Jeana Kriewaldt · Angelina Ambrosetti
Doreen Rorrison · Ros Capeness   *Editors*

Educating Future Teachers: Innovative Perspectives in Professional Experience

Springer

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This book is dedicated to all those who help shape, support and educate future generations of teachers.

Foreword

'Practice' and 'Practise': Tricky Concepts

Reflection on the words 'practice' and 'practise' immediately surfaces a number of queries and issues. Are we concerned with practice – the noun, this practice or that practice? Or, perhaps, practise the verb – to practise? Or practice as an adjective, practice-teaching (but never practice-learning)? *Educating Future Teachers: Innovative Perspectives in Professional Experience* is all about practice and practise: the practice of educating preservice teachers in all of its guises; practising becoming a teacher with all of its challenges; and engagement in programs and activities that bring the theory of teaching and learning into the classroom and what it is that teachers and those who support them do in apprenticing those intending to become teachers.

Bill Green (2009) in his introduction to *Understanding and Researching Professional Practice* argues the case for more careful work to be undertaken with regard to the agreements and solidarities that need to be framed, the new understandings that are to be negotiated and articulated and the challenges that confront us in scholarly inquiry. He focuses, in particular, on professional practice 'that is at the heart of all these concerns and questions, and yet this is something that is arguably still in need of clarification and elaboration, as is indeed the concept of practice itself' (p. 1), a challenge that is met by this important book.

Practice is theorised by Nicolini (2013) as embodying social transactions, activity, performance, work and relationships, and importantly he points to issues in relation to power, conflict and politics. All of these and more are covered in the four sections of the book: 'Partnership Arrangements and New Learning Spaces'; 'Guiding, Supporting and Mentoring'; 'Enabling Dialogues'; and 'Reframing Professional Practice'.

Contributors are cognisant of the importance of context that governs the norms and regulations of the various sites within which professional practice in initial teacher education occurs. If we turn for a moment to the concept of 'practice architecture' as proposed by Kemmis et al. (2014), it is possible to unravel the various

conceptions of what practice/practise looks like, who benefits, who is challenged, how have matters come to be as they are, what could be changed and so on. All of these matters 'hang together' in what Schatzki (2012, p. 16), who has exercised a significant influence on Kemmis and associates, sees as 'practice arrangement bundles'.

Developing these arrangements through partnerships is critical to the enterprise of educating preservice teachers. The form and function of partnerships varies. They may be *bureaucratic*, designed to meet a set of predetermined requirements such as the burgeoning ethos of constructing teaching standards; *organisational*, to do with logistics, for example, the placement of students; *democratic*, subject to negotiation; and *participatory*, contributing to the development of new and innovative relationships.

Irrespective of the motivation to form partnerships, with regard to initial teacher education, an underlying requirement is the manner in which networks that will enable such partnerships evolve. Networking embodies 'the processes through which professional knowledge is received and transmitted by means of personal relationships … (It) is a social process which occurs both within and between the formal structures and boundaries of organisations' (Anderson-Gough et al. 2006, p. 232). For those charged with the responsibility of designing and implementing professional experience in schools, it is essential that the emergent plans are founded on the kind of network experience that ties the various contexts together, but importantly does not trammel them such that they result is some kind of cultural reproduction.

Schooling embodies a range of cultural formations that are extremely robust and enduring and are transmitted from one generation to another through the action of its agents. While not making an argument for schooling as a cultural singularity, trapped in a time warp, it is nonetheless possible to claim that there are features of schooling that persist within the institution of the school and the classroom through the roles and behaviours of those who are in residence. Destabilising the cultural forms of schooling is a major challenge. Arguably, it is only possible to contribute to change at the margins. It is for this reason that the invocation of 'the third space', discussed so eloquently in this book, is so significant as a means of a more powerful and profound interruption.

It is not the intention of this foreword to draw attention to each individual chapter, but I have chosen to spend some time on Chap. 3, as for me, it embodies a critical dimension that will inform the reading of the subsequent chapters. It moves us beyond professional experience to ongoing professional learning, to address issues of compliance, conformity and cooperation and the tension between being classroom ready and classroom concerned, and considers the complexity of creating professional learning experiences in the field. Its thrust is to enter the 'third space' between teacher education in the university sector and practice/practise in schools by drawing attention to programs, complexity and identity. The chapter reflects the strong arguments made by Rorrison (2005) that the perceived theory-practice gap is not only figurative but also literal leading to confusion and uncertainty. In a poignant reference in the chapter, Williams (2013, p. 128) points to her own dilemmas

in constructing her identity as she moved from a professional in the classroom to becoming an academic in a university. She concluded that:

> ... the boundary practices of the third space require a delicate balancing act of acknowledging and respecting the personal and professional identities of all involved…The challenges and tensions involved in developing these boundary practices are essential elements of my evolving identity and practice as a teacher educator.

Lingard and Renshaw (2010) have been ever alert to the perceived gap between the two sectors and argue for teaching as a research-informed and research-informing profession and for teachers to have a 'researcherly disposition', effectively inhabiting the third space along with their academic colleagues. Of course the notion of a 'third space' is a metaphoric one and other writers in the book, while not specifically invoking the concept, are referencing it as a dimension within which new and different relationships can emerge such as in the practice of mentoring.

Finally, Kemmis (2009) insists upon a social view of practice with a demarcation between that and the prevailing individualistic stance that overly attends to individual behaviours and attributes. He argues that practice is always shaped by ideas, meanings and intentions that are socially formed and always involves values, raising questions about professional responsibility. He is optimistic that in spite of historical constraints governing habits of mind, there is always the potential for practice to be transformative. The authors of *Educating Future Teachers: Innovative Perspectives in Professional Experience*, drawing as they do upon a wide range of theories infused with experience as illustrated by a number of case studies, have made an important contribution to our understanding of these tricky concepts, 'practice' and 'practise', and have contributed to what I have called 'a reflexive turn' in evolving these into 'praxis' as morally informed action (Groundwater-Smith 2017).

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We salute AARE who provided seed funding towards the initial working conference and Springer, particularly Nick Melchior, for supporting this project. In the final phase of the project, manuscripts were subject to anonymous peer review. We are grateful to the scholars who were so generous with their time and guidance.

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Angelina Ambrosetti is a senior lecturer and head of course in the School of Education and the Arts at Central Queensland University. Angelina is an experienced primary school teacher and taught in Queensland primary schools for 16 years prior to her move to initial teacher education, where she works with undergraduate preservice teachers in pedagogical practices, and designs and coordinates the in-school professional practice experiences in which they engage. Angelina's doctoral research focused on developing an alternative mentoring model for preservice teachers and their mentors during the professional practice experience. Her ongoing research interests include mentoring in preservice teacher education, mentoring in workplace learning, the professional practice experience in initial teacher education and professional development for teachers.

Rebecca Andrews is a lecturer at the Department of Educational Studies, Macquarie University. Rebecca is an early childhood specialist who worked in the early childhood sector as an early intervention adviser and teacher for several years. Beginning at Macquarie University in 2001, she now lectures and teaches early childhood philosophy and pedagogy as part of the student experience in early professional experience units. She has researched and developed programs for diploma-qualified students integrating into their first professional experience unit as part of a bachelor of education (early childhood) degree, within the university environment. She is involved in writing professional development courses on mentoring for early childhood teacher accreditation.

Ros Capeness has a 40-year career in education across a range of teaching, research and management roles in schools, universities and government departments. She joined the Queensland College of Teachers (QCT) in 2010 to manage the Queensland Review of Teacher Education and School Induction and the Implementation Taskforce tasked with actioning the recommendations from the review. Her current role at the QCT is manager of Accreditation and Professional Standards. This involves working with Queensland higher education institutions in the national accreditation of their initial teacher education programs and the

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Doreen Rorrison is a critical theorist with an eclectic mix of educational experiences. She held a range of teaching and leadership roles in both public and private sector secondary and R-12 schools from 1974 to 1999 and taught at Flinders University and what was soon be known as the University of South Australia in the 1980s and again in the early 2000s. In the 1990s, she also worked in educational radio and completed a master of teaching at Flinders University. From 2002 to 2010, Doreen lectured and coordinated a range of programs at Charles Darwin University and Charles Sturt University as well as completed her doctor of philosophy, spending a year at a campus in Ontario, Canada, and for 6 months as chair at the Department of Didactic Sciences and Early Childhood Education, at the Stockholm Institute of Education. More recently, as a retired academic, Doreen has worked as a sessional lecturer at Curtin University, is a visiting scholar at the University of Adelaide and is an adjunct of Charles Sturt University.

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Jane Thornton is a leading teacher and school-based teacher educator. In her role as teaching fellow at Koonung Secondary College, she guides and supports preservice teachers and their mentors in a corps of local partnership schools, while teaching physical education and psychology. Jane's focus in her higher degree study is mentoring – clinical teaching at the University of Melbourne. Leading a collaboration with university-based teacher educators, mentors and preservice teachers, Jane has developed a digital tool to capture and give evidence-based, instant feedback called the Teaching Tracker Tool. The Teaching Academy for Professional Practice group continues to develop and refine the tool and to research its impact.

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Kellie Tobin is a lecturer and course director in the Faculty of Arts and Education at Deakin University. Her current doctoral research is investigating the challenge of creating and maintaining enduring school-university partnerships in initial teacher education with a focus on preparing preservice teachers to be classroom ready. Kellie's current academic role and previous work as a teacher in secondary schools has focused on social justice education. She has worked across various education fields to build access and equity for students, building strong partnerships in initial

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Simone White is the chair of teacher education in the Faculty of Education at Monash University and the immediate past president of the Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA). Simone's publications, research and teaching are focused on the key question of how to best prepare teachers and leaders for diverse communities. Her current research areas focus on teacher education policy and research, professional experience and building and maintaining university-school/community partnerships. Through this work, she aims to connect research, policy and practice in ways that bring school and university teacher educators together and break down traditional borders between academics, policymakers, communities and practitioners.

Judy Williams is a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Education, Monash University. She is an experienced primary teacher and teaches in primary undergraduate and graduate courses in the areas of professional studies and practice, supervising research projects. She is also course leader for the primary programs in the faculty. Judy's research interests include teacher and teacher educator professional learning, teacher identity, professional experience – including international professional experience – and self-study of teacher education practices. This research helps to inform practitioners and policymakers on the professional learning needs of graduate and experienced teachers and provides new perspectives on the work of teacher educators.

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and citizenship education, literacy education, inquiry curriculum and multiliteracies pedagogy. Her research is underpinned by sociological concepts and theories for research and analysis such as cogenerativity, ethics of responsibility, dialogic exchange, agentive pedagogy and communities of practice. Linda's research aims to bridge traditional theory-practice divides by exploring how effective sustainable educational partnerships that include universities, schools, parents, researchers, teacher educators and policymakers may be realised.

Sally Windsor is a senior lecturer in the Department of Pedagogical, Curricular and Professional Studies at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. She is currently teaching in the education for sustainable development area and researching school sustainability initiatives. Previously working in the Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne, Sally was the professional practice coordinator and taught educational sociology, psychology, humanities and Indigenous education. Her research focused on practicum experiences as part of a team investigating collaborative professional conversations and the use of descriptive observation tools in preservice teacher professional experience. Before becoming a teacher educator, Sally taught geography, humanities, sustainability and English with a focus on the middle years in both Australia and Sweden. Her doctoral research looked at federal policy and subsequent initiatives for teacher recruitment and preparation that specifically claimed to address the need for higher teacher quality in 'disadvantaged' schools.

Chapter 1
Introduction: Researching Innovative Perspectives in Professional Experience

Doreen Rorrison, Angelina Ambrosetti, Ros Capeness, and Jeana Kriewaldt

Abstract Professional experience in initial teacher education has always been valued, though there is limited agreement in Australia around the structure and knowledge base. Teacher educators from a wide range of institutions and jurisdictions worked together at a conference in early 2016 to share, critique and celebrate their different perspectives and innovative programs. The result is this edited volume of 14 chapters, representing the work of 30 authors from 18 different Australian universities, a secondary school and a state regulatory authority. Through collaborations across borders and within the field, a more nuanced understanding of the varied elements of professional experience, including new and renewed knowledge, has been recorded. This chapter provides the background, aims, rationale and synopsis of sections and chapters in the volume.

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Background

Changes in policy directives in teacher education and, in particular, professional experience have been frequent, often political and framed differently across Australian teacher education programs. Since the 1970s teacher education has been the focus of intense public scrutiny in Australia, with more than 100 reviews conducted into a variety of program components (Mayer et al., 2015). Consistent with this sustained 'improvement agenda', in February 2015 the Commonwealth Government released another report, *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers*, developed by the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG); this was followed by the government's response to the report. The TEMAG (2015) report made 38 recommendations designed to improve initial teacher education in Australia and better prepare teachers for the profession. The professional experience component of teacher preparation featured prominently in these recommendations.

