional experience in one's own country. Together, we learned that relying too heavily on such assumptions, aspects of knowledge and habits of practice can limit opportunities to see chances that may be amplified or silenced in other contexts.

For many of us, this 'personal and social story' (Connelly and Clandinin 1990, p. 2) provided us with the opportunity to reconsider many aspects of our classroom practice. This was not only true for the students who participated in this experience, but was is also true for me as a teacher educator. The IPE program in Prato unsettled my understanding of representing knowledge for the development of effective graduate teachers. The remainder of this chapter will focus on some of the experiences I shared with pre-service teachers that shaped my current understandings and beliefs about what it means to be a contemporary teacher educator.

The Role of Context in Teacher Knowledge Development and Enactment

As described earlier in this chapter, the Italian context in which I worked with a group of pre-service teachers was very different to the Australian context in which I had developed my understanding of what knowledge and practices were important in teacher education. In the Australian context, I had begun to appreciate the strong connections and interplay between technological, pedagogical and content knowledge in the contexts in which teachers worked. This was not only reflected in the teaching that I did at the University but also in the research that I had been undertaking (e.g. see Phillips 2014).

Working in Italy disrupted many of the connections between knowledge forms that had become taken for granted assumptions in my teaching and research. Walking into classrooms in both primary and secondary schools in Prato, I was immediately struck by the absence of many resources that were commonplace in Australian classrooms. For example, the walls of most classrooms were comparatively bare: on some occasions you could find a map of the World, and on others there may be some small examples of student work. In contrast to Australian classrooms which typically feature by an electronic whiteboard, projector and laptop for the teacher running on high-speed wireless Internet, the front of Italian classrooms usually consisted of blackboards and chalk. The physical layout of classrooms in this context was of a traditional nature with desks and chairs in rows all facing the front. In Prato, student desks housed textbooks, notebooks and pens compared to the Australian context where students might have one or more digital devices with wireless internet access, digital textbooks and online learning environments containing other digital resources.

It became clear very quickly that the connections I had previously made between technology, pedagogy and content were not going to hold true in the Italian context. Not only was this a challenge for me in terms of my own understanding of effective teaching practices but it also required me to rethink the approach and advice I provided to pre-service teachers coming into this different learning environment.

Considerations of Context: Theoretical and Practical Contrasts

One reason why TPACK acquisition and development (and PCK before it) have proven so difficult to measure is that knowledge must be acquired and exhibited in specific contexts. Mishra and Koehler (2006) acknowledged the influence of context on teachers' TPACK enactment stating:

> The core of our argument is that there is no single technological solution that applies for every teacher, every course, or every view of teaching. Quality teaching requires developing a nuanced understanding of the complex relationships between technology, content,

> and pedagogy, and using this understanding to develop appropriate, context-specific strategies and representations (p. 1029).

The importance of context was also discussed by Cox (2008) who concluded that 'the effect of context is that TP[A]CK is unique, temporary, situated, idiosyncratic, adaptive, and specific and will be different for each teacher in each situation' (p. 47) therefore suggesting that 'any true example of TP[A]CK must necessarily include the context of that example' (p. 48). Despite Cox's (2008) recognition of the importance of context, her extensive literature review revealed that much of the published research examining TPACK focused on measuring or defining forms of knowledge that are part of the TPACK framework and paid less attention to the context in which the TPACK is developed or enacted.

Cox's findings (2008) were substantiated by Kelly's (2010) content analysis of TPACK research which reported erratic inclusions of context in TPACK research conducted between 2006 and 2009. Subsequently, Rosenberg and Koehler (2015) conducted a comprehensive content analysis of peer-reviewed journal articles between 2005 and 2013 and found that only 36% of published TPACK papers considered context, and that when context was included, classroom and school aspects and those related to teachers were more common than those related to students and society. One may argue, therefore, that the 'contextual turn' which is evident in other areas of academic research is not consistently apparent in investigations of teachers' TPACK.

In addition to this inconsistent consideration of context in TPACK research, Porras-Hernández and Salinas-Amescua (2013) argued that 'the original TPACK framework is limited in that it defines the contexts in which teachers work too narrowly. In fact, the majority of published work refers to the context element in a rather general manner' (p. 224). In contrast, drawing from the conceptual framework from Porras-Hernández and Salinas-Amescua, Rosenberg and Koehler (2015) provided a revised, particular definition of context in relation to TPACK and indicate that context can be considered as 'the conditions around the knowledge and activities of teachers' (p. 2619).

What the academic literature does not discuss are the ways in which changes in context can illuminate different emphases and highlight understandings of what forms of knowledge are considered important by teachers working in different education systems and in different socio-cultural settings. My experience in Prato illuminated what I believe to be significant shortcomings in TPACK's considerations of context and the ways in which context shapes knowledge development and enactment.

My experiences working in Prato have led me to conclude that the broad notion of the 'conditions around the knowledge and activities' may be further enhanced by careful consideration and refinement. Previous research has considered the notion of 'conditions' from a variety of perspectives including factors inside the four walls of a classroom including 'the school environment, the physical features of the classroom, the availability of technology, the demographic characteristics of students and teachers including prior experience with technology' (Kelly 2008 as cited

in Cox 2008, p. 47), the broader socio-political conditions that exist within school workplaces (Phillips 2013, 2014) as well as systemic conditions associated with pre-service teacher preparation (Albion et al. 2010). The variety in these different contexts is reflected in Rosenberg and Koehler's (2015) coding frame that categorises micro, meso or macro contextual levels; however, this characterisation of context amplifies additional challenges for TPACK researchers.

One of these significant challenges centres on the ways in which researchers might consider how knowledge *and* activities of teachers are dialogically linked to the socio-cultural contextual conditions that surround them. While context arguably shapes teachers TPACK development, there is also a strong argument to suggest that context shapes the enactment of this knowledge (e.g. see the discussion regarding pedagogical reasoning and action in Shulman 1987) and this was an aspect of the International Experience program that students in Prato commented on almost daily. Prior research has also shown that the relationship between knowledge and practice is not unidirectional, but researchers also need to consider the ways in which teachers also shape their context (Banister and Reinhart 2011). Thus, context may be better thought of as both influencing and being influenced by teachers and their activities. For this reason, scholars have argued that context cannot be fully separated from individuals (Tabak 2004), their knowledge or their practice. My experiences in Prato certainly allowed me to see this dialogic relationship in action when I observed all of the pre-service teachers working in different classrooms. The connection between context, knowledge and practice is illustrated in an example provided by Ben, one of the pre-service teachers I was working with in Prato.

Disrupting Notions of Context and Knowledge: Learning from a Pre-service Teacher Experiences

The challenges associated with language were probably the most obvious for the majority of pre-service teachers when working in schools in Prato. While there were some students who did have strong Italian language skills, the vast majority of these pre-service teachers landed in Italy with very limited Italian language. This presented particular hurdles for pre-service teachers.

One of the first things many students described was the challenge in trying to initially make sense of their school and their mentors' classroom practices. During the first few days of the program, students were met by their mentors at the Monash Centre and taken to the schools where they would work for the next three weeks. Based on their experiences in Australia, the pre-service teachers are used to having a mentor who has some explicit plans and direction for their teaching. Similarly, the conversations I would have with pre-service teachers after these initial meetings would be about the ways in which technology, pedagogy and content might shape the teaching and learning opportunities outlined in the mentor teacher's plans.

In part, the challenges pre-service teachers faced in Prato were due to the cultural norms in Italian schools, yet a substantial part of the challenge facing the pre-service teachers was also based on the language barriers that some students faced. While some mentors had good English skills, others had very limited capacity to express their ideas verbally with pre-service teachers. As Ben, one of the pre-service teachers, mentioned after his first day in a school:

> My mentor and I had a conversation today using Google Translate. What would have normally taken us five minutes to chat about took us nearly an hour. I have no idea how much I missed simply because we had to keep things so superficial just to make it work.

Ben not only described the challenge communicating in a situation in which language is not shared but it is also interesting to note the way Ben attempted to resolve the impasse at which he found himself. He turned to technology as a way to solve a problem. While using Google Translate did solve some of Ben's communication issues, he was also able to recognise that technology did not provide him with the nuanced conversation he would have had with an English-speaking mentor and that his technology-mediated conversation was more 'superficial'. The change in Ben's teaching context did not only mean that it was a challenge to communicate with those around him, but the difficulties communicating with his mentor impacted on his capacity to comprehend nuanced differences and to work within this new context.

When asking Ben what he felt he missed in his technology-mediated conversation with his mentor, Ben indicated that it was a lack of pedagogical information that was absent. 'I really wanted to be able to get a sense of the students I would be teaching, about them as individuals. What engages them in the classroom, what particular needs individual students have, that sort of thing'. In this instance, the connection between technological knowledge—the use of Google Translate—and the pedagogical knowledge that Ben was after was not present. This connection suggested by the TPACK framework was not part of the initial work occurring between Ben and his mentor.

Talking with Ben and with a number of other students during their time in Prato highlighted the important, dialogical nature between knowledge and practice. I found myself needing to consider the ways in which pre-service teachers like Ben needed to respond to contextual factors, but also I needed to consider the ways in which pre-service teachers also shaped their context (Banister and Reinhart 2011). Changes in my own knowledge and beliefs were not only evident in this new consideration of context, but also understanding the forms of knowledge pre-service teachers required to be effective in this new context. In contrast to the technological, pedagogical and content knowledge triumvirate that is espoused in the TPACK framework, working in Prato required a more nuanced understanding of the pedagogical differences that characterised classrooms in this part of Italy. The connection between knowledge and beliefs is complex and I am still not entirely sure how my knowledge and beliefs changed while in Prato and during reflections afterwards.

The closest explanation that I am able to provide is that the deep, rich and ongoing conversations I was able to have with the pre-service teachers in Prato,

coupled with observations of all students in classrooms and considered in the light of discussions with the pre-service teachers' Italian mentors, provided me with a lived experience illustrating that, in numerous ways and on multiple occasions, the knowledge and practices that were considered valuable in Australian classrooms were different to those valued in schools in Prato. As such, I had little option but to reconsider the beliefs I had previously held about what knowledge teachers needed to be effective in classrooms. This resonates with the findings of Kyndt et al. (2016) who reviewed literature that revealed:

> … the learning outcomes [from informal learning experiences] reported in studies with more experienced teachers mainly concerned new learning methods (e.g. Henze et al. 2009), as well as changing (often conservative) beliefs and conceptions about teaching (e.g. Hoekstra et al. 2010; Hoekstra and Korthagen 2010; Meirink et al. 2009). (p. 1138)

As it transpired, Ben was a highly effective teacher in Prato. He was able to develop his pedagogical knowledge and to engage, teach and relate to the students in his classroom. This was not done through the use of technology as there were simply not the resources in the school to allow for this. Nor was this done by drawing on his mentor's understanding of individual students as the language barrier between pre-service teacher and mentor was too great.

Rather this was done over a three-week period as Ben began to work with the class and individuals in it. Through careful reflection, often involving other pre-service teachers and myself, Ben was able to discuss different students and situations and suggest ways in which he might approach the next day's teaching. Ben, like many other students working in Prato, would get feedback from his peers usually beginning in the student lounge at the Monash Centre and often spilling over from this setting into more informal contexts as the group would head out to dinner together usually continuing to workshop different ideas to help one another. The new context in which Ben and other pre-service teachers were working was not only evident in the schools and classrooms in which they were located, but also in the access pre-service teachers had to one another outside of school hours—something that was not the norm in professional experience placements in Melbourne. This new context saw pre-service teachers sharing their developing ideas about both pedagogical approaches and content in different ways.

Ben's experiences in Prato were not unique but are offered here because of their commonality with those of other students. This kind of experience not only enhanced the knowledge, planning and classroom practices of the pre-service teachers who participated in this experience, but working alongside students like Ben, my understanding of what it was to be a teacher educator shifted. The basis upon which I had built my expertise—as a technology focused teacher educator and researcher—carried less weight in Prato. My experiences in this new context highlighted the equal importance of different forms of knowledge and the flexible way that effective teachers utilise these knowledge forms in different contexts. Indeed, context may be better thought of as both influencing and being influenced by teachers and their activities. For this reason, scholars have argued that context cannot be fully separated from individuals (Tabak 2004), their knowledge or their practice.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced some of my experiences working with a group of pre-service teachers on an International Professional Experience program in Prato, Italy. In contrast to my experiences working with pre-service teachers in Australia, my experiences in Italy have unsettled my understanding of what I should have pre-service teachers consider when planning and teaching. Recent frameworks, such as TPACK, suggest that pre-service teachers should pay attention to technology, pedagogy and content in equal measure; however, practising in a context in which technology is not as obvious disrupts this knowledge triumvirate.

In contrast, working in an international setting such as Prato brings such contextual differences to the fore and shows how context may be better thought of as both influencing and being influenced by teachers and their activities. For this reason, scholars have argued that context cannot be fully separated from individuals (Tabak 2004), their knowledge or their practice. Moreover, working in Prato required pre-service teachers to shift the forms of knowledge that they needed for effective practice from a balance of technological, pedagogical and content knowledge to a blend that focused much more on pedagogical and content knowledge.