These recent policy directions in teacher education, and teacher educators' responses to each wave of reviews, proposals, funding offers and incentives, inform this edited volume. Our focus is on innovative perspectives in professional experience. The promising accounts outlined here of initiatives that enhance professional experience make a contribution to the field to better inform scholars, teacher educators and policy makers. It is our intention that the narratives, comparisons, tentative theories, arrangements and arguments in the chapters will provide evidence of robust, broad and contemporary perspectives of professional experience practice. Through this opportunity to collaborate, problematise and critique, both established and emerging researchers across a range of institutions have uncovered new understandings of their own and others' perspectives.

The origin of this volume was an initiative that was funded by an Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) competitive grant awarded to the Teacher Education Research and Innovation (TERI) Special Interest Group in 2015. Teacher educators throughout Australia and New Zealand were invited to share their innovative professional experience practices and perspectives. Participants were selected and grouped through themes that emerged in their application narratives, and they were invited to attend a working conference at Central Queensland University, Noosa Campus, on 27–28 January 2016. After sharing their 'stories' and research in progress, writing teams with a similar focus or supporting interests were arranged. Their distinct and unifying ideas were then consolidated through open and critical discussion convened by the conference leaders, resulting in a framework for this edited volume. Through the alignment of disparate university initiatives and by bringing together teacher educators across all levels of experience, a diverse range of current perspectives are shared and analysed in this volume. As Allard, Mayer, and Moss (2014) assert, sharing experiences is critical if 'teacher educators [are] to reinsert themselves as key players in the debates around quality beginning teaching, rather than being viewed as a source of the problem' (p. 425).

Aims

Professional experience (previously and elsewhere known as practicum, student teaching, practice teaching, internship, teaching rounds, clinical practice, work-integrated learning, field experience and school-based experience) remains a foundational component of all preservice teacher education programs and is one that is highly valued by preservice teachers, educators, administrators and schools alike (Le Cornu, 2016). Although the nomenclature carries with it a 'host of assumptions and expectations about the place, purpose and nature of practice within initial teacher education programs' (White & Forgasz, 2016, p. 231), to the uncritical eye, the professional experience component of most preservice teacher education programs in Australia appears to be similar in design, requirements and structure (Goodnough, Galway, Badenhorst, & Kelly, 2013; Mattsson, Eilertsen, & Rorrison, 2011). However, as co-convenors of the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) special interest group focusing on 'teacher education research and innovation' (TERI), we discovered through reviewing hundreds of conference presentation submissions from 2012 to 2015 that there was evidence of many innovative ideas embedded within professional experience. The majority had been developed to meet specific challenges and contexts but, due to their local nature and reliance on the goodwill and commitment of participants, were seldom shared or published. We contend that the process of collaboratively negotiating these differences in innovation and perspective, rather than managing mandated policies and imposed frameworks, is the key to ensuring future generations of teachers develop the skills and knowledge that will be needed to effectively manage teaching and learning in their local contexts during times of rapid policy and social change. Edwards, Tsui, and Stimpson (2009) remind us of the limited agreement of conceptual frameworks for professional experience and note that 'until recently very little of the research on school university partnership has utilised explicit theoretical frameworks' (p. 9), while White (2016) also reflects our view of the importance of context observing that it is important:

> to align strategically smaller-scale studies that when analysed and viewed together will highlight common themes, as well as shine a light on diversity and context relevant matters. (p. vi)

Most of the chapters in this edition were written collaboratively to present a multilayered understanding of a particular perspective or theme across a range of settings, and most will additionally present clear examples from current practice. Established and experienced lead authors guided and supported the writing process. As editors we challenged authors to position each chapter within the extant literature as well as theorise and deeply critique their contribution to both interrogate and celebrate current practices to encourage further innovation. The diverse backgrounds and expertise of the collaborating authors is a distinctive feature of this volume, and the blend of early career and experienced writers and researchers promotes a balance between the new and the reimagined, which as editors we have nurtured and supported.

This edition makes a significant contribution by going beyond describing initiatives to reconceptualise theoretical frameworks. It also aligns the locally focussed research to build and develop theories that have wider relevance, illuminating concepts beyond a sum of the individual innovations. Furthermore, this volume is informed by collaborative international research in Malta, Sweden, Australia and the Netherlands that also expands boundaries to reconceptualise the place of context in school-based practice for preservice teachers. As our international colleagues suggest:

> [W]e are aware that practicum arrangements are developed incorporating several models and consequently we are suggesting a move from a descriptive view based on 'models' to a process-oriented view based on 'arrangements'. We see this as a natural evolution, as what is actually happening in different contexts is that those responsible for professional learning are creating their own arrangements to meet the needs or constraints of their context. (Rorrison, Hennissen, Bonanno, & Männnikkö Barbutiu, 2016, p. 125)

It appears to us that a more nuanced view of professional experience is implicated. The focus is changing through partnerships, local initiatives, government directives and most importantly a renewed call to open the debates around teaching and teacher education and share more comprehensively our experiences. The following chapters have provided broad evidence of successful and disparate innovations.

Positioning

In the introduction of the thirteenth volume in the Springer series, *Professional Learning and Development in Schools and Higher Education*, edited by Christopher Day and Judyth Sachs, the volume editors call for a shift in paradigms of learning and teaching and new ways of confronting the many challenges (Lee & Day, 2016, p. 12). Bringing together many of the leaders in the field of research into teacher education across Western and Chinese perspectives, they stress the difficulties and complexities of harnessing and explaining current reforms and initiatives due to the sheer enormity and diversity of contextual influences, as well as the limited attention given to an agreed 'knowledge base of teaching and teacher education' (p. 12). Despite an analysis of rigorous research into the changes and initiatives led by both teacher educators and governments across the globe, these authors still find that 'no one approach or combination of approaches appears to satisfy the aspirations for high-quality teachers and teaching' (p. 13) that is clearly expected by school communities and governments. Indeed they call for new mindsets and present teacher educators with the challenge to equip teachers with 'qualities, values, knowledge and practical classroom skills' (p. 13) to respond to *all* circumstances.

Zeichner, Payne, and Brayko (2015) also point out the labour intensity of cross-institutional collaborations and the extant international literature (see, for example Hennissen, Beckers, & Moerkerke, 2017) makes it clear that there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach to teacher education, just as there cannot be a uniform approach

to classroom teaching. Issues of equity and justice and diversity and humanness are always going to confound those who try to enforce rigorously controlled rules and regulations (and accreditation requirements). It is important for governments to have confidence in the quality and consistency of teacher preparation and graduates across a range of different programs, but local knowledge, conditions and contexts should still be seen as the drivers for effective practice.

Through clear presentation of different perspectives and programs, we demonstrate how commitment, research and analysis can transform action and ultimately help teachers teach more effectively. We wish to unsettle and contradict the neoliberal focus on mandate and sameness through the potential of collaborative action to interrogate the field and to inform and strengthen the political debates. In Chap. 4 the authors write, '[f]rom our conversation, we developed solidarity and gained reassurance that we were not alone in striving for innovation in professional experience', and as editors we are committed to expanding the knowledge base of teacher education referred to by Lee and Day (above) in our quest to open up the field. We also provide local evidence to conclusively contradict the focus on testing and economic imperatives (Lingard, Martino, & Rezai-Rashti, 2013, p. 553) that has gained strength both here and overseas. We heed Lingard and colleagues' warning to circumvent the 'strengthening of technologies of governance in education … and a weakening of political debates' through providing evidence of how to avoid the inherent dangers of policy borrowing from the United States and the United Kingdom (Lingard, 2010). We offer a broad range of Australian research and innovation to support our claim.

Right from the start, we avoided stereotypes, starting our working conference with Moku-chi (ink-splash with energy) presented by its designer Bronwen Wade-Leeuwen (2015). Through using particular strategies from the 'Chinese Four Treasures: stone, ink-stick, water and paper' (Wade-Leeuwen, private conversation, January 27, 2016), the group was provided with opportunities to open different dimensional levels of creative thinking and collaborative action, resulting in a collective vision of what the working conference might achieve. The cover photo for this edition presents one of the unique creations depicting the release of inhibitions and the garnering of creativity.

Synopsis of Chapters

This edited volume is divided into four sections based on the themes that first evolved at the working conference. Although each chapter is constructed to stand alone, concepts are aligned and developed in the chapters within each section. Due to the vicissitudes in ideas over the 18 months of development, and the expansion of initial findings through deep analysis in the iterative writing phases, the section headings could now be considered as an orienting feature rather than a descriptive title.

Chapter 2 is authored by Simone White, Sharon Tindall-Ford, Debbie Heck and Susan Ledger – a mix of experienced and early career researchers from four different universities. The chapter focuses on school–university partnerships in Australia and positions the current situation within the policy changes over the last 20 years. Using illustrative cases from four different settings, the authors analyse the opportunities and challenges for future partnerships and provide recommendations for teacher educators working to sustain such partnerships. They identify that a reculturation of the ways schools and universities view partnerships is necessary and stress the importance of allowing for flexibility and diversity of partnership types if true equity is to be achieved.

Chapter 3 critiques the spatial metaphor of 'third space' and its use and misuse in the extant literature. Through a thorough and scholarly analysis of the seminal works of Bhabba and Soja, and contrasting the quite different view of Gutiérrez, who challenges the policy neutralising of the transformative potential of the 'third space', the authors unravel the genealogy of the concept beyond its relationship to Zeichner's *hybrid* third space. From four different institutions and across two state jurisdictions, practicing teacher educators Debbie Heck, Judy Williams, Angelina Ambrosetti and Linda Willis are led by Rachel Forgasz to review the literature around 'third space theory' and how it has been used to frame partnership models, explore preservice teacher identity and conceptualise tensions in the theory–practice 'gap'.

Chapter 4 introduces the term 'cogenerativity' to reimagine and realise partnerships that provide innovative professional experience for preservice teachers. Established scholars Linda Willis, Helen Grimmett and Debbie Heck explore three Australian preservice teacher education partnership projects through the use of 'metalogue', which they offer as a unique research methodology for education researchers. In their conversation about the notion of cogenerativity, they model how the method can be used, analysing cogenerativity as it is reflected in the literature and in their own projects. Issues of power sharing, knowledge pooling and deep negotiation characterise the concept, and the authors conclude that cogenerativity may be useful for framing the critical conversations that are important in initial teacher education as well as managing the evolving nature of the field.

In Chap. 5 Tony Loughland and early career researcher Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen discuss how cultural–historical activity theory (CHAT) (Engeström, 1987) can intersect with Wenger's (1998) communities of practice theories to provide a generative theoretical lens and conceptual framework for professional experience. Through identifying university taught teaching methods/strategies and the reflective practitioner approach as boundary objects, the authors argue most cogently that these 'artefacts' are then 'brokered' by the university mentor to facilitate boundary crossing for preservice teachers. Implicit in the spaces that are then created is a coordination and alignment of perspectives that supports the collaborative partnerships that are sought between schools and universities. By recognising the entities of the two different communities and the important roles of boundary objects and brokers, other teacher educators can apply these concepts to inform the development of their collaborative professional experience programs.

In Chap. 6, *Distinguishing Spaces of Mentoring: Mentoring as Praxis*, Debra Talbot continues the theme of 'spaces' in her concern with the spaces in which mentoring might occur. She develops a strong and challenging argument to justify why she believes it is necessary to the interests of ongoing teacher education, and particularly initial teacher education, to trouble the existing paradigm and enactments of mentoring that continue in many institutions. Through consideration of the activities of those involved in mentoring relationships, she aims to contribute to a conceptualisation of mentoring as praxis that is transformative and mutually educative. She discusses the mentor/mentee relationship as reciprocal and fluid and refers to 'communities of practice' (Hord & Sommers, 2008; Lave & Wenger, 1991) as she positions her claims. Traversing the literature on mentoring in teacher education, the author provides evidence of a contested and under-theorised terrain, populated by the great thinkers in our critical–theoretical history (the likes of Homer, Bakhtin, Marx, Aristotle and Voloshinov) as well as more recent major Australian influences (the likes of Kemmis, Lave and Wenger) with emerging themes of collaboration and dialectical spaces.

Chapter 7, *Reconsidering the Communicative Space: Learning to Be*, offers three 'vignettes' as stories to illustrate how professional experience offers opportunities for preservice teachers to 'learn to be'. Mia O'Brien, Bronwen Wade-Leeuwen, Fay Hadley, Rebecca Andrews, Nick Kelly and Steven Kickbusch ask the reader to review their perceptions of mentoring and being mentored as an iterative process where identity is continually being renegotiated through praxis. Regulatory bodies tend to focus on 'what we know' and 'how we act', yet this chapter provides a theoretical lens to help us understand how we 'become' as a teacher. The development of creativity, the diversity of preservice teacher background and the importance of disposition are presented as 'spaces' for revisioning how teacher identity can develop.

Chapter 8, *Raising the Quality of Praxis in Online Mentoring*, authored by Nick Kelly, Steven Kickbusch, Fay Hadley, Rebecca Andrews, Bronwen Wade-Leeuwen and Mia O'Brien provides a deep interrogation of the quality of the praxis of mentoring, particularly online mentoring, drawing on Habermas's conception of praxis and Freire's critical theoretical lens. Acknowledging the role of 'systems' in organising the knowledge of preservice teachers during professional experience, the authors also align with Hudson's (2004) 'five-factor model' of mentoring. They demonstrate how the varied elements of mentoring can be enriched through asking the critical questions of moral and ethical practice. Although the TeachConnect online mentoring system has not yet achieved what the designers had hoped for, the opportunity to share their aspirations, particularly as a way to bridge the gap between teachers and designers, has been critical to the further development of their project. This chapter is an example of how the opportunities afforded to the participants at the Noosa workshop enabled them to engage with a range of ideas from participants with quite different backgrounds.