This shift in context and the resultant change in demands on knowledge required me as a teacher educator to also reconsider what information was considered valuable in this context. Reconsidering the ways in which technology can enhance classroom practice has required me to re-examine the knowledge and beliefs that underpinned much of my work with pre-service teachers. Back in Australia, digital technologies continue to be an aspect of my teaching; however, they do not feature with the prominence they once did. In contrast, providing students with ways to consider the dialogic relationship between themselves as teachers and the context in which they are working is now a key feature of my work.

Following my experiences in Prato, I looked back on the email that Rosalie sent to me inviting me to join the International Professional Experience program. As her 'apprentice' she needed '… to locate a person who is teacherly'. Working in a different context has allowed me to develop a greater understanding of my own knowledge and beliefs. In doing so I believe this experience has significantly enhanced by capacities as a teacher educator—in short my experiences in Prato have made me more teacherly.

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Chapter 10
Acknowledging and Learning from Discomfort: The Learners' Perspective

Gillian Kidman, Zoe Davies and Cassy Eaton

Prologue

> I notice students arriving to the first few classes each semester. Many survey the classroom and move towards a friend. Others do the same, and if they don't know anyone, move to an empty table or sit at a table with students who they may have perceived to have something in common. Sometimes, students appear to walk past 'an empty chair', which is next to someone from another culture, to work with others more like themselves. Often it is the international students who end up working together. I wonder to myself – do the Australian students perceive a need for ideas and understandings from their own, familiar contexts, rather than having to engage with students from other cultures. Perhaps the Australian students do not want their experiences challenged or questioned, or perhaps they need the security of an 'insider perspective'?

Encounters such as these made me wonder about how Australian students could apply a different, and at times, illuminating lens, to their learning by incorporating a global perspective. I was not aware of the parallels of this in terms of my own professional work until I began reflecting on my involvement in the Malaysia international professional experience (IPE), and assisting two pre-service teachers —my co-authors Zoe and Cassy—to interpret their experiences in Malaysia. The above 'empty chair' reflection is based on my experiences with what appeared to be cultural assumptions about learning. However, on reflection I see a parallel with my own learning preferences and experiences. Until I participated in the Malaysia IPE, I would always seek comfort and familiarity in my preferred curriculum, that is, science. I was not interested in moving from science or mathematics to new curriculum territory. I did not want to venture into something new, something different, something to cause discomfort. That was until circumstances meant that I had to

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engage with teaching English language in a primary school in Kuala Lumpur. We tend to want to remain in a safe zone, a comfort zone where we have understanding and skills, and we respect the knowledge of that community. Be it walking past an 'empty chair' or walking past an 'unknown curriculum'. After my experiences in Malaysia, I now believe we need to challenge ourselves. We need to go outside our comfort zones and experience discomfort in order to learn.

Introduction

In this chapter, we explore our learning—that of two pre-service teachers (Zoe and Cassy) and one accompanying academic (Gillian)—in terms of when we were faced with situations that took us well outside our comfort zones during a three-week IPE in Kuala Lumpur (KL), Malaysia. Being exposed to global perspectives during our IPE experience meant we needed to be open to new ideas, issues, and solutions and to changing the way we did things. It also meant being culturally sensitive and willing to learn from others. These global perspectives enable a teacher to learn from others and to recognise new opportunities. A pre-service teacher who has undertaken an IPE is able to grow in ways such as those mentioned above, that other pre-service teachers are less likely to do because they have not had the same cultural immersion.

There is recognition among tertiary institutions that an IPE can be transformative to the pre-service teacher when it is based on empathetic engagement (see, e.g. Casinader and Clemans, under review). Empathetic engagement is a blend of emotion and cognition, where we recognise relationships exist with others and these relationships are recognised to involve interests, desires, vulnerabilities, hopes, and sensitivities (Gruen 2015). An IPE can become transformative as the pre-service teachers' perspectives of relationships are changed. There is a paradigm shift, whereby prior interpretations and assumptions are critically reflected upon to form new meaning. Put simply, by experiencing a new culture during the IPE, an old or former view is challenged by new evidence, and this leads to an updated perspective. This widely accepted rational means of modifying our beliefs about the world is known as Bayes' Theorem where learning is considered to be a process of *belief revision* in which a '*prior*' subjective view (referred to as *P*) is replaced by a '*posterior*' view (referred to as *Q*) that incorporates newly acquired information. A simple mathematical formula is used for calculating *conditional probabilities* and the process proceeds in two stages. First, some of the prior views (referred to as probabilities) are directly altered by experience, intuition, memory, or some other non-inferential learning process. Second, the person 'updates' the rest of his/her views to bring them into line with his/her newly acquired knowledge (Joyce 2016). This perspective transformation can be achieved through experiencing discomfort and critical reflection. Such transformative learning is not possible by simply supplementing a Western-based university curriculum with international perspectives (Caruana 2010). Instead, first-hand experience is the better teacher.

The aim of this chapter is to explore our (Gillian, Zoe, and Cassy) learning. We are helped by Boler's (1999) framework of 'pedagogy of discomfort', where the anxiety-provoking events influence more complex understandings of cultural issues. We feel our chapter is distinctive in two ways. Firstly, it is co-written with undergraduate pre-service teachers—the undergraduate student as authors (Zoe and Cassy), and the accompanying academic (Gillian) as co-learner—in the field of internationalisation. Rarely do undergraduate students become authors or co-authors of works that report new research findings. However, it was the common IPE experience that enabled us to undertake this reflective narrative. It seemed that a natural rapport developed between us that was not experienced with other students or the other accompanying academics. This led to a post-IPE meeting to discuss our learning and later to collaborate in terms of the writing of this chapter. Secondly, the learning experiences of Zoe and Cassy are not told through the views interpreted by Gillian, but through their own reflections and interpretations as co-authors. Gillian has tried not to influence the words or views of Zoe or Cassy out of respect for their intellectual contributions to the chapter.

Our intention for the chapter is to explore the challenges we faced, and how our teaching philosophies and identities have been transformed by an IPE. We do this by providing our individual narratives in the context of the Malaysian IPE. We present our joint experience, along with the interpretation of the experience, the challenges and dilemmas, and the lessons to be learned. Whilst much of our learning relates to us as teachers (now and in the future), we firmly believe that we had to be taken outside of our comfort zones and to experience discomfort in order to become learners. We needed to go beyond the comfort zone of doing the familiar, being with like-minded people. We needed to challenge the occurrence of walking past the 'empty chair' and the 'unfamiliar curriculum' outlined in the Prologue.

Context of the Study—The Malaysian IPE

We took part in the *Global Education Practicum* (GEP) which is a collaboration between the Victorian Council of Deans of Education, universities from the Australian state of Victoria, the Australian High Commission in Kuala Lumpur (KL), and the Malaysian Ministry of Education in Kuala Lumpur. This collaboration enables Victorian pre-service teachers (PSTs) to experience the richness of a country where three cultures, Malaysian, Chinese, and Indian, amicably cohabit, resulting in most school students being bilingual, and in some cases trilingual. Cassy and Zoe were two PSTs in a group of 28 from four Victorian Universities undertaking a three-week international teaching experience whilst engaging in cross-cultural learning and awareness about education in Malaysia. Gillian was one of four accompanying academics from the participating universities.

During the Malaysian IPE, Cassy and Zoe were placed in a mixed university, but a single gender, semi-self-contained hotel apartment. Their teaching experiences in

Malaysian government schools were in mixed university and mixed gender groups. The mixed university groupings were a deliberate attempt to integrate the universities, to broaden the friendship groups of the students, and to create a sense of professional collegiality both within schools and among the universities. Cassy was placed in an Indian-Malaysian boys' secondary school to teach Biology. Zoe was to teach English Language to Year 3 and 4 mixed classes of Malay, Indian-Malaysian, and Chinese Malaysian children. Zoe expanded her teaching to include art in Year 3 and 6 classes. Gillian had the role of visiting the pre-service teachers in their schools over the duration of the teaching experience, and to provide personal and academic guidance where necessary. Both Cassy and Zoe found that the crowded and under-resourced (by Australian standards) multilingual environments where they taught, often without supervision or guidance, were a challenge. As an accompanying academic, Gillian also found she had to go outside her comfort zone, and learn as a result, as she worked to support Zoe and Cassy with their teaching.

Research Design

As stated above, a rapport developed between Gillian, Zoe, and Cassy during the three-week IPE. We are very different people, but a rapport developed and continued beyond the placement. Casinader (in press) highlights that teachers accompanying students on international learning experiences develop greater affinity with the students in their groups as individual personalities. I was very impressed with Zoe and Cassy's individual interpretations of their experiences in Malaysia as told in a public presentation on the final day of the Malaysia IPE. When the opportunity to contribute a chapter to this book arose, I immediately thought of asking Zoe and Cassy to help me. We had email conversations as we were spread geographically, we were based on different campuses, and we each had full-time schedules. We met for coffee and discussed ideas. During a discussion for the writing of this chapter, Zoe and Cassy began speaking in terms of going on a *holiday*, and *travelling*—being a 'holidayer' and a 'traveller' as a continuum. We have continued to use these terms and the associated concepts as part of our learnings. Neither Zoe nor Cassy were aware of the Aikenhead (1996) work that also uses the term 'traveller'. Zoe and Cassy devised their own 'traveller' analogy, and we use it later in this chapter. In keeping true to the uniqueness of this chapter —being told by undergraduate students Zoe and Cassy, and not retold and interpreted by a researcher, Gillian—we choose to use the terms 'holidayer' and 'traveller' as original to our IPE experience, and not originating in the literature. The significance of our analogy is explained later in the chapter following our three narratives.

To write these narratives, we referred to Zoe and Cassy's scholarship applications and interview notes that resulted in their selection to participate in the IPE. We also referred to the reflective diaries we kept during the Malaysian IPE and drew upon the sentiments presented in group presentations during a debriefing session,

face-to-face meetings, and numerous email conversations. Collectively we discussed and reflected upon what our joint experiences meant to us, and how our experience has helped to shape our futures as teachers.

Learning Through Experiencing Discomfort

In relation to Boler's (1999) frame of 'pedagogy of discomfort', disruptive moments and anxiety-provoking events unsettle the comfort of what we know and how we think and behave. As we examine our beliefs and assumptions, we experience 'defensive anger, fear of change, and fear of losing our personal and cultural identities' (Boler 1999, p. 176). Most people naturally avoid placing themselves in situations of discomfort, but when we find ourselves there, we need to be reflective and seek a workable solution—it is sometimes a 'fight or flight' response. This is alluded to in the prologue. By walking past an 'empty chair' or walking past an 'unknown curriculum', we are avoiding placing ourselves in situations of discomfort. In terms of the present IPE context, we acknowledge going on the IPE to experience new situations and new learnings, however, we did not consciously go in order to experience discomfort. We were challenged emotionally; we expected this, but we did not take flight. We reflected, and where in the past we might have taken flight, we drew on our inner strengths and fought for emotional control and a return to a state of comfort.

Sterling (2010–2011) explains that transformative learning can sometimes be a 'painful process' for a learner. Resistance may occur as existing understandings, beliefs, and values are challenged. As learners on the IPE, we were required to reconstruct meanings which caused discomfort. We had to leave our comfort zones and to engage in a critical investigation of ourselves in terms of our understandings, beliefs, and values, and the ways in which these things were shaped and structured (Leibowitz et al. 2010). By acknowledging discomfort, we challenged our dominant beliefs, habits, and practices and by doing so, we created openings for individual learning and social transformation (Zembylas 2015). When one is experiencing Boler's (1999) 'pedagogy of discomfort', and there is a form of transformative learning occurring, the goal is an awareness of, and an embracing of, a more complex, yet flexible understanding of 'Self'. We develop an ability to examine our values and how we perceive the 'Other', and the influence of these perceptions on the 'Other' themselves (Boler 1999).

Alternative Framework—Aitkenhead

Earlier we mentioned Aikenhead's (1996) work. We would like to acknowledge, but not cite, his early culture and border-crossing ideas. In this work, Aikenhead wrote of *tour guides* and *travel agents*, of *tourists* and *travellers*. We do see

similarities with this framework's terminology, but as we explain, the framework itself is not ideal for our experiences. Aikenhead's tourist metaphor places the 'tourists' in an unfamiliar culture, and they require a high degree of guidance ("bus tours") from a tour-guide teacher. We did not find 'tourists' on our IPE. Generally speaking, the pre-service teachers were competent in the classroom; they did not need 'bus tour' guidance from the accompanying academics. We used the term 'holidayer' as an analogy for the pre-service teacher who undertook the days teaching as a means to an end—to practice their craft and get academic credit for the experience. At the end of the day, the 'holidayer' pre-service teacher has two personas, the professional teacher at school as well as the visiting adult, temporarily living out of a suitcase, soon to leave with mementoes of an enjoyable visit. We share the term 'traveller' with Aikenhead, who sees the 'traveller' as making their own way through a foreign land—not in need of an agent or tour guide. We, however, use the term 'traveller' for the pre-service teacher who is competent in the classroom, aiming to learn from the new classroom culture and then applying those new learnings beyond the school into the community. Zoe and Cassy developed this meaning for the term in isolation from Aikenhead's science culture and subcultural use.