Chapter 9, *Using a Developmental Assessment Rubric to Revitalise Stakeholder Conversations in Professional Experience,* is the first chapter in the section *Enabling Dialogues* where innovations come together to provide evidence of the variety and

quality of responses across Australia around the important conversations during professional experience. Trudy-Ann Sweeney and Barbara Nielsen report on an assessment rubric they have designed and trialled in Flinders University, which they compare rigorously with a rubric used at Malmo University in Sweden (Jonsson & Mattsson, 2011; Jonsson & Svingby, 2007; Panadero & Jonsson, 2013). Through adding the formative levels of 'novice' and 'emerging' to the graduate level of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) in an assessment rubric for all mentors to use during professional experience, there is evidence of transformed processes, understandings and outcomes. With findings of more professional conversations between preservice teachers and their mentors, better relationships with partnership schools due to the clarity of the assessment tool, and enhanced involvement and thus increasing agency of preservice teachers, the use of the rubric has recently been extended to all teacher preparation courses in the authors' School of Education.

Chapter 10, *Fostering Professional Learning Through Evidence-Informed Mentoring Dialogues in School Settings,* continues the theme of dialogues as well as stressing the importance of the mentoring role. Jeana Kriewaldt, Melanie Nash, Sally Windsor, Catherine Reid and Jane Thornton examine how the use of a descriptive observation tool enhances mentor teachers' post-lesson conversations with preservice teachers. Relational agency is used as a conceptual framework particularly related to reflective phases of the process. Through an interpretivist case study approach, the authors offer strong evidence to support their findings through multiple extracts from participants and deep analysis of their data. Although acknowledging that perspective shapes what one notices, and that in turn depends on what we turn our attention to, the Teacher Tracking Tool is providing openings for more open and focussed learning conversations and has fostered an inquiring and collaborative stance.

Chapter 11, *Professional Experience and Project-Based Learning as Service Learning,* is the first in the final section *Reframing Professional Practice*. Teacher educators Kellie Tobin and Sally Windsor are led by experienced scholar and researcher Bill Eckersley to discuss well-established projects at three different Victorian universities that focus on 'communities of practice' in regions of low socio-economic status. Although the projects are quite distinct – one involves teaching in a remote indigenous setting, another regularly taking school students onto the university campus and yet another providing professional experience through designing curriculum projects within schools – the outcomes of strong partnerships and mutual benefits are enlightening and reflect deep engagement with the local context. The authors clearly establish that their innovative professional experience arrangements integrate the important elements of team work, leadership, negotiation, evaluation and collaboration that benefit both preservice teachers and the communities where they are placed.

Chapter 12, *Immersion Programs in Australia: Exploring Four Models for Developing 'Classroom-Ready' Teachers*, explores how immersion programs develop 'classroom-ready' teachers. Sharon Tindall-Ford, Susan Ledger, Judy Williams and Angelina Ambrosetti present the purpose, structure and intended

outcomes of four different immersion models in four different jurisdictions across Australia. The programs are as varied as they are similar, and the authors begin to problematise the issues that emerge. Through the examination of each model, guiding principles are highlighted for the establishment and success of an immersion program. All authors are deeply committed to the advantages of immersive experiences in their context, and the chapter establishes the need for further study in this area.

Chapter 13, *Paired Placements in Intensified School and University Environments: Advantages and Barriers,* continues the theme of different 'arrangements' for professional experience and investigates the complexities of the pairing of placements during professional experience. Paired placement is an attractive solution to the problem of providing placements for all preservice teachers who are enrolled in teacher education programs, yet the authors believe that the practice is underresearched. Through a review of the literature and the application of the findings to their own projects, a range of enabling and constraining elements are uncovered. The authors, Catherine Lang and Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen, find that commitment by all participants and the development of trust between the preservice teachers, as well as strong communication pathways, are critical to success. The careful and creative management of these elements is also essential. The quality of the relationships that develop both *between* the preservice teachers and *with* their mentors is crucial for successful learning outcomes. In this triadic approach to teaching and learning, peers can provide a source of support and can complement the development of deeper reflective practice.

The final chapter presents our insights, conclusions and future challenges as we interrogate what we have shared, what we have learned and where the gaps continue to be. While we have endeavoured to keep alive the conversations around professional experience in teacher education, it is critical that collaborative, crossinstitutional and cross-border research becomes more established in our field to nurture early career researchers and turn fresh lenses on some established perspectives. This chapter addresses these issues.

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Part I
Partnership Arrangements and New Learning Spaces

Chapter 2
Exploring the Australian Teacher Education 'Partnership' Policy Landscape: Four Case Studies

Simone White, Sharon Tindall-Ford, Deborah Heck, and Susan Ledger

Abstract Schools have long been integrally involved in initial teacher education particularly through the professional experience component. In recent decades however, there have been specific policy calls for greater involvement of schools in teacher preparation. These calls have come in two distinct waves of partnership policy reforms in Australia. The first began in earnest with the Australian Government announcement through the *National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality* (Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National partnership agreement on improving teacher quality, 2008), which identified two priorities. Firstly, it championed a systemic response to strengthening linkages between schools and universities, and secondly, it recognised the professional learning opportunities of preservice teachers and in-service teachers working together as co-producers of knowledge. The second wave, influenced by the Melbourne Declaration (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs MCEETYA. Melbourne declaration on educational goals for young Australians, 2008), resulted in the government response to the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG). Action now: classroom ready teachers. Australian Government, Canberra, 2015) and the accompanying move to mandate school-university partnerships for the purpose of teacher education program accreditation. These national partnership priorities have been taken up in different

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ways across the various states and territories and by universities and schools. This chapter maps the policy reforms both nationally and at the various jurisdictional levels and uses four illustrative cases to analyse the opportunities and challenges for future partnerships and recommendations for teacher educators working to sustain such partnerships.

Introduction

Schools have always been integrally involved in initial teacher education in Australia. At different times throughout the history of teacher preparation, schools have either been the central site of learning to teach or positioned in partnership with universities via the provision of professional experience. Aspland (2006) neatly maps the historical trends in teacher preparation in Australia beginning with the establishment of 'normal schools' at the end of the nineteenth century responsible for the training of 'pupil students' as teachers in the tradition of an apprenticeship model: through to the move of teacher preparation from teaching colleges to universities in the late period of the twentieth century, which heralded the professionalisation of teaching. No matter the level of school involvement on this continuum throughout each historical period, there has also been accompanying critique and debates about the best ways of learning about theory and practice (White & Forgasz, 2016). The turn of the century, however, has seen these debates intensify with an ever-increasing level of scrutiny with initial teacher education now a national policy focus like never before (Fitzgerald & Knipe, 2016).

Accompanying the debates have been numerous reviews into teacher education as outlined by Louden (2008) in his paper *101 Damnations: The Persistence of Criticism and the Absence of Evidence About Teacher Education in Australia*. More recently Bahr and Mellor's (2016) review paper *Building Quality in Teaching and Teacher Education* explores the idea of quality teaching within Australia, with a focus on the role of teacher education and teacher educators in ensuring the graduation of quality teachers. They also problematise the current focus on quality teaching as a more public and political view of teaching rather than a view informed by and for the profession. Underpinning current critiques about teacher education are long-held historical tensions between the perceived divide between 'theory' and 'practice' and the best approaches and places to prepare teachers (see White & Forgasz, 2016).

The latest global policy response is a trend in teacher education back to earlier historical school-based models. Such approaches appear to be characterised by a return to an apprenticeship and training model, with a greater focus on the central involvement of schools in initial teacher education, and call for more time in schools for preservice teachers. Current policy reforms require more formal links to be made between schools and universities through a 'partnership' agenda. The changes

to current policy in the national accreditation requirements for initial teacher education providers (AITSL, 2015, 2016) herald the formalisation of links between schools and universities through newly mandated partnership agreements.

This chapter examines the current Australian partnership policy agenda noting the changing historical document policy landscape and discussing the implications for universities and schools enacted across four state-based jurisdictions. The four cases are drawn across different states, namely, New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia. The authors, each based in one of the four jurisdictions, conducted a qualitative study using document analysis to interrogate the national and state-based teacher education policy documents to better understand the current trends and epistemological views underpinning them. These school-university partnership cases, drawn from various locations in Australia, were then purposefully connected to better understand the policy implications for diverse settings.

While the four cases are independent of each other and remain as policy case studies in their own right, the authors have deliberately connected them through a series of research questions as part of an overarching study as outlined further in the chapter. By purposefully overlaying the studies, the authors have also responded to the challenge for teacher educators 'to align strategically smaller-scale studies that when analysed and viewed together will highlight common themes, as well as shine a light on diversity and context relevant matters' (White, 2016, p. vii). The chapter concludes with contextual insights into the partnership policy-practice nexus and highlights recommendations for future partnership endeavours and agreements.

Connecting Partnership Policy: An Exploration Across Our Jurisdictions

Policy convergence and divergence (Ball, 2005) related to partnerships in different contexts in teacher education are the focus of this chapter. We examine the ways in which the national initial teacher education policy documents are influenced by global policies and in turn enacted at the state and more local levels. As authors, we take up what Ball (2015) notes as the distinction between 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse'. He notes:

> [P]olicies are both 'contested', mediated and differentially represented by different actors in different contexts (policy as text), but on the other hand, at the same time produced and formed by taken-for-granted and implicit knowledges and assumptions about the world and ourselves (policy as discourse). (p. 311)

We explore partnership policy texts and discourses across four Australian states. The examination is framed by a policy trajectory approach to policy analysis (Ball, 1994). A policy trajectory approach seeks to identify the genesis and various iterations a policy can take as it makes its way to implementation and practice. Ball

outlined five contexts of the policy process: policy influences; policy text production and policy practices/effects; policy outcomes and political strategies. Ball's policy trajectory approach has been supplemented by scalar analyses that consider policy levels from global to local levels. Ledger, Vidovich, and O'Donoghue (2015) argued that in an era of accelerating globalisation, key policy processes are no longer confined within national boundaries and analysis needs to extend from global to national to local or institutional levels, with at times the addition of intermediate levels such as regional and state, depending on the particular policy. With this in mind, we considered the global policy contexts and looked for evidence of policy as discourse within the various state-based policy documents. This chapter specifically focusses on the first three contexts and trajectory levels. A series of research questions aligned to these contexts were developed to better understand the policy and practices involved across Australia.

The research questions applied across the texts, discourses and practices were:

1. What are the main partnership themes emerging from the national initial teacher education policy documents?
2. How do the national policies circulate in state-based initial teacher education policy documents?
3. What are the commonalities and differences in the policy practices/effects across the four states?
4. What are the longer-term policy implications of policies and practices on future teacher education partnerships?

In setting out the response to these four questions, the first and second questions are examined through document analysis at the national level and state level for each case and through discussion of the global trends currently impacting on Australia. The third and fourth questions are then considered by looking across the four cases in reference to policy-practice links and longer-term implications and recommendations.

Teacher Education and the Partnership Policy Reform Agenda: Policy as Text

In recent decades across many countries, there have been political calls for greater involvement of schools and teachers in initial teacher preparation (see, for example Furlong, McNamara, Campbell, Howson, & Lewis, 2008). This has been largely expressed in the policy reform literature as school-university partnerships with the desire to both connect the perceived divide between theory and practice and promote professional development for teachers and teacher educators (Smith, 2016). Mattsson, Eilertsen, and Rorrison (2011) characterise this change as 'a practicum turn in teacher education' (p. 17). The focus on situated learning and its contribution to practice-based knowledge in the workplace (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and the need for connections

between teacher education programs and schools to build quality teacher education (Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2006) identify a shift in the value of practice-based knowledge in teacher education. Reid (2011) similarly identifies the current reforms as a 'practice turn'. While policy debates might focus on increasing the number of days for preservice teachers to spend in schools, Reid notes the importance of moving beyond measuring the number of days of professional experience within schools and calls for the return to a focus on *practices* that integrates and relates student experiences.

The exact forms of partnership work – and the associated 'boundary crossings' (Zeichner, 2010) for teachers and teacher educators as well as the professional learning involved for schools and universities – vary across time and international contexts and are often driven by specific policy changes. Ascribing stronger school-university partnerships as a path to improve teacher education, while an increasing feature of the political gaze, is not new in Australia. Many variations of school-university models and partnerships have been documented. (For a full historical analysis, see Vick, 2006.)

Despite the long-standing debates about the best models of teacher preparation and persistent reviews into teacher education (Louden, 2008; White & Forgasz, 2016), the concept of partnerships has become the focus of policymakers as a vehicle to resolve the issue of the perceived theory/practice divide that has long plagued teacher education. In this policy document analysis, we found that the document *Quality Matters: Revitalising Teaching: Critical Times, Critical Choices* (Ramsey, 2000) was a historical catalyst for renewed interest in strengthening school and university partnerships. Over almost two decades ago, this report advocated that a quality professional experience was central to an effective initial teacher education program which could only be realised through close partnerships between universities and schools. As a result of the report, the New South Wales Institute of Teachers (NSWIT) was established in 2004 under the Institute of Teachers Act with one of its objectives to advance the quality of initial teacher education (ITE) by assessing ITE programs against a set of rigorous requirements. One key requirement was that ITE programs must demonstrate how they ensured and supported high-quality professional experience within their teacher education programs.

The call for a National Partnership fund proposed at the time was answered by the Australian Government announcement through the *National Partnership Agreement on Improving Teacher Quality* (Council of Australian Governments, 2008) with the following priorities:

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

Over $550 million was provided for this initiative with $444 million directed to states and territories. A wide range of partnership programs was initiated during this time, though the language to describe partnerships differed across jurisdictions with each taking its own terminology. Across the life of the initiative, terms have included academies of practice, partnership schools, schools of excellence, centres of excel-

lence and training schools. Partnerships between schools, sectors and universities were strengthened during this time and stronger links established between universities and work force planning sectors (Broadley, Ledger, & Sharplin, 2013; Ledger, 2015) resulting in a range of tripartite initiatives discussed later in the chapter.

Most recently the Australian Government has moved from incentivising partnerships to now mandating them (AITSL 2015, 2016) through the initial teacher education accreditation process. The recent Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report and subsequent extensive policy ensemble, including Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA, 2008), Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2011), Australian Professional Standard for Principals, national curriculum, national teacher registration boards and national testing regimes for students in schools and in teacher education programs, are examples of this move. Louden (2015) suggests that the latest Australian policy assemblage resemble policy associated to what Sahlberg (2014) has termed 'the Global Education Reform Movement' (GERM). More recently, Dinham (2015) also expressed his concern that the GERM 'are finding support and traction in Australia' (p. 12).

Many of the case examples discussed later in this chapter had their roots in the first wave of new policy reform influenced by the Melbourne Declaration (2008) and National Partnership funding. The Melbourne Declaration (2008) was pivotal in establishing a national agenda where schools are central to the development and well-being of all young Australians and to the country's social and economic prosperity. The second partnership policy wave has only recently occurred although various state-based jurisdictions have already taken up the policy discourse. Two particular documents heralded the increased focus on strengthened and mandated partnerships. The first is the recent review and report into initial teacher education, *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* (TEMAG, 2015), and the second the new standards and procedures for the accreditation of initial teacher education providers and the accompanying guidelines (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2015, 2016). Amongst many other recommendations, the *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* report focusses on partnerships and the important work of the supervisor/mentor in improving initial teacher education. It states:

> To ensure new teachers are entering classrooms with sufficient practical skills, the Advisory Group recommends ensuring experiences of appropriate timing; length and frequency are available to all teacher education students. Placements must be supported by highly-skilled supervising teachers who are able to demonstrate and assess what is needed to be an effective teacher. The Advisory Group strongly states that better partnerships between universities and schools are needed to deliver high quality practical experience. (TEMAG, 2015, p. 7)

The emphasis on placements, partnerships and supervising teachers outlined in the report is also found in international literature. It has long been recognised that in Australia, we are influenced by many of the past policies of the USA and England (Mayer, 2014; Gilroy, 2014). In England, for example, government legislation from 1992 onwards made it mandatory for initial teacher education (ITE) providers to offer preservice courses with schools, thus making partnership a 'core principle of provision' (Furlong, Barton, Miles, Whiting, & Whitty, 2000, p. 33). Menter,

Hulme, Elliot, and Lewin (2010) and Conroy, Hulme, and Menter (2013) described the rise of teacher training schools, hub schools advanced in Scotland (Donaldson, 2011) or professional learning schools across a number of countries as part of the practice-based reform agenda.

School-University Partnerships: Policy as Discourse

As discussed earlier, the case examples below provide policy data related to four Australian states (New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia). The discussion is presented in four main sections that parallel the research questions noted earlier. A close examination of the policy trajectory is provided, and brief examples are also given in relation to practice.

Case: New South Wales

We argue earlier in the chapter that the Quality Matters (Ramsey, 2000) NSW report was the first of a formalised policy partnership response. As an outcome of the 2008 federal funding initiative, the New South Wales State Government established 50 schools as 'centres of excellence' (CoE). The CoEs were selected based on schools that had been seen to demonstrate increases in student learning outcomes based on standardised testing. Selected schools were then connected to a university with the purpose of sharing high-quality teaching practices between teachers, teacher education academics and preservice teachers, with preservice teachers being immersed in the CoE schools, observing high-quality teaching and experiencing high-quality supervision. The underpinning logic was that schools with excellent National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results would be ideal sites for preservice teacher learning. This approach mirrors the views in the English 'academy' models where schools have been selected for teacher training on the basis of standardised results only. The concerns expressed in this approach is that preservice teachers are not participating in diverse schools and consequences reveal a shortage of teachers willing and prepared to work particularly in challenging environments.

The documented success of the 2009 Centres of Excellence initiative was limited to individual schools/university partnerships and a relatively small number of pre-service teachers. As a response to this limitation and to societal concerns with broader teacher quality nationally, the New South Wales Government released *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning-A Blueprint for Action* (New South Wales Government, 2013), which was a policy response focussed on quality education for all students. The blueprint outlined 47 actions to ensure continual improvement in teaching and learning within NSW Schools. *Great Teaching, Inspired Learning-A Blueprint for Action* (GTIL) argued that professional experience was pivotal to the

strengthening and improvement of teacher preparation and established a series of actions in respect to professional experience and university/school partnerships. For example, GTIL advocated for the establishment of partnership agreements between initial teacher education providers and schools and school systems, clarity of the roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders involved, an evidence guide to support the supervision of preservice teachers and common assessment of preservice teachers based on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST).

The Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) published *A Framework for High Quality Professional Experience in New South Wales Schools* in June 2014. The framework detailed what initial teacher education providers must include within their professional experience programs. This included a formalised arrangement between the initial teacher education provider and school/schooling system; clarity around roles, responsibilities and processes for professional experience; and professional development for teachers supervising preservice teachers. The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) is foundational to all documentation, assessment and professional learning.

The New South Wales Department of Education in 2015 committed to establishing professional experience agreements between universities and NSW Department of Education Schools. The Board of Studies Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) Professional Experience Framework underpinned the agreements, and in October 2015, universities in NSW were partnered with what was described as a 'hub school'. The formal partnership required the school (secondary or primary) and the university to work in a collaborative partnership to develop and trial an innovative professional experience program. The agreement was extended in May 2016 with each university partnered with an additional hub school. How this was to be fulfilled was not specified; rather universities with their hub school were to work together to implement and evaluate a range of models of professional experience and professional learning over a funding period of 2.5 years, with funding allocated to each hub school. Universities were not allocated funding.

This new 2015 professional experience agreement has some similarities to the 2009 Centres of Excellence (CoE) with university and schools working together to share quality teaching and learning practice, with the primary objective to strengthen professional experience practices. However, the new agreement added the expectation that universities and hub schools would build professional learning communities where research on innovations in teaching, learning and professional experience would be shared and professional development of mentor/supervising teachers would be supported. A new focus of this policy initiative was the expectation that research would be undertaken to inform further partnership development.

Case: Victoria

In Victoria, under the first partnership policy wave, the Victorian *School Centres of Teaching Excellence* (SCTE) (State Government Victoria, 2011a) were established, and funding was provided to universities in partnership with a cluster of schools. Unlike New South Wales, a much smaller number of centres or partnerships were formed, and universities were responsible for the distribution of funding and partnering. This key feature ensured an equal commitment existed from both school and universities throughout the partnership. The School Centres of Teaching Excellence (SCTE) funded seven centres each with a university and network or cluster of schools. In the Victorian case (unlike the Queensland example shared below), all schools in the first wave were state schools. Again, unlike NSW, the selection of schools involved was decided upon jointly by the universities and schools, and there were no criteria based on performance of schools in standardised tests. 'Clusters' of schools formed geographically enabling a far greater outreach and participation of schools and inclusion of schools in diverse contexts, for example, inner city, regional, rural and remote. While NSW moved to follow more English-based academy models, Victoria looked to both England and the USA with reference in the documentation to 'residency models' and 'professional learning schools'.

The School Centres of Teaching Excellence (SCTE) discussion paper specifically referred to international policies in its rationale to move to school-university partnerships. The example below highlights reference to US policy documentation. Specifically the document states:

> The US Federal Secretary of Education asserted that 'America's university-based teacher preparation programs need revolutionary change – not evolutionary tinkering', and has subsequently led a national reform to restructure teaching as a practice-based profession similar to medicine or nursing. Student teachers will have a more closely-monitored induction period, followed up with ongoing professional development. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education is investigating 'scalable ways to improve in-the-classroom training and strengthen relationships between school districts and the colleges and universities that prepare their teachers'. (State Government Victoria, 2011b, p. 5)

The second wave of partnership policy in Victoria has been named the Victorian *Teaching Academies of Professional Practice* (State Government of Victoria, 2015). It is interesting to note the change in terminology drawn from English school-led training models named 'academies'. While this term is similar to the term used to describe school-led teacher education models in England, the focus has not been the same. Rather academies in the Victorian model have a focus to improve professional learning of mentors, improve assessment of preservice teachers and improve classroom practice. The Victorian Government's *From New Directions to Action: World Class Teaching and School Leadership* (State Government of Victoria, 2013) states that:

> An Academy will exist as a partnership of universities and schools and is designed to establish leading practice in providing quality pre-service teacher education, continuing professional learning and research opportunities. It will explore options for the delivery of

pre-service teacher education with a school-based focus and the ways in which pre-service
teachers are immersed in effective professional practice. (p. 1)

The second wave of policy reform has seen funding go to schools and not to
universities making resourcing an issue. The seven academies that represent the
school-university partnership has been extended to 12 with almost all Victorian uni-
versities involved and now including catholic schools as well as state schools.

Some of the key features of both waves have included clustering primary and
secondary schools together so that teams of university-based and school-based col-
leagues can connect together. 'Clusters' are traditionally a group of schools located
geographically together and connected with common professional learning foci.
Benefits have been recorded (White & Forgasz, 2017) for a number of stakeholders
including mentor teachers emerging as a key professional learning group. The
authors' note:

The dual focus on participants becoming research-informed mentors *and* thinking of them-
selves as school-based teacher educators was a key feature of this mentor professional
learning program which enabled the development of a shared vision for teacher education
that cut across school and university boundaries.

Case Study: Queensland

Queensland is a geographically large state with the majority of universities clus-
tered in the lower south-east seaboard. Travelling long distances challenges the
establishment and nurturing of mutually beneficial school-university partnerships.
However, like the other states, Queensland has historically engaged with a range of
different types of schools that are managed in different ways including faith-based
schools, independent schools and public schooling. Partnerships' programs between
systems, groups of schools and initial teacher education institutions developed in
very different ways across this broad schooling sector in Queensland. Partnerships
between schools and higher education institutions were identified as important in
The Review of Teacher Education and School Induction (Caldwell & Sutton, 2010a,
2010b). A sector-wide government policy *A Fresh Start: Improving the Preparation
and Quality of Teachers for Queensland Schools* (2013a) articulated the develop-
ment of partnerships as formal professional experience agreements that recognise
the mutual contribution of schools and higher education institutions towards pro-
viding quality professional experience opportunities for initial teacher education
students (Department of Education Training and Employment Queensland
Government, 2014).

The focus of these agreements was to redress concerns that there were no formal
requirements or agreements for schools to provide places for initial teacher educa-
tion students to undertake placement (Department of Education Training and
Employment Queensland Government, 2013b) even though there were accredita-
tion mandates for higher education institutions that require placements to be

undertaken in schools. The focus of this policy agenda was 'on ensuring that all Queensland schools have access to the teaching workforce they need to boost student performance and ensure young Queenslanders are well-prepared for life after school' (Department of Education Training and Employment Queensland Government, 2013b, p. 1). Unlike both previous examples, the federal government National Partnership agreement on improving teacher quality (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2008) agenda provided funding to support *different* models of engagement between schools and universities to emerge across the sector. Education Queensland focussed on the development of 'centres of excellence' in partnership with universities to extend the experience of high performing graduates with the aim of recruiting high-quality initial teacher education students for rural and remote schooling locations (Department of Education and Training Queensland Government, 2015). There was a strong agenda focussed on workforce planning in Queensland especially in relation to the provision of quality teachers for rural and remote schools.

One of the challenges identified by the development of partnerships was the burden on individual schools in the development of these agreements. In 2014, Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) expanded their existing 'centres of excellence in preservice training' program to facilitate the development of partnership agreements between peak bodies, schools and initial teacher education providers. This is just one example of the second wave of partnership development. In Queensland, the second wave was supported by an analysis of enduring partnerships by the Queensland College of Teachers that identified four aspects of enduring partnerships: commitment to mutual learning, agreed and well-articulated roles and responsibilities, commitment to genuine collaboration and responsiveness between the partners (Rossner & Commins, 2012). On the basis of these findings, Independent Schools Queensland adapted their funded 'centre of excellence program' to include a partnership between Independent Schools Queensland, a university and schools for a period of 2 years. Schools were required to apply to host a centre of excellence and agree to engage with Independent Schools Queensland and a partner university. The work began with a draft service agreement between Independent Schools Queensland and the university.