Narratives of Discomfort

We now present our narratives of learning from our involvement in the Malaysian IPE. In each narrative, we describe a situation that triggered feelings of discomfort, followed by a discussion of the learning that came from that experience.

Gillian: Seeing Myself as Learner as Well as Teacher

It was a sink or swim time for me. I was in KL with three other accompanying academics, and 28 pre-service teachers (PSTs). The PSTs could ask us for help in terms of planning lessons or interpreting the days' events, so most evenings I had a PST wanting to chat. I was also a learner just like the PSTs were. In terms of our abilities, we were all learners. What we each knew and understood from our past experiences was not sufficient in our new context—we needed to learn in order to survive the experience and to grow professionally. And who knows, maybe grow personally. Zoe, Cassy and I began sharing experiences and perceptions in order to gain mutual understandings of the complexities of the KL classrooms. In my case with Zoe, it was reciprocal teaching. I had observed her teaching in a Year 4 classroom. The class had to 'do' English Language—something I knew nothing about in terms of teaching (I am a scientist and mathematician, comfortable with my chemicals, dissections and formulae). To help Zoe plan for this overcrowded class where many of the children had no functional English was a huge challenge.

I felt a little threatened. I experienced great discomfort. I had a feeling that my professional ability to 'teach' was on the line. How do I tell a PST I had no idea, and that I was out of my comfort zone? I have told PSTs it is okay not to know everything, and it is okay to tell students you don't know—but I found myself actually having to do this. I had to reveal 'I don't know' and this was a huge challenge. I know I don't know everything, but having to admit it publically is very hard. I felt embarrassment and discomfort. Zoe had come to me for advice, and I didn't have any to give. Fortunately Zoe had a few ideas, which we were able to troubleshoot (for example, the task was to teach invitation writing genres, so Zoe suggested a class party discussion might work—but what about inclusivity with limited English for some students?): Over time, I become more comfortable admitting my shortcomings in a genuine and sincere way. I became aware I was feeling less threatened, and at the same time I felt empowerment. I was learning to teach English Language. I was learning about the Malaysian curriculum. I could 'see' what they were aiming to achieve as learning outcomes through their curriculum. I recall feeling a sense of ease late in the second week of the IPE—I had an understanding of what the curriculum and text book writers were valuing in terms of English language at the Year 3/4 level. I was starting to appreciate the bigger picture. You could say I had immense pride as I thought to myself, 'Yes, I could go into that class and teach English Language. I cannot only just teach my sciences!' Of significance, I had gone outside of my comfort zone, I had grown in terms of facing my weaknesses and insecurities, I had co-planned in a different curriculum area, I wasn't walking past an 'empty chair' or an 'unknown curriculum'—I was facing it head on and embracing its differences. Now about two years later, I am feeling discomfort once again in retelling my story. It is one thing to admit you 'don't know' to a PST, it is quite another to admit it publicly in this forum. However, an outcome from the IPE was a gain in personal courage.

Cassy (Secondary Science PST)—Learning to Be a Teacher in an Unfamiliar Cultural Context

I come from a small country town in rural Victoria. My experiences with cultures not my own were very limited prior to moving to Melbourne and beginning university studies. I was really excited to apply for a scholarship to do an IPE in Malaysia. I was excited to travel, but I was also excited at the challenge of immersion in a new culture. I wanted to experience a different culture, to improve my skills and meet new people. I didn't really set out to question and clarify my own culture, but that is what I found I was doing after only a few days. You just can't get that level of awareness from a textbook, a tutorial discussion or an assignment.

The experience was so rich that I don't know where to begin my story. So I will begin at the end with what I learnt. My learning has come from my lived experiences, not from a book or from someone else's words. I have learnt that possessions

are not synonymous with capacity. The boys in my science classes had very little, but that did not necessarily mean they had any less to offer. Quite the contrary in fact. I visited the 'The Stepping Stones Living Centre' [orphanage] where the boys sleep on a concrete floor. I was shocked, horrified and surprised all at the same time. I didn't understand how these boys could live this way, yet not seem to care. This caused me discomfort, not because they had so little, but because of my own attitudes as to what I did have. I learned that the things we stress about, are actually quite unimportant and we should gather some perspective. For me, this IPE experience is beyond anything I have ever tried. I had not seen my comfort zone in 31 days, I could not wait to return home with a new outlook, not just on my teaching, but also a new perspective about the world. My refreshed understanding of culture is that a culture can never be fully understood by anyone, ever, even those who live in it. The more I learned about the Malay culture, or any other culture, the more I realised how little I actually knew, and how there is so much more I will never know. One thing, for example, pointing with the index finger, that we were told would be heavily offensive to the Malay Peoples, we went to school, and we saw every second person do it. So I think the main thing I learnt from this experience is that you never assume ... EVER! For example, I assumed teenage boys were the same everywhere. But this is not so. In KL, the boys did not hold back with their questions. I was surprised at how forward they were in questioning me about Australian girls, about sexual relationships, and about my own personal life. What is taboo in Australian schools is not taboo everywhere. I assumed I would have personal privacy, but when I found this was not the case, and the boys were free to ask any question of me, I experienced great discomfort. I did not have the comfort of teacher student boundaries, and I had to learn to accept this, and to learn fast! Also, I had assumed that I was to learn from my mentor teacher, but it turned out she wanted to learn from me! I was not prepared for this. Once I realised I was 'on show' for her learning, I felt immense pressure to come up with quality pedagogies each lesson that the teacher could learn from. The use of ICTs in the classroom was scant, so I could show her a few 'tricks' (for example, using the projector to project a diagram onto the white board for the boys to come up and label). I definitely noticed the pressure was on to perform well pedagogically every lesson so she could learn from me.

Zoe (Primary School PST)—I Became a 'Traveller'

Receiving the scholarship to go to Malaysia during the third year of my primary education degree was very exciting. I would get to learn in-depth about the Malaysian culture as working in a place helps you to do, rather than just visiting it on holiday. I would get to teach types of kids I had never taught before. On my first day I found out I was to have total control over my Year 3 and 4 English language classes. This was very scary for me, as I had always been supervised and mentored whilst on placement. At first I struggled with everything—the curriculum, the lack

of a language common to all in the room, the notion that I was on my own with no teacher present. I felt great discomfort, and I began to question my very being. Self-doubt was ever-present: what if something went wrong? What if a kid got sick? What if ….? But then I discovered that if I was patient, the class generally responded to me. Some kids translated for others. We all struggled. We all continued to feel discomfort, but I did notice that it abated a little from time to time. My main pedagogical discomfort was having to teach from the text book—a set lesson every day, often disjointed, and at times very confusing even for me, a native English speaker. If the book was confusing to me, what were the kids getting from it? I had a crisis one lesson. I became very anxious, I didn't know what to do. But then I realised I just had to deal with it. And I did! I coped for the first time! I knew I had to make a decision and follow it through. This was a critical moment for me. The nature of the incident is no longer of importance. I'm finding it hard to recall what happened. There was no disaster, no one got hurt—was it really even an incident? Perhaps it was as simple as I didn't like having to teach from the textbook. The class didn't like not being taught from the textbook. We were having to do something none of us wanted, and something I did not consider educationally sound. Whatever it was, the critical thing is that my family and friends were not around to support me and talk me through it. Any actions were mine alone, and for the first time I experienced self-assurance and a sense of accomplishment. From that day on, I was a different teacher—I had become a 'traveller'! Before I was just going through the motions I think. When we looked back on the IPE experience, I think up until this so-called crisis, I was a 'holidayer', just doing what I had to do. But by having to stand on my own two feet, I was now in control, I knew I could do this teaching thing, and I could do it well.

I was ready to teach the content and had the personal skills to effectively make a positive impact on these kids' education. I then initiated my taking art classes for the Year 3 and 6 children. I had integrated my two passions—art and teaching children, and I loved it!

Discussion

In the preparation of this chapter, Zoe and Cassy spoke of being a 'holidayer' and of being a 'traveller'. They spoke of differences between the two terms as being significant in terms of out-of-school contexts more so than the in-school contexts. The in-school incidents influenced us personally, thus also influencing who we were out of school. We all started the IPE as a 'holidayer' living out of a suitcase that progressively gets messier over time due to the busy school schedules. As Boler's (1999) framework of 'pedagogy of discomfort' attests, we had times of significant discomfort. The reflection and discussion of these experiences resulted in our being aware of our altering of views—transformation of ideals. We began to learn about ourselves, and how we 'fitted' into the KL community both in and out of school. Gillian realised she was being challenged personally and professionally

and she developed a new awareness and began 'learning'. She was transforming both culturally and intellectually as she became more aware of her teaching biases. Gillian realised she can apply a different, and at times, more illuminating lens to her teaching tasks by incorporating pedagogies and rationales from teaching areas outside of the sciences. Whilst this may be obvious to many academics, previously it was not obvious to Gillian. She rarely ventured beyond her science comfort zone, so she had little knowledge of the possibilities beyond. She needed to experience the reality of drawing on the sciences to teach English Language in order to learn the strengths of different lenses. Gillian also became aware of the possibilities of adopting new ideas (from English Language education) to use in her beloved and comfortable science. She further experienced the 'pedagogy of discomfort' as she also had to face her insecurities and gain personal confidences and is still grappling with this discomfort as this chapter goes to press.

Zoe taught a lesson during which she experienced acute anxiety that, for the first time, she had to cope with on her own. It was this anxiety and discomfort that changed Zoe. Boler's (1999) frame of pedagogical discomfort is highly relevant in understanding Zoe's experiences. Her growth in confidence and personal understanding can be directly attributed to the anxiety-provoking event. Previously Zoe would have taken flight and removed herself from the situation, either physically or mentally, with the assistance of family and friends. Kissock (1997) explored the notions of moving out of one's comfort zones when on international placement, which can be a time of personal growth beyond the support networks of family and friends. We know this certainly occurred for Zoe. Gillian recalls the pride on Zoe's face when she spoke of the critical incident, and how she (Zoe) dealt with the situation.

Cassy struggled with the blurring of teacher/learner expectations and boundaries. She experienced discomfort as the teacher when her adolescent male students repeatedly questioned her on aspects of her private life and queried the sexual activities of young Australian women in general. These boys pushed Cassy's personal boundaries. What is apparently culturally acceptable for Indian-Malaysian boys to discuss with their teacher is not necessarily appropriate in an Australian context—something Cassy had to contend with. Cassy found she was crossing cultural boundaries and in doing so she needed to create a safe learning environment for herself in her multicultural classroom. Australian teenage boys do not normally ask personal questions of their teacher. There are unwritten codes and boundaries that Australian youth seem to follow. This was not the case in the school that Cassy was teaching in. Her mentor teacher was present when the boys deviated from their lesson, but did not take issue with the boys' questions. Cassy experienced further discomfort as the expectations between herself and her mentor were not what she anticipated and was accustomed to. She sought a mentor relationship; however the reality was, she became the mentor in terms of pedagogies. Cassy also found she needed a heightened classroom flexibility and the ability to create innovative resources as her mentor teacher wanted to learn pedagogical strategies from her. She had consistent pressures to perform well pedagogically, never knowing when and what the boys may ask that was unrelated to the lesson. She was confronted and challenged by her all male Year 11 biology class. Cassy discovered

her inner resilience, and this enabled her to work through this pressure and discomfort and to succeed. From the frame of pedagogical discomfort, she was able to reflect upon her unease on a daily basis, and to begin to recognise the benefits of this discomfort and challenges. Cassy had changed in her outlook on life; she had become a 'traveller' and was keen to embrace this new being and travel forward.

We can each describe our experiences in terms of transformational change. We changed from being, in Zoe and Cassy's terms, a 'holidayer' to a 'traveller'. But to do so, we needed to experience the discomfort, and to accept this discomfort, and use it to our advantage. We had to confront the challenges and learn from them, rather than shy away from them. In doing so, we each gained a clearer understanding of ourselves. To extend our 'holidayer' and 'traveller' metaphor, Zoe provides us with a suitcase diagram (see Fig. 1).