To illustrate the complexity of partnership agreements, one university experience is discussed. The collaboration between the participants and genuine dialogue saw the service agreement develop into a partnership agreement that initially articulated the roles and responsibilities of Independent Schools Queensland and the university. Later this expanded to include the roles of the schools in the partnership. Funding support was provided directly to the schools in response to a project plan negotiated between the partners. The initial challenge for all parties was the negotiation of formal agreements in the context of the various institutions. The process began in August 2014 and concluded in December with 18 iterations of the agreement being exchanged. Upon reflection, the detailed and sustained conversations that the partnership negotiation represented provided a strong foundation for the work that followed and provided the groundwork for the team to maintain the responsiveness required to ensure this work contributed to the development of the quality teaching

agenda. The focus within this partnership was the development of mutual learning as a contribution towards quality teaching for all the stakeholders' preservice teachers, teachers, school leaders, Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) staff and teacher educators from the university context. The agenda within the independent schooling sector was closely aligned with achieving the outcomes of the state government *Fresh Start* agenda, namely, developing effective partnerships that facilitated improving the professional experience for preservice teachers. This was achieved through a community of practice that explored practice analysis focussed on the professional standards for graduates and teachers that also supported teachers to make consistent judgements about preservice teacher performance while on professional experience.

Case Study: Western Australia

Western Australia is also a large state with specific rural and remote staffing needs. The five universities are also centralised in Perth, the state's capital. Western Australia's response to the National Partnership program was very much influenced by university leadership and access to funding. Across the state, all universities, public and private, were involved in establishing 'training schools' for preservice teachers. Western Australian use of the training terminology heralded a shift to an apprenticeship model drawing from English policy. The term 'training schools' was not embraced by many of the universities; however it was the term used to fulfil the nomenclature of the tender process in Western Australia. National Partnership funding was awarded to all universities, although three public universities, Murdoch University, Curtin University and the University of Western Australia, joined together to form the WA Universities Training Schools (WACUTS) program and worked collaboratively to offer a select entry internship for high-calibre final-year Bachelor of Education preservice teachers. Murdoch University, for example, led the WACUTS 12-month internship program. Interns were assigned as co-teachers at one school for the whole calendar year. The program graduated a total of 50 interns spanning Early Childhood Education, Primary and Secondary programs each year for 3 years (2010–2013) in rural and metropolitan contexts. Similarly, Edith Cowan University and University of Notre Dame offered a 'residency program' similar to the US model, specific to its Graduate Diploma cohort, and placed preservice teachers in two different schools over the year (one per semester) for 3 years (2010–2013). Over 100 preservice teachers graduated each year from the residency program.

Both WA Universities Training Schools program and the residency program were supported by a series of associated 'training schools'. These schools were chosen based on their partnerships with the universities and their ongoing commitment and capacity to support preservice teachers over 6 months at a time (Residency) or 12 months (WA Universities Training Schools program). One unique aspect of the identified training schools for each program was their capacity to support

interns from different universities. The program was well timed as the new policy reform for initial teacher education meant schools and universities were collectively grappling with the new Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2011) and associated assessment requirements for preservice teachers. During this period of national policy reform, the tripartite relationship between universities, schools and education sectors was strengthened as each body worked together for a common goal of producing 'classroom-ready' graduates in response to the second wave of policy reform outlined in *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* (TEMAG, 2015).

The legacy of National Partnership funding is a sustained commitment to internships in Western Australia by the department, universities and schools. Once funding ceased in 2013, the Department of Education continued its support for internships, offering financial support for secondary interns in areas of workforce planning needs, as well as professional support for early childhood and primary 12-month internships. However, only Murdoch University continued internships after funding ceased using the WA Universities Training Schools (WACUTS) program model as a blueprint. It has graduated approximately 40 high-calibre interns annually across programs and contexts since 2011. After a hiatus of 2–3 years, Edith Cowan University is currently redesigning a residency program, and the University of Western Australia and Curtin University are independently conceptualising or implementing different models of internships suitable for their programs. Identified 'training schools' in WA generated from the original National Partnership funding have continued to support preservice teachers across a range of placement types including internships, shorter-term 'block' or 3–6 week placements, distributed placements and more recently the employment-based model used by Teach for Australia (TFA) linking Victoria and Western Australia more closely.

In addition to National Partnership-funded training schools' programs that targeted preservice teachers, the Department of Education has established nearly 70 Teacher Development Schools more akin to the NSW 'centres' with the sole purpose to guide teachers on curriculum content and professional standards outlined in the Australian Institute for Teaching and Learning (AITSL) suite of policy texts as part of the second wave of policy reform for teacher education. It is not surprising that these schools include many of the National Partnership Training Schools.

Findings and Discussion

The four case examples demonstrate both partnership policy convergence and divergence. All state-based policy initiatives aimed, to different degrees, to formalise agreements between schools and universities and provide some form of framework to guide their creation and sustainability. Frameworks for the types of partnerships were negotiated by the universities (as in the Victoria case) or more flexibly (as in New South Wales) where no one model of partnership was mandated; rather each hub school, centre or academy was encouraged to develop a partnership model

based on their own specific needs and context. In Queensland, there were examples of both these levels of partnership being more prescribed to address the issue of availability of teachers to supervise professional experience placements and the more flexible partnership models such as the one developed across peak bodies, schools and university as partners.

The common aspect of each of the partnership cases presented is that resourcing was aligned with policy and funding and was for a set period of time. In all cases, funding supported personnel from university, schools and school systems to implement the envisaged government partnership policy. Such funding was key no matter how the funding was allocated, whether it be to schools, as in the case of New South Wales where an individual hub school was allocated funding over a specific time period, or in the case of Western Australia where university(s) submitted a tender to access funding to establish and support yearlong preservice internships at partnership schools. What cannot be disputed is for sustained partnerships, resourcing, money and committed personnel from all sectors involved in the partnership agreement are fundamental to success. Resourcing one component of the partnership and not the other does not appear to enable effective partnerships and relationships to flourish. Funding models in the future need to be allocated to both partners and specifically to the allocation of supporting the emergence of new roles and work accompanied in connecting and bridging the relationships between schools and universities.

Although the outcome for each of the policy cases presented was to establish effective school-university partnerships with a primary focus on enhanced professional experience for preservice teachers, each of the cases discussed is unique. In the case of Victoria and Queensland, a university was partnered with a number of schools to develop what may be viewed as a 'community of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Rossner & Commins, 2012). In contrast, New South Wales partnership policy required a university to be partnered initially with only one school, with the aim to develop an integrated mentoring-professional experience model.

In both the case of Western Australia and New South Wales, the government university-school partnership policy was built on pre-existing relationships between a university and particular school(s). In these cases, the state policymakers enacted policy that built on what was in most cases an informal university-school partnership. While in the case of Queensland, the state-driven partnerships were new and provided an opportunity to secure commitment from the profession to support quality preservice teacher professional experience placements. The enactment of this policy as the development of a future workforce had a significant impact on the engagement of schools in professional experience. The smaller-scale partnership agreements successfully shifted more of the focus on the need for genuine collaboration and mutual learning possible in authentic partnerships as a contribution towards the quality teaching agenda.

There are long-term implications that can be garnered from our initiative to present the comparison of the four cases. Firstly, there is no one effective partnership model that can be applied to all jurisdictions. Future government policy reforms need to acknowledge and support the flexibility between universities and schools all

of which have unique contexts. In these cases to date, a 'cluster' model was more effective in enabling cross-institutional collaboration and a collegial approach to linking preservice and in-service professional learning. It also appears important that all schools, not just those who have high NAPLAN results, should have the opportunity to participate in initial teacher education with preservice teachers. Schools can benefit from working with a university in multiple ways including opportunities for professional learning and research. Likewise universities can benefit by connecting with practitioners and drawing on their professional expertise in curriculum renewal. Most importantly preservice teachers benefit from diverse settings and contexts and being a part of a professional learning community. As the partnership policy is extended, we strongly encourage models that will further enable rural, regional and remote schools to be included and for any policy development to be wary of a metropolitan-centric partnership model by default. Any new cluster models with rural and remote schools could be enabled through technology, and innovative approaches should be welcomed.

Another finding garnered from our data suggests that continued funding is required to support long-term development and the sustainment of partnership programs. Once funding ceases, partnerships often dissolve, as seen in the Western Australian case where only one university and their partnership schools continued to offer an extended internship program. Aligned with funding is the need to have personnel at schools, university and government that are committed to school-university partnerships and who have a deep understanding of each sector and the complexities of integrating educational bodies whose structures and purpose may be difficult to align. The need for research as part of the policy reform agenda that is theoretically based has been largely ignored within current government policy thus far, as most funding has supported only the implementation of the partnership innovation itself. Research is seldom funded as part of the initiative, and the long-term outcomes of the quality teaching agenda remain under-researched. This raises the important need for research on school-university partnerships to be central to policy agreements. It is the authors' experience that the assembling and contrasting of the research on small-scale university-school partnerships can inform further policy and partnership initiatives (White, 2016), consistent with the aim of this chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter provides a review of policy texts, discourses and practices related to two waves of policy reform impacting initial teacher education in Australia. It emphasises the importance of partnerships in schools and universities as a result of the *National Partnership Agreement of Improving Teacher Quality Report* (2009–2013). The chapter highlights the importance of contexts and reveals variability in policy outcomes across the states in response to recent reform – in so doing exposing a range of opportunities and challenges for key stakeholders across all the

sectors. The opportunities presented across the case studies relate primarily to partnership types, access, participation and re-culturation of the ways in which schools and universities can partner together, whereas the challenges relate to sustainability, equity and scalability. While supporting the traditional partnership approach that relies on individual connections between schools and universities, the variability across the states and even within states calls for a more strategic systems' level approach to defining, monitoring and maintaining partnerships (see Le Cornu, 2015). But conversely, it recognises the need to allow for flexibility and diversity of partnership types across Australian jurisdictions to ensure a truly equitable model for all.

Partnerships between university and schools facilitated the enactment of the National Partnership initial teacher education policy reform in Australia; more importantly 'tripartite relationships' developed between university, school and education sectors within individual states during the recent wave of policy implementation. These partnerships resulted in cross-systems' level approaches to program development and resulted in sustainability with stronger and more direct links to issues surrounding workforce planning (Ledger, 2015). This 'shared responsibility' and systems-based integrated approach to initial teacher education are also a recommendation in the TEMAG report (2014) from which the policy text *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* (2015) was generated. However, building interinstitutional collaborations is labour intensive (Zeichner, Payne, & Brayko, 2015) and relies on changing the institutional culture and restructuring of current practices (Le Cornu, 2015).

Teacher education and the partnership policy reform agenda have produced a suite of new policies 'as text' and associated 'policies as practice' (Ball, 2015). The recommendations that emerge from this study relate not to the types of partnerships that were developed during the National Partnership policy reform but rather focus on the outcomes of the partnerships that were established. The outcomes show variability and diversity related to success, recognition and sustainability of partnership programs. It also highlights the need for further funded research in this space.

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Chapter 3
Theorising the Third Space of Professional Experience Partnerships

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Abstract Across the international research literature, references to the problematic 'theory-practice gap' in initial teacher education abound. Essentially, this refers to the dialectical positioning of university-based learning about teaching as abstracted theory in opposition to situated school-based learning about teaching through practice. This perceived theory-practice gap is exacerbated by the fact that the distinction between university-based and school-based learning is not only figurative but also literal, resulting in confusion amongst preservice teachers who often perceive an irreconcilable tension between the theories learned at the university and the practices observed during their professional experience in schools.

Policy reform and popular debate around this persistent problem tend to focus attention on rebalancing the ratios of theoretical and practical learning in initial teacher education. But recent scholarship on the subject offers a new paradigm in which theory meets practice and in which university- and school-based learning come together in a third space of mutuality, hybridity and collaboration. Popularised by Ken Zeichner, third space theory is gathering momentum as a framework for closing the theory-practice gap in initial teacher education, especially as it plays out in the professional experience component. Third space theory is being variously applied across contexts to (re)frame school-university partnerships and the role and position of various stakeholders within them.

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So, what is third space theory all about? What makes it useful for reconceptualising partnerships in initial teacher education? What is its genealogy as a conceptual, philosophical and political framework? And what kinds of attendant considerations should be taken into account by teacher education scholars looking to apply it to their thinking? These questions form the focus of this chapter, which offers a critical analysis of the development of third space theory and an interrogation of the possibilities and limitations of its application to the professional experience context.

Introduction

Across the teacher education research literature, references to the problematic 'theory-practice gap' in initial teacher education abound. Essentially, this refers to the dialectical positioning of university-based learning about teaching as abstracted theory in opposition to situated, school-based learning about teaching through practice (Ng, Nicholas, & Williams, 2010; Sinner, 2010). This perceived theory-practice gap is exacerbated by the fact that the division between university-based and school-based learning is not only figurative but also literal; that is, teacher education is taught partly by academics in the university setting and partly by mentors and teachers in schools. This separation accentuates confusion amongst preservice teachers who often perceive irreconcilable tensions between the theories learned at the university and the practices observed during their professional experience in schools (Rorrison, 2005).

Policy reform and popular debate around this persistent problem tend to focus attention on rebalancing the ratios of theoretical and practical learning in initial teacher education. But recent scholarship on the subject offers a paradigm in which theory meets practice and in which university- and school-based learning come together in a 'third space' of mutuality, hybridity and collaboration. Popularised in professional experience research by Zeichner (2010), 'the third space' is frequently invoked as a conceptual framework for addressing the theory-practice gap in initial teacher education, especially as it plays out in its professional experience component. It is not difficult to understand its appeal. The spatial metaphor of 'third space' readily encompasses a number of associations that powerfully and tangibly express the complex interrelationships between people, institutions and knowledges; for example, we might speak of the centre and the periphery, the borders of knowledge, of marking out territory, exploring new frontiers, crossing boundaries and carving out new spaces. The possibilities are seemingly endless. And yet, 'third space' is also more than a helpful metaphor for describing relationships and tensions. Third space theory has transdisciplinary origins that track back some 20 years before Zeichner's uptake of the concept. Indeed, third space theory has multiple, simultaneous disciplinary genealogies, each of which inscribes the metaphor of the 'third space' with a particular meaning (Bhabha, 1990; Gutiérrez, Rymes, & Larson, 1995; Soja, 1996).

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the use of third space theory in the context of initial teacher education, in particular, in relation to professional experience partnerships between universities, schools and communities that facilitate preservice teacher learning within various professional contexts. The chapter begins with a critical analysis of third space theory as argued by several oft-cited theorists. The analysis examines the specifics of each theorist's conceptualisation of third space and offers some observations regarding the possibilities and limitations for educators when applying third space theory to theorise aspects of professional experience partnerships within initial teacher education. Attention then turns to the critical review and systematic analysis of recent scholarship that applied third space theory to teacher education and professional experience partnerships. The outcome of the analysis indicates that since its popularisation by Zeichner in 2010, third space theory has been applied to three aspects of professional experience partnerships in teacher education: to frame the development of new programs and practices, to understand the complexity of preservice teacher learning and identity and to explore the tensions in teacher educator identities.

Critical Analysis of Third Space Theory

The most frequently cited third space theorists across the international teacher education research literature are Bhabha (1990, 1994), Mitchell (1995), Soja (1996) and Gutiérrez in collaboration with various co-authors (Gutiérrez, 2008; Gutiérrez et al., 1995). Common across all three conceptualisations of the third space is the political act of disrupting both unified and binary ways of seeing through the introduction of a 'third' possibility. Their various philosophical assumptions, underpinnings and purposes are otherwise different in sometimes subtle, yet ultimately significant ways. And while it is perfectly appropriate for researchers to stretch, combine and play with these existing concepts in order to theorise their own unique knowledge contributions, lack of awareness of the differences risks the misappropriation and dilution of the third space construct. Conversely, paying attention to the details of different third space theories may offer even greater promise for the application of third space theory as a framework for theorising, problematising and reconceptualising the tensions and possibilities of professional experience partnerships within initial teacher education.

Bhabha's Third Space of Hybridity

Understood with a post-colonial sensibility, Bhabha's first space may be understood to refer to indigenous cultural knowledge and identity. The second space, therefore, refers to the coloniser's imposed knowledges, cultures and structures. The colonised in this cultural construction has two choices: either assimilate and relinquish

indigenous identity altogether or be read as culturally 'Other'. Invoked to describe the point at which first and second space cultural identities rub uncomfortably together, Bhabha's third space of hybridity offers another alternative. Deemed to be a 'split-space of enunciation' (Bhabha, 1994, p. 56), the third space is the in-between space of hybridity in which it is possible 'to live on the cusp, to deal with two contradictory [identities] at the same time without either transcending or repressing that contradiction' (Bhabha as cited in Mitchell, 1995, np). Within the third space, new knowledges and new cultural expressions and identities emerge, which are traceable neither to the first nor to the second space but instead are the unique product of hybridity.

Significantly, Bhabha's third space of 'cultural and historical hybridity' (1994, p. 31) is not something we choose to create or enter. It is, rather, a way of understanding the in-between experience of cultural difference that acknowledges, without seeking to unite, multiple and sometimes contradictory identities, knowledges and cultures. As 'the margin of hybridity, where cultural differences "contingently" and conflictually touch' (Bhabha, 1994, p. 296), the third space can produce both anxious and agentic social actors. With this dual focus on the discomfort and the possibilities of contingent, hybrid identities, Bhabha's conceptualisation of the third space offers a useful way in which to theorise the tensions in identity and knowledge construction that can arise for preservice teachers, teacher educators and school-based personnel as they negotiate their roles and identities within professional experience partnerships.

Soja's Thirdspace and Thirding-as-Othering

The 'Thirdspace' introduced in Soja (1996) *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and other real-and-imagined places* draws conceptually not from Bhabha's postcolonial third space theorisation of cultural hybridity but from French philosopher Henri Lefebvre's various philosophies of trialectic reasoning and social spatiality. According to Soja (1996), '[w]ithout ever using the specific term, Lefebvre was probably the first to discover, describe, and insightfully explore Thirdspace as a radically different way of looking at, interpreting, and acting to change the embracing spatiality of human life' (p. 29). The 'spatiality of human life' to which Soja refers is both literal and metaphorical. A postmodern geographer, Soja is concerned with both revaluing the significance of the 'spatial dimension of our lives' (p. 1) and with the theoretical and philosophical insights opened up through the expansion of our 'spatial and geographical imaginations' (p. 1).

Soja's Thirdspace offers what he describes as a 'recombinatorial and radically open perspective' that uses the critical strategy of 'thirding-as-Othering' in order to 'open up our spatial imaginaries to ways of thinking and acting politically that respond to all binarisms, to any attempt to confine thought and political action to only two alternatives, by interjecting an-Other set of choices' (p. 5). The technique of 'thirding-as-Othering' has its roots in Lefebvre's philosophical resistance to

dialectical thinking. Soja explains that, for Lefebvre, '[t]here is always the Other, a third term that disrupts, disorders, and begins to reconstitute the conventional binary opposition into an-Other that comprehends but is more than the sum of two parts' (p. 31). He describes Lefebvre's response to either/or binaries 'by choosing instead an-Other alternative, marked by the openness of the both/and also' (p. 7). Although rarely attributed to either Soja or Lefebvre, the language of 'both/and also' is frequently invoked in teacher education research in what may be read as the critical thirding of familiar binaries such as university/school and theory/practice.

Soja enacts various examples of critical thirding, even challenging epistemological perspectives such as modernism and postmodernism that otherwise appear to be 'incompatible, uncombinable' (p. 6) binaries. Elsewhere, critical thirding of the Firstspace of the 'real' material world versus the Secondspace of 'imagined' representations of spatiality creates a Thirdspace of 'real-and-imagined places' (p. 6). Even Bhabha's hybridity is offered up by Soja as an example of thirding-as-Othering, providing as it does an-Other alternative to the unenviable choice between indigenous-oppressed-other and assimilated-homogenous-colonised (see Soja, 1996, pp. 139–145).

Whereas Bhabha's third space emerges to account for an identity which might be described as neither first nor second space, Soja's (and Lefebvre's) Thirdspace produces an-Other alternative which is inclusive of both. Furthermore, where hybrid subjects inexorably find themselves in Bhabha's third space, Soja's Thirdspace is intentionally created via 'a creative process of restructuring that draws selectively and strategically from the two opposing categories to open up new alternatives' (p. 5). According to Soja (1996), embracing the third space of cultural identity is a kind of 'chosen marginality' since it 'explicitly challenges hegemonic historiography' (p. 140). Despite these differences, the interest that Bhabha and Soja share is disrupting the hegemonic assumptions that underpin binary thinking, by highlighting (Bhabha) and creating (Soja) alternative spaces and perspectives.

Gutiérrez's Third Space of Dialogue

Despite writing about the third space at a similar time as Bhabha and Soja, Gutiérrez et al. (1995) invoked the term to describe yet another related but distinctly different phenomenon. While Soja explicitly addressed the relationship between his Thirdspace and Bhabha's third space, Richardson Bruna (2009) observes that Gutiérrez claimed to have had no knowledge of Bhabha's invocation of either 'third space' or 'hybridity' as its defining feature when she too began to use both terms in order to theorise an aspect of classroom dynamics which is essentially concerned with knowledge and power. In fact, Gutiérrez (2008) tracks the development of her own third space metaphor over time.

Grounded in Bakhtinian notions of 'dialogic meaning and social heteroglossia' (Gutiérrez et al., 1995, p. 446), Gutiérrez's third space refers to the ways in which teachers and students can share knowledge and power, in order to challenge

dominant discourses, by entering into a space of improvised, dialogical exchange. For Gutiérrez, the teacher's 'script' is spoken from the first—or official—space. Students' 'counterscripts' are spoken from the second, unofficial space. Both these spaces are ultimately dominated, however, by the 'transcendent script' that is society's overarching hegemonic discourse. For Gutiérrez et al., the third space is Bhaktin's 'heteroglossia', an unscripted space where '"what counts as knowledge" is negotiated between student and teacher, and the possibility of contesting a larger societal, or transcendent, script emerges' (p. 452). In this context, teachers are not the agents of colonisation, imperialism or hegemony. Rather, the teacher's positioning in the third space is just as vital as that of students in challenging hegemony through the improvisation of hybrid knowledges and understandings that emerge through authentic dialogue.

Beyond its classroom applications, Gutiérrez's third space theory offers a way of theorising dialogue as strategy for recognising and rebalancing the power differentials in professional experience relationships (e.g. mentor/mentee, teacher/teacher educator and teacher/student) that see some speak the official script and others the unofficial counterscript. But perhaps even more useful to professional experience research is that Gutiérrez's approach recognises that even within the power differentials of these relationships, the agency of all social actors participating in the professional experience is determined by a transcendent script that they cannot control, only challenge through dialogue and genuine exchange. Thus, a third space of improvised dialogue may offer new opportunities in the context of developing a partnership agenda.

Exploring the Use of Third Space Theory in Teacher Education Research into Professional Experience Partnerships

In the previous section, we offered an analysis of the disciplinary origins of third space, and we began to theorise some of the possibilities and limitations of applying each of these third space theories to teacher education professional experience partnership research. We now go on to offer a systematic, critical review of data-driven teacher education studies in which third space theory was, indeed, applied.

The review was driven by the central inquiry: *how has third space theory been taken up in teacher education research into professional experience partnerships since its application by Zeichner in 2010?* Searches within education databases identified 15 papers published between 2010 and early 2016 that referred explicitly to the third space as it applies to teacher education, with specific focus on the professional experience partnership dimension of teacher education. We systematically coded the papers' definitions and applications of third space theory in order to offer a critical analysis of the uptake of third space theory in professional experience research.

The findings of the review confirmed the central role of Zeichner (2010) in the popularisation of the concept in teacher education discourse since that time. In that work, Zeichner cited all three third space theorists (Soja, Bhabha and Gutiérrez) to frame his own application of the term 'third space' to describe a 'paradigm shift in the epistemology of teacher education programs' involving the development of 'hybrid spaces in teacher education where academic and practitioner knowledge and knowledge that exists in communities come together in new less hierarchical ways in the service of teacher learning' (p. 89). One of the problems we identified in our review was the tendency in subsequent papers to primarily attribute third space theory to Zeichner's seminal work while also making sometimes glib and ad hoc references to any or all of Bhabha, Soja and Gutiérrez, without apparent appreciation of the differences in the various purposes, underpinnings and assumptions of their respective theorisations of third space.

It is important to note that even before the popularisation of third space theory by Zeichner (2010), the concept had been taken up across a range of education research contexts. Across these studies, too, there is evidence of the three main conceptualisations of third space being frequently conflated and confused and with good reason. Both Bhabha and Soja write of the emergence of hybrid identities and hybrid knowledges that counter hegemonic discourse. The key difference between them lies in whether this hybridity emerges out of the tension of belonging neither to the first nor the second space (Bhabha) or whether it is intentionally created as an-Other alternative (Soja). And then there is Gutiérrez who, like Bhabha, speaks of 'hybridity' as a disruptive and empowering stance. She is interested in troubling hegemony by foregrounding and revaluing marginalised knowledges, identities and cultures. But, like Soja, she sees the third space as one in which multiple knowledges can be deliberately drawn in and recombined in order to create an-Other hybrid alternative.