We arrived in KL with our suitcases (Fig. 1a): we had clothes, shoes, swimwear, a few books, pens, pencils, and so on. Initially you could say we packed a suitcase based on our past experiences, and our future intentions. It is what happened with our suitcase contents as we experienced and learnt from our discomfort that is important. As we alluded to earlier, we acknowledge the work of Aikenhead, as he too used the metaphor of being a traveller. Aikenhead used the notions of tour guides and travel agents assisting the tourist and traveller. However, we see our suitcases differently. Gillian was not the tour guide or travel agent. She was just as much a 'holidayer' as a 'traveller'. She began the IPE with preconceived ideas and understandings of what the IPE would be—an opportunity for PSTs to practice their craft. Then, when Gillian discovered she was being challenged personally and professionally, transforming both culturally and intellectually, her suitcase changed from being in a jumble to become more orderly (Fig. 1b). She had to sort her skills and clarify her pedagogical actions in order to assist the pre-service teachers she was supporting in this experience. Zoe and Cassy's suitcases were also initially a jumble, and then following discomfort and the associated reflective practice, their

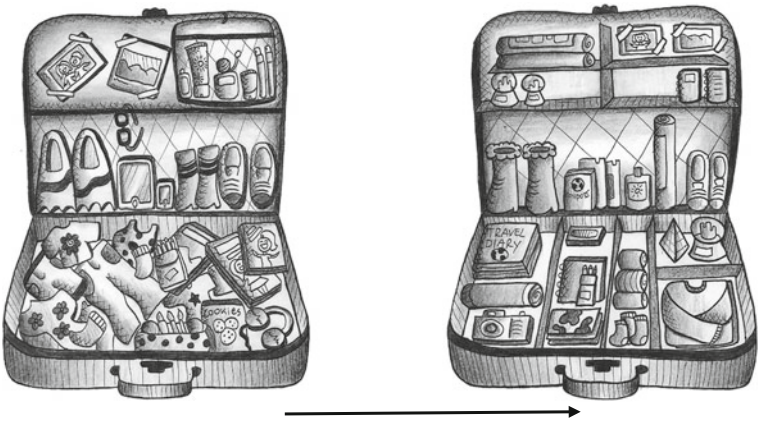

Fig. 1 **a** 'Holidayer's' suitcase. **b** 'Traveller's' suitcase

suitcases also became more orderly. When a suitcase becomes more orderly, it does so because new skills are emerging, new understandings are evident and require a place from which they can easily be accessed and refined. Easy access and refining are not possible if the skill or understanding is in a jumble.

Conclusions

Our narratives as viewed through the lens of 'pedagogy of discomfort' indicate that we became our form of 'travellers' in a variety of ways. We gained professional knowledge and skills, but we are still working on our understandings. Gillian had to reassess her teaching when she found she did not have her familiar resources to draw upon. She was lacking in knowledge, understanding, and confidence. Zoe gained personal coping skills that gave her a new found inner strength. Cassy gained a new outlook on life and a great anticipation of moving forward to embrace this. The lasting benefits of our IPE include that we doubt we will prejudge a person's cultural background, linguistic difference, or even learning ability. We think we will be more inclined to have greater patience and empathy. We have greater personal courage and confidence.

Epilogue

I (Gill) feel the need to conclude this chapter with an Epilogue to balance my Prologue, to create the linear symmetry I perceive is necessary. That, and the need to include the mathematically based Bayes' Theorem to explain my understanding of the learning process through conditional probabilities, indicates I am a scientist and mathematician at heart. I am in my comfort zone when thinking in a quantitative and analytical way. I am not comfortable being publicly reflective, revealing my inner-self, and then writing about this in a narrative genre that is so very different to my preferred third person scientific genre. So why did I do it? Why did I willingly put myself in a situation that would bring such great discomfort? The honest answer is that I had no idea of how hard this writing journey would be. I didn't realise how difficult narrative genre writing is, and how hard it is to keep consistent. I didn't realise it is best to keep to one framework to base one's ideas upon. I kept sub-consciously reverting back to the third person, past tense, jargon laden, multi-framed genre I was familiar with. I kept re-entering my comfort zone despite repeated pleas from my colleagues to face the discomfort, simplify the frames, and open myself to exploration. I also struggled as to how to do all this as well as stay true to my student co-authors. It would have been easy to simply accept the Aikenhead framework, but as Zoe and Cassy developed their own use of terms, I needed to be true to my data. I needed to present the data—their 'holidayer' and 'traveller' terms, and the sub-sequent suitcase diagram and explanation. They were not mine to change or

reinterpret. Interestingly, the writing of this chapter was more confronting and created greater discomfort than the discomfort that I experienced during the IPE, or during the writing of the other chapter I have in this volume (see chapter "Pre-service Teachers' International Teaching Placement: Outcomes for the Accompanying Academic" with Lang and Cacciattolo). I think this is because during the IPE we had co-experiences which helped me lower my guard, and then during the other chapter writing, I had Lang who understood my scientific and mathematical writing needs, and Cacciattolo who understood the narrative genre. Together they helped me create a balance between my mathematical needs and the narrative requirements of this text. These co-authors, who were comfortable with the narrative, supported my learning and helped me through my discomfort at times overwriting my work 'to make it more … and less ….'. In this chapter, I was the one supporting my co-authors and fighting to keep true to the original aim of not reinterpreting my student co-authors' words. I was out of my comfort zone and in considerable discomfort. The discomfort of the IPE long forgotten, replaced by a newer and more challenging discomfort. I am wondering whether I would have undertaken this writing task had I known what lay ahead. Would I do it all again? I think I might. I think it will be easier next time as I know a little more about the narrative genre. I would definitely involve students as co-authors as I feel they have excellent ideas, which need sharing and not always reinterpreting in relation to the literature.

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Chapter 11
Resilience, Global Threat, and International Professional Experience

Julie Faulkner, Anne Keary and Jan Drew

Introduction

Student mobility is growing as an embedded feature of the globalization of university education in Australia. Students electing to complete part of their tertiary study or professional experiences related to their area of study overseas negotiate complex issues pertaining to intercultural understanding in situ and on a daily basis. International professional experience (IPE) can be richly rewarding, yet also present challenges. One of the international challenges of the twenty-first century is associated with the threat of global terrorism. On a recent Faculty of Education IPE program to Malaysia, pre-service teachers' anxiety was heightened due to rumors of a terrorism threat. These concerns disrupted the cohort's equilibrium, despite the Australian Department of Foreign Affair and Trade (DFAT) not raising their security rating for Malaysia.

This incident called into focus the role of the supervising academic and local liaison, as well as the understandings built through predeparture and in-country workshops. This chapter explores the perceptions of the IPE students and the capacity of just-in-time, point-of-need briefing to develop students' cultural beliefs. Such perceptions and beliefs seem especially apposite when dealing with difficult issues such as terrorism. In response, we explore notions of resilience from the perspectives of Rose (2014) and Bottrell (2007), and Beck's (2002a) notion of risk. Drawing on Boler's (1999) 'pedagogy of discomfort,' the reaction to threat is analyzed as a protective response to further knowing. We ask how an anxiety-provoking event, or even the perception of such an event, can leverage more multifaceted understandings of cultural issues and representations of those issues. We argue in this chapter that deeper knowledge of real and imagined global

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threat, thrown into relief in this Malaysian instance, carries resonances for negotiating risk and building resilience, for students engaging in IPE.

The Incident

In January 2016, a group of 24 students from three Victorian universities participated in a three-week IPE in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The cohort and an academic representative from each university stayed in a two-star hotel in the middle of the Chinatown precinct. The students in groups of two to four travelled each day for anything from 30 min to 1.5 h to their host schools, which were scattered throughout sections of Kuala Lumpur.

On the second weekend, ten days into the IPE program, one of the academics stayed in Kuala Lumpur (KL) to be available to the students while the other academics travelled to Melaka, a regional city about two hours south of KL. On the way back to Chinatown late on the Sunday afternoon, we had a phone call from the academic based in KL for the weekend, who was on a day trip to the Cameron Highlands with a cohort of pre-service teachers. She alerted us to postings on Facebook by a group of pre-service teachers who were extremely upset, as they perceived there was a terrorism threat in the vicinity of our Chinatown hotel. We were unable to access these postings so were unaware of the situation.

Jennifer (all pre-service teachers quoted here are from Monash and have pseudonyms) described the initial incidents that set off the train of events which led to the pre-service teachers' agitation:

> So apparently one of the other pre-service teachers got a call from one of the mentor teachers saying that we just got informed, I don't want to alarm you or anything but you really shouldn't be going out tonight, stay in your hotels, there might be something going on.
>
> … this was on the weekend, on a Sunday. And they were informed about it, and then I think maybe a couple of other people got something like, I don't know. And then someone put a message up on the Facebook chat group saying what happened. But the problem was that we were all over the place, there was a small group of us, they were like hours away from KL, and then there was a small group of people that was still around KL. But the thing was that they were saying that the target areas were Bukit Bintang and Chinatown, which was where most of the people were.

The incident further escalated when other pre-service teachers contributed to the discussion with their experiences over the weekend. Sally, another pre-service teacher, explained:

> I went out on the Saturday night, my aunty and uncle were in KL for the weekend, they usually live in Singapore a lot of the time. And they said that they've heard that there were terrorism threats, but you know sort of I was like oh whatever you know, there's terrorism threats everywhere, I wasn't really concerned. But then about an hour later when we were walking home from dinner we actually saw probably like 20 police officers and a few German Shepherd sniffer dogs, and my uncle was, they were staying at a hotel right at the

> end of Petronas Towers, apparently there was a scare or a threat or something in one of the restaurants, sort of behind Petronas Towers. And so that was a little bit scary because I was like oh it's sort of, that sort of made it real.

Further to this, pre-service teachers were in contact with their families in Australia where there had been media coverage of possible terrorism threats in KL:

> I think it was just in the paper as well that someone was arrested, to be planning to take out an attack in a popular western, a nightclub or a pub or something like that, that Westerners populate that place usually. And it was told to us that the target was Westerners, which could be the case, (Sally)

Jennifer sums up the feelings and emotions of the pre-service teachers on that afternoon, 'That was a very surreal day' and, as Sally comments, 'I guess … we were a bit more alert after that too.'

The academics returned to the hotel late on the Sunday afternoon and, as various elements of the story came to light and many of the students were extremely nervous and upset, a meeting was called at approximately 9 pm for all the pre-service teachers to discuss the situation. Jan, the IPE consultant based in KL, was contacted for further information. The facts related to the situation were relayed to the students. The DFAT warning for KL had not changed since the previous September and was still at '*exercise normal safety precautions*.'

Jan describes the scenario from her perspective:

> We were back in KL and didn't know anything about this and not thinking that there was any problem but when we were contacted by the academics and alerted to this we checked the DFAT website and found no change. There'd been no change to that site, I don't know in 12 months there had been no increase in risk, and we made contact with - the contact we have at the Australian High Commission who said she didn't know anything but she took steps to check whether DFAT had any news of anything and they said, "No." So we realised that we had to sort of try and take steps to calm them down.

Mary, a pre-service teacher, explains the feeling of the group after this meeting and comments, 'That was really good, I think, to actually talk through the situation.' Only eight out of the twenty-four students went to their placement schools on Monday. A meeting was called by Jan to provide further context to the situation, give the pre-service teachers the facts, and allay their fears. Jan elucidates:

> So the next morning only half of them went to school, we didn't go over that evening, the academics said that they thought they were calm, they had them under control but I said, "I think I'll come over in the morning and just see." Especially when I found out that half of them didn't go to school.

However, by this stage, and without consultation with the academics, one of the pre-service teachers had already booked her flight back to Australia for that afternoon.

How do circumstances converge to create precarity, and how can adults in positions of duty of care best manage such events? From this critical incident, we explore a range of theoretical perspectives helpful to such questions, and from which implications for IPE might flow.

Risk Society

Rose (2014) asks, 'When did we living in liberal democracies begin to think of ourselves living in an era with risk?' He thinks perhaps it began with Beck's (1992) notion of a risk society. Beck (2002a) revisited the notion of 'world risk society' after 11 September terrorist attacks arguing that "Risk inherently contains the concept of control…Risk is a modern concept. It presumes decision-making. As soon as we speak in terms of 'risk', we are talking about calculating the incalculable, colonizing the future' (p. 40). He separates out three axes of conflict in a world risk society—ecological conflicts, global financial crises, and the threat of global terror networks. Global risks are unevenly spread and are formed against historical backgrounds, and cultural and political arrangements. Moreover, the terrorist threat is reproduced globally by the media. Terrorist threats, he sums up, are about '(bad) intention', 'active mistrust', 'systemic risks' in contrast to individual risks, intelligence agencies, and the 'simplification of enemy images.'

Risk management discourse is one means of addressing this notion of a risk society. This is exemplified by the Faculty's IPE risk assessment management policy and documents. Rose (2014) sees this discourse in terms of society 'managing, regulating, controlling or governing a whole range of problems, persons, institutions, locales.' He goes on to argue that

> risk management has become a technique of the prudent self and in this process dividing practices come into existence dividing those who manage their own risk to those who do not/cannot/will not and those who are unable to do so.

Rose suggests that an image of society is put forward 'where almost all undesirable events can be reframed in the language of risk and managed in terms of risk; risks that are potentially calculable and manageable by expertise'. Individuals within this discourse are held responsible for their own risk or fate. However, Rose contends that this representation requires probing alongside the expert thinking and instruction, and types of subjectivity that risk necessitates. A term that embodies this change is 'resilience.'

Resilience

Resilience revises problems of risk in postmodern times that are susceptible to threats such as terrorism (Rose 2014). Bottrell (2009) contends that 'Resilience research is broadly concerned with enhancing young people's potential through seeking understandings that would facilitate resilience building, optimizing coping and adaptive mechanisms and minimizing detrimental impacts of external conditions' (p. 478). She argues that the focus needs to be on social constructivist notions

of resilience that contest normative ideas about resilience. This focus provides a space to consider the subjective narrative context (Ungar 2004).

Resilience is an optimist notion when risk management cannot anticipate events and is, hence, not enough. It does not need to be totally grounded by neoliberal notions of the individual as it can also entail social relations; that is, close relations with others that encapsulate a more protective solidarity (Rose 2014).

Resilience thus mobilizes both personal (and emerging professional) biographies of those involved and historical and cultural contingencies. Pre-service teachers participating in an IPE are continually drawing on their own resources to negotiate the known and unknown in an unfamiliar environment. Using a sociocultural, critical frame (Johnson et al. 2016, p. 3), we borrow from the authors' question over how it might be possible 'to create and more widely sustain the kinds of conditions conducive to developing a politically, ethically, and pedagogically engaged conception of teacher resilience in these dark times' (Arendt 1968; Benhabib 2010).

Are We in 'Dark Times'?

While Arendt and Benhabib's characterization of 'dark times' is historically differently contextualized, increasing awareness of post 9/11 terrorist threats has become part of contemporary life. Airport security has increased, government warnings now accompany travelers' movements across countries, and risk management procedures have been ramped up significantly within institutions. While there has been ongoing critique of the frequency and nature of media representations of terrorism (see, for example, Sensales et al. 2014; Kampf 2014), few doubt that, in the west at least, we are living in a new era of transition and uncertainty. The Long Peace, coined by Pinker (2011) as a post-WWII phenomenon, has now given way to perceptions of living in far more indeterminate and volatile circumstances. Competing political ideologies are further intensified by digital technologies, leading to a destabilization of a sense of global order. This sense is heightened by digital media that render frightening events in visceral and immediate ways.

The effect of threat is loss of agency and power to develop salient, alternative paths of action—Rose's 'optimism.' A critical approach to perceived danger would be to challenge 'oversimplifications, compromises, and conventions' (Berkowitz 2010, p. 8) communicated through word of mouth and via the media. This requires education, cognitive capacity, and, arguably, courage to resist the compulsion of potent narratives. Such a perspective recognizes the ways people might respond to adversity in complex social environments, moving beyond any narrowly psychological framing of fear and resilience.

Pedagogies of Discomfort

Responding to questions of uncertainty and threat in an educational context, we find the concept of 'pedagogies of discomfort' helpful (Boler 1999; Boler and Zembylas 2003).

Boler argues that a pedagogy of discomfort enables us to see differently. Her definition includes both 'an invitation to inquiry as well as a call to action' (p. 176). While teacher education experiences have the capacity to reproduce and entrench normative practice, both in local and international schools, they also offer a generative platform to enact change through critical reflection. It can provoke change to have teachers become, as Boler argues, less encumbered by constraints. Disruptive moments and events unsettle the comfort of known, routinized ways of thinking and behaving. Moreover, they confront the need identified by Butler (2005) to present a coherent, autonomous identity.

Boler (1999) claims further that the first sign of the success of a pedagogy of discomfort is 'quite simply, the ability to recognize what it is that one doesn't want to know, and how one has developed emotional investments to protect oneself from knowing' (p. 200). In the process of examining 'cherished' beliefs and assumptions, we are likely to experience 'defensive anger, fear of change, and fears of losing our personal and cultural identities' (Boler 1999, p. 176). This discomfort asks students to leave the familiar waters of learned beliefs and explore the riskier critical depths of ethical and moral differences. Not unsurprisingly, learners are often reluctant to enter this zone, and invite further risk-taking.

Boler and Zembylas (2003) sketch a 'pedagogy of discomfort' as an educational framework for giving meaning to the construction of norms and differences. They challenge teachers and students to move out of their comfort zone:

> … the inscribed cultural and emotional terrains that we occupy less by choice and more by virtue of hegemony. The comfort zone entails emotional assets that are unexplored and reflected upon as they are part of the fabric of our daily existence. It is what is commonly referred to as 'common sense'. (p. 124)

An element of the IPE enacts a 'pedagogy of discomfort' with the intent being to focus on the way in which pre-service teachers (and supporting academics) construct and embody dominant beliefs and norms in their everyday lives. Through the IPE, pre-service teachers are faced with reacting and responding emotionally, that is, developing an 'emotional stance.' We argue that it is the negotiation of this emotional stance which links to resilience. Here, these affective concepts are employed by us to (re)frame students' individual and collective awareness, storying their responses through a narrative approach.

Narrative Inquiry

Narratives assist in capturing the human experience. They also have the power to trouble the grand narratives about education and wider cultural contexts. For this and the reasons below, we drew upon a narrative inquiry approach. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) observe that 'experience happens narratively' (p. 19), and initially view narrative inquiry as both method and phenomenon. They assert:

> People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which their experience of the world is interpreted and made meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomenon studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. (Connelly and Clandinin 2006, p. 477)

Arguing that each experience has 'a past experiential base and leads to an experiential future', Clandinin and Connelly (2000, p. 2) position individual stories in relation to time and emerging personal, social, and institutional conditions.

To search more deeply into the values and beliefs of beginning and experienced teachers, we wanted to create a 'dialogic space' (Bakhtin 1981) for participants to speak freely in relation to the influences which shaped them and then how such influences formed them 'in the face of different discursive pulls' (Bamberg and Georgakopoulou 2008, p. 67). Parr et al. (2013) argue for the rigor of this practice:

> The process of clarifying and reflecting required a combination of critical and analytical skills as well as the capacity to imagine the kind of […] teacher they hope to be. In so doing [the teachers] began to construct and articulate a sense of their emerging professional identities … (p. 5)

Questioning the pre-service teachers about their IPE was a recursive process. As we listened to, read and reread their stories during (rather than at the end of) the research process, we began to see connections that were arising as themes among these pre-service teachers' lives, the context in which they worked and their emerging professional identities. In order to better understand the incidents that shaped them, we asked the pre-service teachers to return to statements they made or further clarify ideas, thus generating further stories. In this way, many of the questions emerged and developed from the data. Moreover, as teacher educators and researchers, we wanted to adopt reflexive stances ourselves. We were conscious of shaping versions of experience through the questions we asked and the ways that these processes of selection positioned the respondents. Respondents chose what to include, highlight, downplay, or omit. This shaping or interpreting act constitutes a methodological approach through its way of seeing the world.

Bamberg and Georgakoploulou (2008) claim that it is in the navigation process that a 'sense of self' is rehearsed. It is this constant interactive movement between versions of the self, local, and political contexts—the smaller to larger and vice versa—that identities are constructed and reconstructed.

The participants' small stories—their language and content choices—engaged with and rubbed up against the themes in the literature: real and perceived threat, risk, resilience, and agency. From this contextual engagement emerged more or less linear narratives, but we also sought inconsistencies and contradictions in the retelling. Positioning and repositioning the ways these pre-service teachers and university staff told their stories, sometimes juxtaposed through metaphorical lenses, offered us insights into intercultural responses in foreign contexts.

Resilience as a Community Response

As earlier alluded to, a dichotomy is apparent between the psychological framework of resilience and the more sociological tradition in which risk is situated within society rather than in young people themselves (Cahill 2015). Beck coined the term 'risk society' to delineate between the two theoretical approaches. In the following discussion, these two models are played out against each other, as individual (emotional) stance on the IPE experience is situated within a broader sociocultural context.

Outside sources such as parents and teachers can promote the enhancement of resilience by facilitating the exploration of resilience strategies. The consequence of this pedagogy is that the responsibility for 'bouncing back' is not totally entrusted to the individual, and resilience is not understood as a purely natural characteristic but one that can be enhanced and produced. Resilience, as a social act, acknowledges contingency and creativity and ponders the questions of 'What are collective conditions for resilience?' It is not about eradicating vulnerability but rather about providing opportunities for action (Rose 2014).

Beck (2002a) points out that terrorist threats are reproduced globally by the media, and this impacts on how individuals and groups perceive of terrorism. The first people the pre-service teachers contacted were each other and their parents and friends back in Melbourne. At this point, they did not think of contacting the IPE academics or IPE consultant based in Malaysia. Parents and friends in Australia were swayed by local media reports of terrorist threats in south-east Asia, and through social media and phone contact, escalated the pre-service teachers' fears. The media reports in Australia reconstructed activities and events in a sensational way. This resulted in angst for not only families and friends but also for the pre-service teachers. Jan, the IPE consultant, explicates the way in which the perceived terrorism episode spiraled 'out of control:'

> Once they call their parents all hell breaks loose and they don't help, they just do not help the situation…However, they (the pre-service teachers) didn't contact us straight away; they didn't contact anybody that probably could have helped them work through this. They went into a mad frenzy themselves, panicking and it spread amongst the group until a few hours later we realized that we had a major issue, and it had been blown into something just quite scary and sort of out of control.

Cahill (2015) suggests that risk and protective factors for resilience include family, peers, and the individual. The risk factor also, in this instance, not only involved the perceived terrorist threat but also the media reporting of this activity. Families and friends in Australia, on the one hand, were a protective factor providing support and reassurance to the pre-service teachers but, on the other hand, abetted by the media reports, contributed to the heightening of fear and angst.

Feelings of connectedness or belonging to a family or group can provide protection in terms of resilience building (Cahill 2015). However, in this instance these relationships were problematic as they were not on the ground and aware of the accuracy of the reporting by the media and pre-service teachers' sources. The IPE coordinator, when reflecting on the circumstances surrounding the incident, discusses the need for open conversations about unexpected events such as this: 'It's about making sure students have an understanding of the media and comfort levels and what it means on the ground … and just having the conversations.'

The perceptions and narratives of the pre-service teachers were acknowledged during the conversations following this fearful episode, and these conversations considered the pre-service teachers' subjective experience. As well, facts and DFAT warnings were checked by academics and the High Commission was contacted to gain information directly from an expert authority. The pre-service teachers were provided with this information, and a debriefing session with the IPE consultant, Jan, was arranged the day after the incident. Jan discusses the approach she employed to reassure the pre-service teachers:

> the threat of terrorism is everywhere and we're not immune to it here… we talked about the threat of terror being real in any city in the world, it could be in Melbourne, it could be here, it could be wherever. So what are we going to do? How are we going to respond to this? Do we stay at home? Do we just not proceed with our lives? We can't.

These open conversations with IPE academics in Malaysia and Jan, the IPE consultant, allayed the fears of many of the pre-service teachers and helped to enhance coping and adaptive mechanisms so as to counteract the detrimental effects of the threatening external circumstances (Bottrell 2009). Jennifer, another of the Monash pre-service teachers, in hindsight recognized the strength in being able to adjust to circumstances, 'I think adapting…to situations that are out of your hands and accepting them for what they are and just moving on from it. Then going into the next challenge and adapting to that.' Jennifer speaks as an individual who managed a threatening social event. She articulates a positive coping strategy for dealing with 'situations that are out of your hands.'

Nevertheless, not all the pre-service teachers adapted to the situation, and one pre-service teacher flew home the day after the episode. Sally, a pre-service teacher, intimated that the perceived terrorism event was only an aspect of the reason for the student leaving Malaysia:

> This particular person came with a little bit of a negative attitude in the first place, sort of the culture was a bit of a shock and she played on the role of terrorism as a way to get out.

Hence, perhaps a culmination of factors may have participated in this pre-service teacher's discomfort and consequent flight.

An element of the IPE enacts a 'pedagogy of discomfort' (Boler 1999; Boler and Zembylas 2003) with the intent being to focus on the way in which pre-service teachers (and academics) construct and embody dominant beliefs and norms in their everyday lives. Through the IPE, pre-service teachers are faced with reacting and responding emotionally, and begin to detect the ways in which they comply with western ideology in obscure ways (Boler and Zembylas 2003).

The 'pedagogy of discomfort' played out in a range of ways during the terrorism episode. The construction of the meaning of terrorism in south-east Asia manifests in the stereotypical and simplistic images employed by the media. The concomitant pre-service teachers, their families, and friends' discomfort with uncertainty attached to the episode, made it difficult to emotionally cope with the circumstances. Rose (1998, 1999) contends that identity and emotions are best given meaning through conversations and practices. Questions can be further posed about 'what aspects of the subjective experiences enabled the individuals to feel afraid; how were they socially organized and directed?' Boler and Zemblyas (2003) argue that 'attending to the emotions associated with these beliefs and values, one is able to begin to problematize the complex of practices and assemblages within which identities are fabricated, and which presuppose and enjoin particular privileges and emotional habits' (p. 121). Most of the pre-service teachers, after they engaged in conversations with the academics and the IPE consultant, were able to examine what they had heard from Australia, both through the media and personal contacts, and chose an avenue that took into account the complexity of the situation. Their 'discomforting' emotions may have not left them but they were able to perceive uncertainty in a different way.

The pre-service teacher who flew home to Australia was unsure of the cultural milieu throughout the IPE, and the terrorism episode escalated her discomfort to a point where she could not deal with the disquiet of the situation anymore. Her uneasy emotions grew as a consequence of the culturally different experience. As Jennifer explains: 'I could see after the first week that she was really kind of a bit drained already or not breaking through.' Unger (2004) contends that those who employ socially acceptable coping strategies (such as 'being adaptable') are commended, and those who use less acceptable coping strategies (in this instance, flight) are viewed unfavorably. However, Unger goes on to argue that markers which delineate acceptable and unacceptable responses become enmeshed in the very processes that are employed to explain young people's well-being. These processes may involve IPE risk assessment and management procedures.