Richardson Bruna (2009) is scathing in her assessment of the 'fetishizing of third space' (p. 227) in education research, arguing that 'Bhabha's understanding of liberatory Third Space has been distorted, in education, through teacher-centred and power-neutral multicultural discourse' (p. 221). Explicitly citing the work of Gutiérrez, Richardson Bruna argues that the post-colonial repositioning of power at the heart of Bhabha's third space is lost when, for example, 'the locus of attention becomes how teachers 'create' hybridity in the classroom rather than how students bring hybrid practices along and productively use them not only for enhancing their learning but also for influencing teaching as well' (p. 227). However, in this critique, Richardson Bruna falls into the very same trap of misrepresentation, failing to recognise that Gutiérrez's hybridity is decidedly political and that it is rooted not in Bhabha's post-colonialism but in Bakhtinian dialogism. Indeed, in 2008, Gutiérrez lamented the ways in which the politics of her own socioculturally situated conceptualisation of the third space had been taken up in politically neutral ways that failed to take account of the promise of the third space as a 'transformative space where the potential for an expanded form of learning and the development of new knowledge are heightened' (p. 152).

Through our review of the recent third space professional experience scholarship that follows, it is our intention to analyse how third space theory has so far been applied to understand professional experience partnerships, to make suggestions that might reduce the risk of further dilution and misappropriation of the theory and to identify opportunities for further research into its value. Three themes emerged from our analysis of the research on third space partnerships and professional experience. They are presented and discussed in detail as follows: First, the application of third space theory to frame new professional experience partnership models and practices in schools and the community; second, the application of third space as a way to explore and understand preservice teacher identity; and third, the use of third space to explore and explain the tensions inherent in teacher educator identity in the context of their professional experience work.

Third Space as Way of Framing New Professional Experience Models and Practices

The professional experience component of preservice teacher education programs often relies heavily on cooperation between universities and schools for authentic opportunities for professional learning. It has been long argued that without cooperation, and indeed partnership between the two spaces, the disconnection between theory and practice will continue to grow. In his seminal paper, Zeichner (2010) called for a paradigm shift and renewed focus on the 'hybrid spaces in teacher education where academic and practitioner knowledge and knowledge that exists in communities come together in new, less hierarchical ways in the service of teacher learning' (p. 89). There are several examples within the literature that explore the purposeful creation of hybrid spaces, and therefore hybrid roles and relationships, within professional practice partnerships.

The recent changes in funding models in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in England are an example of an alternative context for such hybrid spaces to emerge. In the English context, funding that traditionally went to universities is now being redirected towards schools to recruit and train teachers. Jackson and Burch (2016) report on 'School Direct', a program whereby schools apply for funding to train teachers on site, thus usurping the role traditionally played by the university. The schools in this model take ownership of teacher knowledge and the application of such knowledge. However, in this hybrid third space, schools are required to work in partnership with an ITE provider who becomes responsible for the quality of the training. The third space created in this model enables the intersection of practitioner and academic knowledge and thus assists in reducing the gap between the theory-practice divide (Zeichner, 2010). The model as described by Jackson and Burch turns traditional roles and relationships upside down with the participants in the model grappling with the creation of new roles, new identities and new ways of interacting. As such, although a purposefully created 'space', the consequences of

this model links to Bhabha's conceptualisation of cultural and historical third space hybridity (1994).

In a second example, Le Cornu (2012) discusses a partnership model that frames the roles that participants play in a professional experience placement within a learning community, thus providing an alternative hybrid space that allows the participants to 'work differently and more collaboratively' (p. 29). The learning communities' model challenges the traditional conceptions of the role of the school-based coordinator. Traditionally, this role is administrative; however, within the learning communities' model, they become 'leaders of learning' (p. 19) through the use of learning circles that enable professional conversations to occur on a regular basis. As such, Le Cornu argues that the school-based coordinator enables the creation of a third space whereby pedagogical practices are discussed, and links between practitioner and academic knowledge can be illuminated. The notion of third space in this context described by Le Cornu identifies the third space as the one created by teacher educators and school coordinators for the purpose of creating new possibilities. While not identified specifically by the author, this application of third space in the professional partnership context suggests an affinity with Soja's conception of thirding-as-Othering.

Similarly, Taylor, Klein, and Abrams (2014) describe a teacher residency program that endeavours to challenge the traditional roles played by the participants of a teacher education program. The program aims to overcome traditional divides that occur between universities and schools by equally valuing the knowledge of the community, faculty, teachers and preservice teachers. The urban teacher residency model described in the research by Taylor and colleagues sees preservice teachers placed alongside a mentor teacher for a school year who co-constructs learning in the school context with the preservice teacher. In this respect, the researchers describe the third space as being the program itself, stating that 'teacher education in this instance, occurs not only in university and in the school, but also in a *third space* unique to itself' (p. 3). The work authentically contributes to the political disruption of teacher education partnerships. The identification of three specific spaces is strongly connected to the work of Gutiérrez and offers new ways for partners in teacher education to negotiate power differentials. Like Le Cornu's partnership model, this unique space of other provides multiple sources of expertise that negate traditional hierarchical structures of teacher education. Hence, it also suggests connections to Soja's thirding-as-Othering.

Another interesting but different partnership model that creates a hybrid third space is the inclusion of a professional experience opportunity where the university teacher educator works alongside preservice teachers and mentors in partner schools. Martin, Snow, and Torrez (2011) describe the teacher educators in this model using Zeichner's terminology of 'hybrid teacher educators' (p. 299); thus, the roles undertaken within the school context foster third spaces across the partnership. The researchers describe the model as having the potential to intersect the different kinds of knowledge that the participants interact with, but also to challenge the relationships that traditionally occur in professional experience. The hybrid teachers indicated that:

> We took on roles at the school sites designed to strengthen collaboration and foster relationship building within and across the different groups. Negotiating this resulting web of relationships seemed, to us, much like a complicated dance involving ongoing decision-making processes situated in specific contexts; the complexity arising from the 'variety of perspectives, needs, and interests of the many involved parties'. (Martin et al., 2011, p. 305)

Although the partnership model in Martin and colleagues research can be linked to Guiterrez's collective third space, the challenges faced by the teacher educator towards their role were neither first nor second space and therefore link more specifically to Soja's conceptualisation of thirding-as-Othering. In this respect, the opportunities that the roles and the associated participatory interactions created lead towards an alternative construction of identities and learning consistent with Soja. The role of the teacher educators in this example was reconstructed according to the context of the professional experience and the nature of the interactions that occurred as a result of the goals set out to be achieved.

The examples presented and described in this section of university-school partnerships have highlighted how hybrid spaces can create opportunities for preservice teacher learning that takes advantage of multiple sources of expertise to support high-quality teaching, as espoused in Zeichner's conception of third space (Zeichner, 2010). In this respect, the literature provides examples of how the third space can offer alternative school-university partnerships that allow the creation of new knowledge where practitioner and academic knowledge, or the practice and theory, intersects. More specifically, such spaces allow new knowledge to emerge from the connections made by the preservice teachers 'in and from practice' (p. 91) and integrates what is often seen as competing discourses in new ways. Although the third space challenges the participants in professional experience about new ways of thinking and doing, the third space offers alternative possibilities which may enable ITE providers and schools to create authentic partnerships, but also strengthen them for future learning.

Third Space as a Way of Understanding the Complexity of Preservice Teacher Identity

Persistent disconnections between what preservice teachers are taught during university coursework and the opportunities to enact what they learn in schools and classrooms during field experience have limited the roles preservice teachers can play. The conceptualisation of a third space as discussed in this chapter may enable preservice teachers to develop new and different identities that bridge the traditional theory-practice divide. Three studies from the literature are discussed and analysed below to provide learning and insight into how this may be possible.

In the first example, Cahill et al. (2016) conceived a third space as one in which dialogic exchange enabled preservice teachers to work with teachers and teacher educators as well as students. The research involved 120 University of Melbourne preservice teachers undertaking a Master of Teaching (Secondary) program and 125

high school students in years 7–10. The study was part of a course designed to forge a university-school 'learning partnership'. In the space, the high school students were positioned as advisors and consultants as they engaged in participatory tasks (e.g. role plays) together with the preservice teachers. Through the use of dialogic methods (e.g. the inclusion of student 'voice'), the course provided opportunities for the school students to formally contribute to the professional development of the preservice teachers. The deliberate opening up of spatial and geographic dimensions in Cahill et al.'s study could be considered a reflection of Soja's (1996) conceptualisation of Thirdspace. However, the emphasis on preservice teachers learning with and from students about how to enhance their engagement and well-being seems more aligned with Gutiérrez's (2008) ideas of a collective third space. Greca (2016) and McDonough (2014) observe that Gutiérrez's work has often been used within the literature in the context of the development of new programs that focused on dialogue between partners. The power of conceptualising Cahill et al.'s research through the lens offered by Gutiérrez is in seeing the transformative potential of a third space. Cahill et al. showed that it is possible to recast preservice teacher identity by providing opportunities for them to work together with students to deconstruct the discourses that shape expectations and simultaneously to co-construct new storylines about what is possible in teacher-student relations.

In the second example, research by Youens, Smethem, and Sullivan (2014) described how university teacher educator visits during professional experience were reconceptualised as spaces for learning conversations amongst mentor teachers, preservice teachers and teacher educators. Youens et al. found that subsequent analyses of preservice teacher-selected videos of classroom practice constituted a powerful tool for creating dialogic spaces 'physically and emotionally removed from the busyness of classrooms and the 'remoteness' of a university campus' (p. 109). They elaborated that 'In this way, the course of the discussions swiftly circumvented the culture and practices historically associated with 'university tutor visits' to an in-depth analysis of issues around pupil learning and the influence of theory on practice' (p. 109). As a result, they concluded that the use of video capture enabled the preservice teachers to develop their identities as professional teachers through interactional spaces in which they were recognised and credited as valuable contributors to the learning of all involved (Youens et al., 2014). In Youens et al.'s research, using video captures to bring together stakeholders who traditionally play separate and distinct roles in preservice teacher education illustrates Bhabha's (1994) idea of cultural hybridity as a third space. In this space, the mentor teachers, preservice teachers and teacher educators maintained their usual contradictory identities while simultaneously transcending those identities in ways that repressed those contradictions (see Bhabha as cited in Mitchell, 1995). New knowledges, new cultural expressions and new identities were therefore possible. These expressions emerged through dialogic exchange and cogenerated action amongst all participants. Hence, Gutiérrez's (2008) ideas of a collective third space were also demonstrated. In connecting the ideas of Bhabha and Gutiérrez, Youens et al.'s research shows the transformative potential of third space conceptualisation for [re]developing preservice teachers' identity as agentive, collegial, reflexive professionals.

In the third example, Greca's (2016) research in inquiry teaching in science also explored a third space through the use of discursive spaces in which teachers, preservice teachers and teacher educators participated. Such spaces were generated by the teacher educators who developed activities in which the preservice teachers actively participated. These activities included preservice teachers reflecting on science teaching events and designing and implementing a science inquiry sequence during their professional experience. The research unearthed a number of tensions for the preservice teachers such as confidence in their teaching ability, student group work and class behaviour, using inquiry design for teaching science and not knowing their 'place' in the school community. According to Greca, the source of these tensions concerned contradictions between the preservice teachers' knowledge of theory in universities and practice in schools. Rather than ignore them, generating a third space in which these tensions could be a focus for discussion proved key to increasing the preservice teachers' learning. Like Youens et al.'s (2014) research, Greca's study illustrates the emergence of both a hybrid third space (Bhabha, 1994) and a collective third space (Gutiérrez, 2008). Conceptualisation of third space in these distinct yet simultaneous and connected ways shows how new possible solutions to the challenges of traversing the usually contradictory worlds of universities and schools were generated. As a result, the preservice teachers were positioned to better construct their identity as effective science teachers.

In each of these three examples, conceptualisation of a third space yielded knowledge and understanding about ways to bridge the traditional theory-practice gap. Seen through different, sometimes overlapping, third space lenses, these studies showed how the intersection of knowledges from preservice teachers, teachers, teacher educators and students created new knowledges, new practices and new hybrid roles. Consequently, the development of new professional preservice teacher identities was possible.