Risk Assessment/Management

From a social theorist perspective, Adam and van Loon (2000) contend that 'the essence of risk is not that it is happening, but that it might be happening' (p. 2). They suggest that risk cannot be observed as a 'thing-out-there' but rather it is a construction. Risks exist as potential harms but are not fixed entities. They are linked to 'understandings of what constitutes dangers, threats and hazards and for whom' (Adam and van Loon 2000, p. 3). Risk is messy, insidious, and unpredictable. Therefore, in order to understand risk more fully, it needs to be examined in association with perceptions and meanings, and implicit assumptions associated with risk. That is, how is risk interpreted and what are the consequences of living in a risk society. Hence, a reflexive lens is employed to examine risk in relation to the IPE program.

Beck (2002b) argues that the more we try to 'colonize' the future with the assistance of 'risk,' the less it is likely to be controlled. He goes on to state that 'many attempts to confine and control risks turn into the broadening of the uncertainties and dangers' (p. 216). The Campus Support Manager in the Faculty of Education discusses the briefings given to IPE students prior to their international experience and refers to controls and measures that were put in place in relation to risk. However, the counter side to this governing of risk, he suggests, is the notion of balancing expectations of awareness and vigilance as a response to managing potential risk:

> I think that the numerous briefings that the students have leading up to the trip are very important. The briefing document and the risk assessment is important to explain that we see this as a potential risk. But if we put the controls and measures in place…then we're comfortable with that risk. And so then it's about convincing students that for terrorism, particularly, you could be walking down a Melbourne city street and it could happen, it could happen anywhere in the world. And if there's a heightened level as well, as it was in Malaysia, where they had the military on the street people were alarmed at first by that, but really you should feel more secure. So it's just about balancing their expectations I think … making sure they're aware and stay vigilant.

Jan, as IPE consultant, alluded earlier to the nonspecific geography of threat, and the ways that fear can work to limit opportunities. The risk management briefing is about the 'potentiality' of risk and raising the idea that terrorism is a global danger that can occur locally as well as internationally. In addition to regulatory procedures, risk management is about awareness-raising and drawing attention to the social and cultural IPE context pre-service teachers are inhabiting. The Director of Professional Experience in the Faculty goes on to explain that it is about opening up dialogue and discussion with the IPE pre-service teachers: 'It's not about not going to these countries; it happens in Brussels. So I think having conversations with the students.' The university's approach to risk is, on one hand, focused on controls and measures, yet, on the other hand, is imbued with dialogue and negotiation.

Traditionally, the 'language of risk' is related to economics and insurance, medicine and extreme sports, and people risking their lives. Within these contexts,

individuals ascertain the risk potential of particular actions and made decisions and choices accordingly. Hence, this world of risk was rational and scientific, and delineations of 'safety and danger, truth and falsity, and past and future' were made (Adam and van Loon 2000, p. 7). However, as exemplified through the perceived IPE incident, risk assessment and management are often less predictable. As with the Campus Support Manager's notion of risk and balancing expectations, Beck (1992) contends that risk is not causally governed and 'cannot be safeguarded, compensated or insured against' but rather, he suggests, needs 'balances beyond the insurance limit' (p. 31).

Nevertheless, the meanings and perceptions the pre-service teachers have of risk can, at times, be different to that of the university. The Campus Support Manager goes on to explain the IPE students' engagement and response to the risk management sessions:

> Yeh, it's interesting because I know when I go and give my spiel, quite often glazed eyes and people will be doing other stuff when I'm doing the talk and that's OK. But when we did the spiel for UAE for example, everyone was scared about terrorism and they were all listening with intent … And you can say all these things but the experience itself you can't describe it.

Hence, depending on the perceived risk associated with the international location, the pre-service teachers choose to tune in or out of the risk management briefings. However, as the Campus Support Manager notes, no matter the detail of the briefing, the experience itself cannot be fully portrayed.

Twenty-first century notions of risk attend to uncertain and manifold possible incidents that may not occur in rational, probable, and statistically measurable ways. Organizations that deal in risk management (such as universities) must undertake this activity by means that more than simply compute risks (Lentzos and Rose 2009). The pre-service teachers, in their interviews two months after the IPE terrorism incident, requested that further information about safety measures be incorporated into the university's risk management briefings, as captured in Mary's comments:

> … think beforehand to be just aware that something can happen similar to that incident, or it can be worse, so you know okay if that happens then this will happen. Just to have it there in case; something extra in the safety list.

The perceived terrorism incident has amplified risk management strategies associated with the IPE as Jan, the IPE consultant, explains:

> Now out of that (incident) … we have now created a one-page emergency response which we will now include in every program that we run. So it's now part of orientation instead of just talking about health and safety it will now be health, safety and security and will actually talk to them about this… I think that we have to be upfront and realistic about this so that students know if something does happen we do have a plan, and this is what the plan is, because we're living in a world wherever you are in the world this could happen at any time.

Concluding Thoughts and Further Questions

Selection into the Monash IPE program is not automatic. Applicants complete a written application, and then undergo 'speed dating' scenarios, with a view to demonstrating what they know in snapshot vignettes. The notion of resilience has been a criterion in applicant selection for the IPE program. They have limited preparation time to respond to questions such as:

> Think about a really challenging obstacle you have faced. It could be in your workplace, other professional experiences, while travelling, etc. What was the obstacle, how did you go about dealing with it and what did you learn from the experience?

These questions tended to blur the line between resourcefulness (arguably an element of resilience) and resilience itself. To further clarify the distinction, the prompt was sharpened: 'Resilience is about being competent when under stress. For example, resilient people show know-how when their well-being is at risk physically, mentally, or emotionally.' Applicants were then asked to share an example of when they have demonstrated resilience.

It is problematic to blandly correlate what is said in an interview with what is enacted under pressure. The scenarios represent one approach to selecting students who might have to negotiate confronting situations. We have drawn upon the research, however, to argue that resilience goes beyond an individual's innate or learned capacity. It connects with a number of broader social and cultural factors which, in themselves, are less than stable or 'knowable.' Rose (2014) argues that a robust conceptualization of resilience contains possibilities and opportunities for action.

Our framing of student unease within Boler (1999), and Boler and Zembylas's (2003) 'pedagogies of discomfort' enables us to make connections to Rose and options to cope and adapt. Recognition of how we protect ourselves from knowing, or choosing to know some things and not others, mitigates tensions and one's ability to negotiate them.

Similarly, we tend to read images and reports as unproblematically 'true' when, as texts, they are partial, contingent, and constructed. The assumptions we bring to forming views require critical and ongoing examination as we attempt to negotiate less comfortable environments. The role of orientation, debriefing, and simply the 'opening up of dialogue' are crucial elements in managing uncertainty.

Lentzos and Rose (2009) discuss the means of governing through insecurity. They note how governments strengthen and employ 'subjective states of alertness, suspicion and the monitoring of the daily conduct and attitudes of others as the means of extending—or appearing to extend—the reach of security into the interstices of everyday existence' (p. 247). The Faculty in its risk management procedures draws on this idea to a degree with its IPE pre-service teachers. It asks them to be alert and attentive to others and situations as a means of spreading a sense of security into the fissures of the everyday international experience.

Governing risk and uncertainty is an insecure task in itself. No matter what the preordained plan is, it is open to unpredictability and randomness. We argue, however, that a program like the IPE is best served when threat is viewed through the perspectives discussed here, as opportunities for deeper dialogue and more critical learning.

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Chapter 12
Learning from Leading: A Teacher Educator's Perspective of Learning Through Leading an International Professional Experience

Judy Williams

Prologue

August, 2015

Here I am again—flying towards that beautiful 'jewel' in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, the Cook Islands. Around me is an assortment of 25 excited pre-service teachers and my equally excited although slightly nervous colleague Robyn, embarking on their first IPE. Their first, but my fourth. Due to extraordinary circumstances, I had been asked to fill in as leader of the 2015 Cook Islands IPE, one month before it was due to start. Up until a month ago, I thought I had lead my last Cook Islands IPE. This year, I had not been involved in the planning; I didn't know any of the students; I didn't know Robyn very well; and I was keenly aware that they were all very disappointed that their original leader was no longer able to go with them. I felt a bit like an interloper, but in some ways, a rescuer too. I was fortunate to be perceived as an 'expert' on the Cook Islands IPE, and well placed to step in at this late stage and, along with Robyn and the students themselves, to make this wonderful experience happen. I was looking forward to this unexpected opportunity. How did I come to be in this position? When I look back to 2012, I remember my fellow academic Ange, now my co-editing colleague, coming into my office when I was Director of Professional Experience. She flopped into the chair, shook her head, and said "I can't get anyone to come with me to the Cook Islands! What will I do?" It was unusual not to have even one staff member volunteer to be the 'learner' to Ange's 'leader.' I had looked at the invitation to lead the Cook Islands IPE several times over the past couple of years, but had always thought that I couldn't do it—it all seemed so much hard work, way outside my comfort zone, and I probably didn't have what it took to do it anyway. Despite this trepidation, after discussing and

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deciding against several options with Ange, I tentatively said, "Well, I suppose I *could go." Momentous words, as they turned out to be. Little did I know then what a transformative professional and personal journey they would lead me on.*

Introduction

In this chapter, I draw on self-study data and reflective memories to share my journey of professional learning as a teacher educator during my involvement in the Monash IPE program. Through a series of narratives, I explore the evolution of my understanding of IPE not only as an educational program for pre-service teachers, but also as a significant professional and personal learning opportunity for me as teacher educator. The work of teacher educators in IPE is under-researched in the academic literature, but also little understood by colleagues who have no personal experience of the challenges, complexities and career-affirming opportunities that involvement in IPE presents. This is understandable, as insight and deep understanding are only truly gained by active participation in an experience. IPE is no exception. Therefore, in this chapter, I aim to "pull back the curtain" on this facet of teacher educator work, and hopefully, to inspire others (teacher educators, academic leaders and administrators) to embrace the idea of IPE as a significant professional learning opportunity, and to value the work of all participants, especially those hardy souls who take on the daunting task of leading a group of pre-service teachers on such a memorable, and potentially transformative journey.

I was Director of Professional Experience when I first undertook the Cook Islands IPE, and was subsequently involved in the development of other IPEs as the program expanded. Professional experience had always been an essential part of my work: as a primary school teacher, mentoring pre-service teachers in my classroom; as a teacher educator teaching in courses related to pre-service teachers' professional experience; and visiting schools and working with mentor teachers during the practicum. So being involved in pre-service teachers' learning in schools was not new to me, neither did I ever feel uncomfortable or lacking in knowledge about the work of professional experience. The IPE program, however, presented me with new challenges and opportunities that I wasn't even aware existed, let alone felt fully prepared to tackle and embrace. When I first cautiously offered to be the "learner" on my first Cook Islands IPE, my main concern was whether or not I would be able to drive the 15-seater minivan—this was my first "first" of the experience, with many more to come.

Learning from Professional Experience Programs

Working in the field of professional experience (PE) offers challenges and opportunities for teacher educators, no matter what the context. It is a complex educational and cultural space, which calls for a multitude of skills, experiences and

personal capacities. Research has shown that involvement in PE is often a highly charged intellectual and emotional experience, with relationships at the heart of the work that takes place during these programs. Working in schools and other educational contexts during PE calls for mutual respect and understanding, critical reflection, resilience and perhaps most importantly, dialogue to unpack the learning and challenges that are experienced by all participants—pre-service teachers, students, mentor teachers and teacher educators. Philpott (2015) recognised that there were significant personal and emotional needs of pre-service teachers during professional experience, while Yuan and Lee (2015) found that the challenging emotional experiences of practicum are an integral part of the development of a pre-service teacher's professional identity. Hastings (2004) explored the emotional demands experienced by cooperating, or supervising, teachers when they mentor pre-service teachers, and found that they 'experience a wide range of differing emotions directly related to their practicum role…[including] feelings of guilt, responsibility, disappointment, relief, frustration, sympathy, anxiety and satisfaction' (p. 138).

Despite a large body of research about the learning of pre-service teachers and their mentor teachers in host schools during PE, less is known about the experiences of teacher educators supervising professional experience. Emerging self-study research points to challenges in relation to practice and pedagogies, and to the evolving professional identities of former school teachers, who are now university-based teacher educators involved in supervising PE. In their new roles, these teacher educators have to make sense of their work in the field with mentors and with pre-service teachers, and work out how their school teaching experience is relevant in this new space. For example, McDonough (2014) found this experience to be an opportunity to develop new pedagogical practices and relationships and that 'this transformed my practice…as it made me much more cognizant of the need to continually rewrite the script of mentoring and my interactions with others in this space' (p. 220). Cuenca et al. (2011) found that for them, as non-tenured "outsiders" in field supervision, the need to establish credible relationships with pre-service teachers, their cooperating teachers and fellow (tenured) academic staff at the university was paramount.

Learning from International Professional Experience Programs

While the challenges of professional experience programs in more familiar local contexts are well documented, there is less known about these challenges in the less familiar contexts of international professional experience. A small but growing body of research has uncovered the many opportunities that are available to pre-service teachers when they undertake IPE (e.g. Cushner and Mahon 2002; Walters et al. 2009). As many chapters in this book attest, these learning

opportunities include the development of intercultural competencies, enhanced intellectual growth, personal development and global mindedness; acquisition of a new understanding about life, culture, themselves and others; and an increased level of intercultural sensitivity. Brindley et al. (2009) found that for pre-service teachers working on international placements, 'the challenge…can be a catalyst for accelerated professional development…Study abroad experience does challenge pre-existing assumptions about teaching and causes trainee teachers to re-organize and broaden their developing understanding of teaching and learning' (p. 532). Trilokekar and Kukar (2011) found that the most valuable learning for pre-service teachers came from the disorienting experiences they encountered and the extent to which they were able to reflect on these in relation to their existing beliefs and assumptions. They concluded that the greatest value of the study abroad experience lies in pre-service teachers' ability to build 'an awareness of their own frames of reference (social, cultural and political contexts), and…the challenge of confronting difficult discussions [and]…constructing and revising one's perspective of both self and other' (p. 1149).

With the ever-increasing global movements in teacher education (Tudball 2012), the need to understand the experiences of *all* participants is essential. To that end, we need to pay particular attention to an under-researched area of this phenomenon —teacher educators working in diverse international contexts. The work of teacher educators in developing and leading IPE programs is essential to making this experience happen, but there is a tendency to take this work for granted and to underestimate its nature and complexity. A proliferation of global experiences in higher education has resulted in many teacher educators leading short-term study abroad programs, including IPE. As the relatively few studies examining the experiences of teacher educators have shown, working in new international contexts has important implications for their professional learning, identities and practice. Reciprocal learning relationships are inherent in the process of any professional experience, but this is particularly the case in relation to IPE, where the traditional role of the university-based teacher educator is regularly challenged, and the reciprocal nature of multiple relationships lies, largely unexamined, at the heart of the experience.

Teacher Educator Professional Learning Through Working in IPE

In the prevailing managerial discourse of professional standards and accountability of the education workforce, a teacher educator is deemed to be developing professionally if he or she undertakes a diverse range of activities in research, teaching, short courses or seminars, and service/leadership roles. This work is all relatively easy to "measure" or assess. For an increasing number of teacher educators, however, their work involves teaching, researching and leading programs in new

and diverse global locations, such as IPE. The professional learning derived from these experiences is less easily measured. Just what and how teacher educators learn from leading IPE is not well documented in the literature, although this is beginning to change. As Kidman, Easton and Davies (in thesis Chapter "Acknowledging and Learning from Discomfort: The Learners' Perspective" in this book) found, many of the learning opportunities that are available to pre-service teachers on IPE are also relevant to the academics who accompany them. In examining our experiences as leaders of two different IPEs, Cook Islands and Kenya, respectively, my colleague Arlene Grierson and I found that one of our greatest challenges was to negotiate and build relationships with local mentor teachers, based on sensitivity and awareness of cultural and pedagogical differences. We saw that there were many parallels between our professional learning and that of the pre-service teachers in regard to acquiring intercultural knowledge and understanding, and in learning to work in new educational and social contexts. We concluded that 'the importance of teacher educators adopting a global perspective and a deep consciousness of how they may be perceived by others who are culturally, racially, and/or linguistically different, is fundamental to successfully leading international practicum' (Williams and Grierson 2016, pp. 13–14). Parr (2012) used the concept of border crossing to analyse his experiences in leading a teaching practicum in South Africa. As a teacher educator, he found that during these practicums, he crossed many borders—geographic, economic, cultural, sectoral, disciplinary and political—and in doing so, came to 'appreciate anew the importance of a dialogic ethics in my own work as a teacher educator…These ethics urge me to appreciate the multiple and overlapping ways in which I, as an educator-academic-researcher, am related to the Other with whom I am teaching, working and researching' (p. 106). Parr concluded that participation in IPE enables both pre-service teachers and teacher educators to learn about themselves through learning about others. The notion of "dialogic ethics" is central to Parr's learning from his IPE experience.

A review of the relatively limited literature on the experiences of teacher educators leading IPE suggests that it is complex and challenging work, and requires deep reflection on personal and pedagogical beliefs, examination of assumptions and experiences and awareness of the emotional and ethical dimensions of the work. Such understanding leads to a heightened sense of self as a teacher educator, and deeper understandings of practice. There are significant implications from this for teacher education programs and professional learning both at home and abroad.

Teacher Educator Identity and the Academic *Self*

The literature on teacher (including teacher educator) identity suggests that its construction is a process of individual sense-making in conjunction with the influences of contextual factors and relationships, a convergence of the inner world of our own perceptions of our worth and "safety" with the outer world of our

working and learning contexts (Beijaard et al. 2004; De Weerdt et al. 2006). Teacher educator identity has been examined in some depth in the self-study literature, and was described by Williams et al. (2012) as a complex and multilayered process, involving

> personal and professional biography; institutional contexts and the nature of community; and the on-going development of a personal pedagogy of teacher education. Becoming a teacher educator involves examining beliefs and values grounded in personal biography, and dealing with the inherent tensions that arise from overlapping and interrelated personal and professional identities. (p. 256)

While Williams et al. were referring to beginning teacher educators making the transition from classroom teaching to the academy, the complexity of this identity work continues throughout a teacher educator's career, as they traverse different institutional, social and cultural contexts. As professionals, teacher educators are constantly learning from experience, as they move through time and space, and develop collaborative and pedagogical relationships with colleagues, students and communities (see Williams and Hayler 2015).

To understand teacher educator professional identity in relation to IPE, the work of Sanderson (2008) is particularly pertinent. Sanderson maintains that universities' goals of internationalisation for students cannot be fully realised without the internationalisation of the personal and professional outlooks of the teaching staff involved in these programs. He argues that

> the internationalization of the academic *Self* should be seen as a fundamental building block in an institution's response to global forces affecting higher education…[Other researchers] have maintained that universities have embarked on a mission to help all students become new internationalist learners, workers, and citizens. The corollary, indeed precursor, of this is that [university] teachers as individuals must operate from a base that extends beyond local and national perspectives. They, themselves, have to be among the cosmopolitans of the 21st century. (pp. 276–7)

By the term *cosmopolitans*, Sanderson refers to the disposition of university teachers to display attitudes of "openness, interconnectivity, interdependence, reciprocity, and plurality [rather] than necessarily knowing a lot about other cultures" (pp. 288–9).

Sanderson (2008) goes on to claim that while many universities develop as internationalised organisations, and put in place policies and programs to achieve these ends, far less attention is paid to the professional learning of the staff involved in organising and/or leading these programs. He argues that there is a need for greater exploration of the development of individuals' academic *Self* in relation to understanding the complexities and contested spaces of internationalised higher education programs. Indeed, Sanderson argues that 'a consolidated body of theory on how academic staff might internationalise their personal and professional outlooks…is not evident at this stage' (p. 281). He maintains that "the growing cultural, language and educational diversity in Australian higher education institutions presents a strong case for universities to take heed of the importance of fostering cosmopolitan perspectives in their staff" (p. 300). An essential element in

developing the academic *Self* is self-awareness and the ability to reflect deeply and critically on one's work and its social and cultural contexts. Building on the work of Cranton (2001), Sanderson suggests that authenticity in teaching is grounded in self-knowledge, an appreciation of cultural difference and an understanding of 'how [educators'] home culture produces and supports their personal and social world-views' (p. 282). He argues for the importance of self-reflection to understand one's beliefs, assumptions and implicit cultural values and norms:

> critical reflection and self-reflection are important mechanisms by which individuals can become aware of the context in which they live and work. These processes have the potential to assist in the development of an authenticity that allows individuals to genuinely engage with others in teaching and in life in general. (p. 287)

Research Design

This research is qualitative in nature, using self-study and narrative inquiry as the methodologies.

Self-study

Self-study as methodology enables the researcher to examine their beliefs, assumptions and practices, and to explore how these impact on practice (Pinnegar and Hamilton 2009). Self-study helps the researcher to examine and reframe their experiences not only in their own contexts, but also in relation to the experiences of others (Samaras and Freese 2006). LaBosky (2004) states that self-study research aims to develop and test theories of teacher learning, and involves 'the investigation of our own practice…This means we are simultaneously concerned with our own learning…transformed practice…and the resultant effects on the reframed thinking and transformed practice of our student teachers' (p. 819). Self-study was appropriate to this study as I was able to examine my experiences, assumptions, understandings and practices in relation to my own learning and also to explore the implications for my practice, not only during IPE but also in my broader role as a teacher educator.

Narrative inquiry

This study is also a narrative inquiry. Sisson (2016) claims that 'in narrative inquiry, the story is the source of data' (p. 672). According to Creswell (2013), narrative inquiry '…might be the term assigned to any text or discourse…with a specific focus on the stories told by individuals' (p. 54). He goes on to explain how 'Re-storying is the process of reorganizing the stories into some general type of framework' (p. 56). The "story" of my experiences of learning then leading the Cook Islands IPE was captured in my reflective journal, in which I documented events, thoughts and responses to particular incidents that occurred before, during

and after each placement over the course of four consecutive years. Sisson (2016) maintains that even seemingly inconsequential incidents or encounters, sometimes reframed as "critical incidents", can have a significant impact on shaping identity and agency. In this chapter, an account of particular "critical moments" during my experiences is presented, based on selected excerpts from my journal. Each of these excerpts is followed by a retelling of the event that triggered the journal entry, and includes reflections on the impact the event had on my professional learning.

Reframing data as narratives of experience

For this chapter, the data contained in my reflective journal were re-examined and three excerpts about critical moments were selected, which represent the three interrelated themes that emerged from previous multiple analyses of the self-study data. These are as follows: (1) negotiating and managing new professional relationships with mentor teachers; (2) understanding new professional relationships with pre-service teachers; and (3) developing a deeper sense of self as a teacher educator. As Merryfield (2000) suggested, '…experiences in themselves have no essentialist effect or meaning. It is in the telling of experiences, in creating one's narratives of experience, that who a person is and what the person experienced become one' (p. 431). The excerpts selected illustrate the challenges that I faced and the learning opportunities that arose from these challenges over the three years during which I kept my reflective journal. I present them in chronological order. However, this does not suggest that learning was lockstep and linear. Learning about developing and negotiating new professional relationships, and shifts in my identity as a teacher educator, occurred constantly and simultaneously, with progressions and regressions. The final narrative, written some time after my reflective journal, involves my "going back to the beginning" and reflecting on my learning over the course of my four-year involvement in the Cook Islands IPE. As the narratives show, over time I came to see the everyday challenges of leading an IPE in new ways and I became increasingly aware of the impact this had on other dimensions of my teaching.

Narrative of Learning About Negotiating and Managing New Professional Relationships with Mentor Teachers

First Journal Entry 11/07/12

I am sitting on the deck of our accommodation, overlooking a beautiful coral bay in the Cook Islands. I'm here as a teacher educator, accompanying 23 pre-service teachers on a three week practicum. I haven't done such a thing since going on school camp when I was teaching primary school. I have been here almost three weeks, but it has taken until yesterday to have the 'ah-ha' moment that demonstrated to me that I am not as culturally-aware and sensitive as I thought I was

when I embarked on this trip. Funny how a brief conversation with someone can undo all the 'good' you were going to do, and expose you to be as culturally-insensitive as some others that you might criticise. After sunny weather, the dark clouds are gathering this morning, and a few drops of rain are starting to fall. A bit like my own outlook really. Things were looking good—I was planning to do some really important research on intercultural learning, then a light-bulb moment of insight, initially lightened, then darkened my outlook and brought on the gloom. Nothing very dramatic or bad happened, but I did receive a culture shock that I thought I was past receiving (me, the seasoned traveller who has 'been there, done that'!!). The gloom set in but it is not too late to retrieve the situation, and my pride. I need to sit back and reconsider how this conversation taught me about what it means to be a teacher educator in what is for me a new and different cultural context.

The context of this journal entry was that I had shared with a mentor teacher, who was an expatriate from New Zealand, my intention to organise (when I returned in the following year) a professional development (PD) session for the mentors who host our pre-service teachers. My initial plan was to present some information about the changing nature of mentoring in Australia, and what the expectations of the university were in regard to mentoring our students. In other words, I was planning a PD session in which I assumed that my knowledge and experience were relevant and of interest to Cook Island teachers. I wrote in my journal that, when I shared my thoughts with this particular mentor teacher, *'he was immediately sceptical. I had the feeling that he saw through my enthusiasm and actually saw my ignorance. He told me that in his experience, when local teachers sensed that an outsider tries to influence how they teach, "the walls go up" and they are not interested' (11/07/12).* This experience was the catalyst to my deeper reflection on how to negotiate professional relationships with local mentor teachers in my role as a teacher educator, and how to do this with cultural sensitivity and respect for the knowledge already held by local teachers. This would be my task when I returned as leader next year. As explored with a colleague who had a similar experience on IPE in Africa (Williams and Grierson 2016), my challenge was to understand my relationship with the local mentor teachers, and my role in the practicum experience for them and for the pre-service teachers. I grappled with questions such as 'What is my expertise and how is it relevant to this context?' 'How should I interact with mentors, pre-service teachers and children in the Cook Island classrooms?' 'What authority do I have to present PD on mentoring, based on my own "Western" views of this activity?' My journal entries over the three years of involvement in the IPE reveal frequent feelings of uncertainty as I encountered situations that were new to me, and that I was unsure of how to handle. There were times when I was unsure of my relationships not only with the local mentor teachers but also with the pre-service teachers themselves. These challenges emerged largely from the new and unfamiliar roles and responsibilities I assumed as leader of the IPE.

Narrative of Learning About Understanding New Professional Relationships with Pre-Service Teachers

Journal Entry 05/09/14

Looking back on the past two years, perhaps one of the greatest differences I see this year is that I have been more prepared to be more open with the pre-service teachers, and to join in activities and be part of their social experience, in addition to the more formal teacher educator role. Also, being sick with them, when about 10 of us came down with a gastro bug, and providing comfort to them when they were sick, created a bond that isn't possible at home. Back in Australia when I mentor students who are on a teaching placement, I don't look after their health (except in a pastoral way as student advisor), I don't take them to the doctor or hospital, I don't check in them at night and in the morning to see if they are OK. The relationship and duty of care here is so different from that at home. It creates a whole new relationship—they are individual people as well as students, whereas at home, the main focus is on them as students. That boundary between the personal and professional is very blurred—as a teacher educator in an overseas practicum my first responsibility is actually to their welfare, and the teaching comes second. The priorities change, and this changes the nature of the relationship. I care about and for them in different ways….

This narrative was written during my third IPE, following an outbreak of illness to which several of the students and I succumbed. For the first time on IPE, I had to deal with quite severe illness, including some students being admitted to hospital for several hours. I was also ill for 24 h, and was I touched by the concern shown by the students for my welfare. I had never before been in such a vulnerable position in my work as a teacher educator. When I first agreed to be part of the Cook Islands IPE, I assumed that my greatest challenge (apart from driving the van!) would be in working in very different school environments and with the local mentor teachers, who, I assumed, would have very different ways of teaching. While this assumption was accurate in many ways, as my experience progressed I became increasingly aware of the complexity of the roles and responsibilities that I also assumed in relation to the pre-service teachers in my care, and of the impact of this on my relationships with them.

Initially as learner, and then as leader of each placement, I assumed multiple roles and responsibilities which I had previously not had as a teacher educator at home. These included travel organiser, bus driver, social secretary, counsellor, nurse and general information provider and troubleshooter, in addition to the more familiar role as teacher and practicum assessor. In undertaking these various tasks, and living in close quarters, day and night for three weeks, I was aware of the constantly shifting relationships with the pre-service teachers—one minute I was organising a birthday dinner, the next observing their teaching in classrooms, and in one instance, counselling a student who had been told that he had failed his placement. How was I to straddle these relational boundaries between professional

and personal? To what extent should I socialise with the pre-service teachers? How do I maintain a close personal relationship while advising about and assessing their teaching? Throughout the four years of leading the IPE, this was a constant challenge for me, but by the third placement, I realised the tremendous value of these relationships. Rather than being overly challenged by this boundary crossing work, I came to see that the close personal and professional relationships I forged with each group of pre-service teachers were actually a key part of my own personal and professional learning as a teacher educator. Over time, I came to see more clearly that the relationships that I develop with my students, whether on IPE or at home, are a key to my success as a teacher educator. This is something that I have taught my students for many years—that communication and relationships are at the heart of successful teaching. However, it took my participation in IPE to really understand just how important this is, not just for the students in their teaching, but also for my own.

Narrative of Learning About Developing a Deeper Sense of Self as a Teacher Educator

Final Journal Entry 28/04/15

I have identified throughout my journal that relationships with mentors and pre-service teachers were the key dimension of the Cook Islands experience for me. I have written about the challenges involved in this, but I can see from the later entries in this journal, that negotiating and managing these relationships was a very important experience and has helped me to gain a stronger sense of self as a teacher educator…Being involved in these relationships meant that I got to know the students in ways that would not be possible otherwise. In Melbourne, students attend their placement, classes and sometimes my office for discussions (or a cry), then they leave the university and I don't know their world outside the boundaries of the institution. In the Cook Islands, those boundaries were very much blurred…I now teach two of the students [in Melbourne] and my relationship with them is different—I know them better, I have seen them in different circumstances… and I understand them better. This puts us in a different position compared to the other students in the class. If only I knew those students better, but I only see them for two hours per week, and am unlikely to see them on their upcoming placement. Such a different situation! In my earlier journal entries, I positioned my concerns about my relationships with students as a problem—I was unsure about how to balance the personal and professional relationships. I can see now that it doesn't have to be one or the other—the challenge is to do both. While Monash confers a certain level of authority on me, effective authority really is bestowed by the students themselves. It has to be earned, together with respect. I think that my increased confidence over the last three years has helped me to find that balance, and to gain a more assured

identity as a teacher educator. I have learned how to be me *in this international context.*

This journal entry was written a few months after the third placement, before I knew I was going for a fourth time. It captures my awareness of my personal as well as professional growth as a teacher educator through leading the IPE. It recounts an increase in my confidence to straddle relational boundaries, especially between myself and the pre-service teachers. The entry also illustrates how my experiences on IPE caused me to reflect in new ways on my work at home. I became increasingly aware of how little I know about my students, their lives and their practicum experiences, compared to those with whom I worked in the Cook Islands. My relationship with the IPE students was much deeper because being with them enabled me to see the complexities and difficulties, as well as the successes, of learning to teach during practicum. I had a greater understanding of, and respect for, the impact that personal issues have on learning to teach, because I experienced it all with them. I was increasingly comfortable to be myself and to do the work of a teacher educator in new ways: to be more informal with pre-service teachers, to get to know them on a more personal level, to be open to conversations and new learning with them, but also to be aware of the need to maintain professional and personal boundaries. The trick was to work out what those boundaries should be. This learning also guided my interaction with pre-service teachers on my return to home in Melbourne—I began to see them more as complex human beings, not merely as student teachers. Even though they weren't Cook Islands IPE students, they *could* have been. It was very likely that they faced many of the same challenges in their lives and on practicum that IPE participants did. I was, and still am, much more careful to not make assumptions about particular students, and to make the effort to get to know them on a more personal basis, even though the opportunities for doing this are relatively limited.

After my three years of participating in the Cook Islands IPE, this journal entry shows that I had accumulated much experience, confidence and wisdom as a teacher educator that I was unlikely to have gained otherwise. I was much more aware of the challenges and potential risks that are inherent in any IPE, but I felt more confident that I could cope if and when any problems arose. Although I was still, and always will be, a learner, I was not the beginner that I was in 2012, as I embarked on my first-ever international professional experience.

Learning from Narratives of Learning

These narratives of learning from IPE suggest the importance of self-awareness and self-knowledge in understanding the challenges and opportunities available to teacher educators who lead IPE. Each narrative was triggered by my reflection on a particular incident or circumstance that leads to a deeper exploration of what it means to be a teacher educator in an unfamiliar cultural context. The narratives also enabled me to reflect more deeply on what it means to become a teacher, as there

were many parallels between my learning journey and that of the pre-service teachers. Just as I had to negotiate new relationships and to understand the new roles and responsibilities, so did they. They had to build personal and professional relationships with their peers, mentor teachers and other staff. So did I. They had to negotiate their role within the classroom and to work out how to bring in new ideas about teaching and learning, while acknowledging and respecting those of their mentor teacher. So did I. Together, we all had to learn how to appreciate, respect and negotiate within an unfamiliar cultural context, even when we were challenged or confronted by our experiences. Being a teacher/learner myself in this context, I was reminded of the challenges experienced by pre-service teachers on any practicum, at home or internationally, and that my experiences as a learner are just as relevant to my teaching about teaching (and learning to teach) in my home institution.

Sanderson (2008) argued that 'a thorough understanding of the Self can empower teachers to make informed choices based on who they really are' (p. 283). Reflecting on who I really was as a teacher educator on IPE, and capturing this in a self-study, was an important part of my professional learning and growth. I learned to look deeply and critically at myself, and like many of the pre-service teachers, I progressively gained more confidence to undertake the challenges, and to gain the rewards, of being involved in such an important professional experience. I learned that I can do this work, and do it effectively, and although I am not on IPE to change the world, I am there to make a contribution to pre-service teacher learning, to intercultural relationships and understandings, and to knowledge about IPE as an educational endeavour. Negotiating relationships and working out not just how to *do* teacher education on IPE, but how to *be* a teacher educator in this context, is an on-going, complex but highly rewarding part of my work. I believe my experiences on IPE have served to move me at least some way in the direction of Sanderson's (2008) *cosmopolitanism*—the ability to 'critically reflect on one's own values [which] is fundamental to being able to dismantle the barriers that obstruct a legitimate understanding and acceptance of others' (p. 287).

In undertaking this self-study, I came to see my practice in the Cook Islands and at home differently. Over time, I came to better understand the complexities of learning to teach for pre-service teachers and for myself. This knowledge provides a solid foundation for teaching teachers, and for being a teacher educator, in any context, not just on IPE. I came to appreciate how each school has its own social and cultural context, no matter where it is located. As teachers, we need to be aware of and respect local ways of doing and being, while also making a contribution to furthering knowledge and practice of teaching and learning that is meaningful, relevant and sought in the particular context. The challenge is finding this balance: How can teacher educators and pre-service teachers most effectively make a difference while acknowledging and respecting existing ways of knowing and being? How can we work with local schools and communities (at home and abroad) to improve the educational outcomes for children, families and communities, without promoting a deficit view of their culture and educational systems? How can we work with our peers and colleagues to bring out the best in each other? The answer

to these questions lies at the heart of teacher education. As teacher educators, we need to see and understand our own diverse learning experiences in ways that can support the learning of our pre-service teachers. This, in turn, supports the education of children and their communities, as these future teachers also face the challenges of working in unique and exciting professional spaces.

Where to Now?

This chapter, and the self-study on which it is based, has explored my experiences as a leader of IPE. However, the voices of other academics who do this work are largely silent in the research literature. In several chapters in this book, some of these voices begin to emerge, shining a light on the complex, challenging but ultimately rewarding nature of this work. To have a more in-depth and multifaceted picture of the work of teacher educators leading IPE, more of these voices need to be heard. By learning of their experiences, in conjunction with those of pre-service teachers, local communities and host teachers, a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding will emerge. This has the potential to inform current and future international programs, in terms of planning, structure, processes, and professional and personal learning, to further enrich the experiences of those who participate.

Epilogue

September, 2015

The luggage carousel at Melbourne airport is chugging into life—the Air New Zealand flight from Rarotonga via *Auckland has discharged its load of suitcases and backpacks, some of which are packed with ukuleles, coconut grass skirts, parau (sarongs) and other assorted souvenirs from the South Pacific. As the passengers jockey for position to locate their belongings and to make the final leg of their journey home, I spot our students dotted amongst them. The same people who embarked on this journey only three weeks before, but somehow…different. I can see a mixture of tired, relieved, sad and excited faces, all so familiar now after being together for three weeks. Although they were sad to leave Rarotonga, I can see that most are now looking forward to seeing their loved ones, and to sharing their stories of what many of them have describe as a life-changing experience.*

I think back to our meeting at this airport just three weeks ago, when they were all strangers to me, and think how different it is in the arrivals hall compared to the departure lounge. I remember thinking, as I do each time, that the nervous and excited students and my new colleague, have no idea what they are in for. Just as I had no idea what I was in for when I left for my first IPE with Ange four years ago. Standing at the carousel, it struck me that this really was (probably) my last Cook Islands IPE, and I was hit by conflicting emotions—relief that I didn't have to do

all that work again—planning and preparation, administration, juggling paperwork and budgets, and dealing with all the inevitable 'issues' that arise during placement; sadness that I wouldn't be sharing such a wonderful experience again with students or colleagues; happiness to be heading home to my own family, dog and everything else that is familiar and comforting; and perhaps strongest of all, pride— in the students who have been to the Cook Islands over the past four years, in Robyn, who contributed so much to our shared experience, and in myself—yes, I could do it after all.

I never dreamed that when I took on that first placement with Ange, it would extend beyond the usual two year commitment to become such an important part of my life, for so long. I never thought I would be entrusted so willingly by my university with the huge responsibility of caring for 25 others in another country, far away from their families and home. I never thought I would be able to negotiate the roles and the challenges, the logistics and the emotional work, that is ever-present and an essential part of IPE (yes, I did manage to drive the van without any mishaps). I also felt grateful that this is my career. In my work on IPE, and every day of my professional life, I am helping my students to realise their dreams and to learn about what it means to be a teacher. Some of them will venture out into the world beyond Australia, others will live and work much closer to home. Wherever they end up, I hope I have made some contribution to their future as compassionate, outward-looking professionals, who are well equipped to work and live with others in respectful, interested and interesting ways. We are all teachers and learners together, making sense of ourselves in the world, and building relationships that help us to see who we are and how we can be better. The Cook Islands IPE taught me that.

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