Third Space as a Way of Understanding the Tensions in Teacher Educator Identity

When teacher educators work in the area of professional experience, and have close contact with preservice teachers and supervising teachers in schools, their contexts of professional practice can change considerably. Several researchers have written about their experiences in these contexts as operating within a 'third space' and have drawn either directly or indirectly on the work of third space theorists. Some would suggest that this work leads to the development of new perspectives on the nature of learning and teaching and of themselves as teacher educators. As a school teacher transitioning to the role of university-based teacher educator, Williams (2013) did not specifically refer to any of the theorists outlined above in this chapter and relied mostly on literature that explores the interactions between school- and university-based teacher educators. However, in finding that her shifting identity as

a teacher/educator led to new perspectives on what it means to learn to become a teacher, Williams appears to be representing a concept similar to that theorised by Bhabha, that is, that her 'third space' of professional practice emerged out of the tensions she felt as a teacher transitioning to the academic work and identity of a teacher educator. Williams' self-study revealed that working in the so-called third space created many challenges and rewards, including shifting identities between related but distinct professional selves (classroom teacher and teacher educator), changing perspectives on learning to become a teacher and negotiating relationships with mentors and preservice teachers. Williams concluded that:

> ... the boundary practices of the third space require a delicate balancing act of acknowledging and respecting the personal and professional identities of all involved …The challenges and tensions involved in developing these boundary practices are essential elements of my evolving identity and practice as a teacher educator. (p. 128)

In another self-study, McDonough (2014) explored her experiences within an intentionally created third space (Soja), in which she 'developed and implemented a partnership between an independent P-12 school and a regional university to create a third space for teacher education focused on exploring new opportunities for mentoring of pre-service teachers and working with supervising teachers' (p. 213). In recounting her experiences as both a university-based teacher educator and a secondary teacher providing support for preservice teachers during professional experience, McDonough found that her work 'was characterized by navigating tensions of loyalty, advocacy and obligation in my relationships with pre-service and supervising teachers' (p. 211). As both a practicing school teacher and employed by the university to work in practicum supervision, McDonough faced tensions around her sense of loyalty, advocacy and obligation to the different stakeholders involved in the practicum—preservice teachers, teachers in schools, students in schools, teacher educator colleagues and the regulatory bodies that provide the framework in which professional experience takes place. Early on in this work, McDonough found that she was 'bound by issues of who to speak for as I found my hybrid identity as teacher, university mentor and teacher caused me to experience shifting, and at times, conflicting emotions about who I was loyal to, who I would advocate for, and who I was obliged to act with or for' (p. 215). As she became more involved in the work of this third space, McDonough began to understand herself and her hybrid role more deeply. She concluded that she 'needed to begin to rewrite the script of what it means to be a mentor in these kinds of spaces through processes of translation and mediation' (p. 218). Although McDonough was working in an intentionally created third space, which aligns with Soja's conceptualisation, she also encountered the tensions that Bhabha referred to when people assume hybrid identities, that is, when they are neither one (teacher) nor the other (teacher educator) but both.

Conclusion

A review of the literature has revealed that third space theorists provide different yet complimentary theoretical frames through which to view the professional experience component of teacher education. The different conceptions of third space presented in this chapter include hybridity, thirding-as-Othering and dialogue.

Soja's thirding-as-Othering is the typical application of third space theory in research about building new models of school-university partnerships. The focus on creating professional experiences that are neither representative of school nor university knowledge forms, but something entirely new, is a unifying theme within this work. With its emphasis on preservice teacher agency and voice, research into the development of preservice teachers' identities during their professional experience largely reflects Gutiérrez's approach to third space as dialogue. Finally, research into teacher educators' identities and roles during the professional experience reflects both Soja's notion of deliberately creating third spaces of possibility and Bhabha's notion of the tensions that arise from hybrid identities.

This chapter attests that third space theory has been applied to recent partnerships and professional experience scholarship within the field of teacher education. Viewing the professional experience through the lens of various third space theories certainly helps us to problematise teacher education and to gain greater insights into the learning of preservice teachers, teacher educators and educators in school contexts. We propose that the potential of third space theory for understanding the complexities of the professional experience can only be heightened with closer attention paid to the nuance that each third space theory offers. We also note that while existing research applies third space theory to program development and preservice teacher and teacher educator identity, further research possibilities include exploring the third spaces of professional experience from the perspectives of mentor teachers and school coordinators.

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Chapter 4
Exploring Cogenerativity in Initial Teacher Education School-University Partnerships Using the Methodology of Metalogue

Linda-Dianne Willis, Helen Grimmett, and Deborah Heck

Abstract This chapter explores the concept of 'cogenerativity' by providing three different examples of initial teacher education school-university partnership projects in Australia. The first of these professional experience projects drew on the use of participatory approaches in a new Master of Teaching program; the second involved a project of co-teaching triads; and the third concerned the development of university, school and system partnerships. The authors used the methodology of metalogue to engage in dialogical exchange about the notion of cogenerativity in relation to the literature and through the lens of each project to examine the nature of the concept for developing and sustaining professional experience partnerships. The chapter concludes that cogenerativity may be useful for conceptualising why and how initial teacher education school-university partnerships flourish. The knowledge developed may assist educators and researchers not only to create supportive conditions for the development of initial teacher education school-university partnerships but also to [re]imagine the possibilities of such partnerships to realise continual expansive transformative learning for all involved. The use of metalogue offered a unique research methodology for the authors who each explored their experience of school-university partnerships. At the same time, the use of metalogue illustrated cogenerativity in practice. The approach also enabled the authors to highlight possible challenges and limitations for creating and sustaining cogenerativity in the context of initial teacher education school-university partnerships.

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Background

The genesis for this chapter emerged when we, Linda, Helen and Debbie (authors), met for the first time at an Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) Special Interest Group (SIG) workshop. Here Linda shared how she had contemplated the philosophical and theoretical notion of 'cogenerativity' to describe and explain how educators and researchers might create the conditions for initial teacher education (ITE) school-university partnerships to develop and flourish. Linda's contemplations of her recent work as program director of a new graduate-entry teacher education program that involved school-university partnerships resonated with both Helen and Debbie. Helen recognised parallels with her work that involved co-teaching triads, and Debbie saw resemblances to her work in developing university, school and system partnerships that support professional experience. Developing and sustaining school-university partnerships have become recent additions to the accreditation and reaccreditation processes for initial teacher education programs in Australia (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2015, 2016).

In this chapter, we use the methodology of 'metalogue' – used previously by Linda (see Willis & Exley, 2016; Willis, Kretschmann, Lewis, & Montes, 2014; Willis & Menzie, 2012) – to explore our growing understanding of cogenerativity and its potential to inform initial teacher education (ITE) school-university partnerships. Originally coined by Bateson (1972, 1987), the term, metalogue, is defined as 'a conversation about some problematic subject [where ideally] the structure of the conversation as a whole is also relevant to the same subject' (p. 12). Bateson's example of a conversation with his daughter about 'muddles' is therefore deliberately muddled in its structure. Likewise, in our case, the structure of our conversation works to actually cogenerate a shared understanding of the concept of cogenerativity. Readers should be aware that as the *form* of the conversation contributes as much as the *content* to both developing and presenting our understanding of the concept, it requires a different level of reading in which attention is paid simultaneously to both the process and product of the dialogue. A metalogue resembles a metanarrative where information, ideas and even emotions that emerge in conversation fold back into the conversation to enable the participants to reflexively consider the problem. Calling on Bateson's (1980) work, Roth and Tobin (2002) elaborated that:

> Metalogues are conversations that take previous texts or conversations and analyse them at a new, meta-level. Metalogues therefore are a means to represent analyses that move through several levels of complexity (or logical order/type as Gregory Bateson called it). Metalogues … [enable] previous analyses to become the topic of reflection and/or discussion. That is, metalogues constitute a practice of reflexivity. (p. xxiii)

These conversations not only enable potentially new and different perspectives about, and solutions to, the problem being considered but also allow the participants to gain new knowledge and insights about the problem, one another, the world in general and themselves personally. In this case, we were interested in discussing

ways to develop effective initial teacher education school-university partnerships and at the same time to explore whether cogenerativity offered a way to conceptualise why and how such partnerships develop and continue operating. Our metalogue comprised three group conversations on Skype over several weeks which were initially transcribed and then revisited, reworked and added to, to improve clarity of meaning and strengthen ideas by including supporting literature.

These reworked conversations are presented here as a metalogue in three parts. The first part involves our discussion of the possible meaning and nature of cogenerativity in relation to the literature. Second, we each provide a snapshot from our different professional experience partnership projects in order to describe and analyse the role of cogenerativity and to gain deeper knowledge and understanding of the concept and its nature. In part three, we reflect together on the potential as well as the challenges and limitations of using cogenerativity to conceptualise the development and continuation of initial teacher education school-university partnerships. The three sections thus work together to help develop new understanding of cogenerativity as a useful concept for informing collaborative research and practice transformations. Recommendations and implications for future research and practice conclude the chapter.

Metalogue Part One

Cogenerativity and the Literature

Linda

When we came together for the workshop, I'd been attempting to define cogenerativity using what I'd learnt during my PhD research. My research had used 'co-teaching' and 'cogenerative dialoguing' to investigate parent-teacher engagement in a co-teaching community of practice in which a teacher, two parents and I (researcher and co-teacher) participated (see Willis, 2013). Co-teaching is described when two or more teachers purposefully decide to pool their knowledge, skills, experience and expertise in order to learn with and from one another about how best to teach a group of students. Cogenerative dialoguing describes the interactive social spaces – actual and virtual – set up by participants to enable dialogic exchange about a particular co-teaching enterprise. These spaces are characterised by respectful and inclusive practices such as listening actively, inviting equitable contributions from each participant, weighing ideas and arguments deliberatively, reaching shared understandings, making mutual decisions and acting in ways throughout co-teaching that reflect these shared understandings and decisions (see Willis, 2013). Since my initial research, I've continued to ponder on the idea of cogenerativity and was particularly encouraged to explore the concept further through discussions with those who attended the workshop. This has led to an article in the *International Journal of Educational Research* (IJER) in which I explore cogenerativity in my

parent-teacher engagement research using ideas about the topic of power that emerged during one-on-one cogenerative dialogues between the case teacher and myself (Willis, 2016). By tracing threads of ideas from these conversations, I showed how understandings about power emerged and contributed to the co-teaching community's initial learning and ongoing operations (Willis, 2016). In coming to this metalogue, I also bring an understanding of cogenerativity that draws on the derivation of the word where 'co' as in co-teaching emphasises the collaboration possible among individual participants and groups as they contribute their varied expertise in a community of practice. I understand the meaning of 'generativity' from similar future-focused words such as 'generation' and 'generative'. It refers to the processes that enable the successful formation, continuation, expansion and transformation of a community of practice as members work together towards common goals to mutually benefit all involved (Willis, 2016). These processes benefit from dialogic exchange possible during cogenerative dialogues and were certainly what I found during my previous research into parent-teacher engagement. These findings form the basis of my current work to investigate how initial teacher education (ITE) school-university partnerships can be developed and sustained.

Debbie

In listening to you at the workshop and later reading your publication (see Willis, 2016), it was your description of cogenerativity as a transformative process that influenced me in terms of thinking about the kinds of things that I was trying to do in my work in initial teacher education (ITE) school-university partnerships. In particular, it was the way you spoke about the interactions and transactions regarding how participants think, speak and act that caused me to consider the terminology of cogenerativity as actually giving a name to what I was trying to achieve. I hadn't encountered the term before but creating cogenerativity was what I was aiming to do. I think being able to identify the components of that process and how these were negotiated was important. I am particularly thinking of the idea of power. In your research, you looked at how parents have traditionally been positioned as having little or no power in terms of the roles they can play in formal education (see Willis, 2013). In the context of ITE, preservice teachers have typically played roles that operate from a deficit perspective compared to those of mentor teachers in schools and teacher educators in universities. In my work, the aim for the school-university partnership process was to establish a different power dynamic among the participants. Participants in the project included personnel from Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ), teachers and administrators from schools, teacher educators from universities and preservice teachers. At the level of ISQ there was an acknowledgement that partnerships which included ISQ, schools and a university needed to be negotiated to support the development of quality mentoring in schools. The literature clearly supports the notion that coordinated school-university partnerships contribute to the development of quality teaching (Allen, 2011; Ronfeldt &

Reininger, 2012; Yan & He, 2010) and the development of quality teacher education (Allen, Howells, & Radford, 2013). The improvement of teacher quality was identified as important in the development of the ISQ School Centres of Excellence (CoE) in Preservice Teaching program (ISQ, 2011–2016). The program aimed to establish a regional professional learning community focusing on excellence in professional experience for preservice teachers. The inclusion of universities as part of the process was incorporated into the program in 2014. Hence, one focus of the development of the partnership was to reduce the power differentials among the different participants while improving the quality of teaching.

The partnership in which I was involved began as a discussion between Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) as a peak body and the University of the Sunshine Coast where I worked. Starting with one school, the partnership extended to include two schools, forming the Sunshine Coast ISQ School Centres of Excellence (CoE) in Preservice Teaching program (ISQ, 2011–2016). It was important that the partnership did not just focus on the development of quality teaching for the preservice teachers; the partnership needed to focus on the learning that would occur for all participants. Professional development for teachers who undertake mentor roles was paramount in considerations about the program. Hudson (2013) acknowledges that teachers who undertake mentor teacher roles develop communication and leadership skills as well as enhance their own pedagogical knowledge. The challenge for those involved in setting up the partnership was how to meaningfully connect the learning of all participants while simultaneously removing the vertical hierarchies that traditionally separate initial teacher education (ITE) players. Our solution was to develop communities of practice in which teachers and administrators, teacher educators, preservice teachers and ISQ staff participated.

Linda

Debbie, I do recall you talking that way about your work in ITE school-university partnerships and saying, 'Yes, now I have a name for what I was doing'. Helen, I'm wondering whether cogenerativity was at work in your context, or if you might have used a different name for the same idea, or have a different understanding of cogenerativity.

Helen

My professional experience project involved 'co-teaching triads', and like you, Linda, the project was an expansion of my own PhD research (see Grimmett, 2012) in which I drew extensively on the co-teaching and cogenerative dialogue literature (e.g. Roth & Tobin, 2002; Murphy & Scantlebury, 2010). I wouldn't say though that I had used the term cogenerativity as a concept in its own right before. In setting up

the new project, I certainly came to it with knowledge of those ideas you talked about such as dialogic exchange, and of purposefully using the principles of mutual respect and inclusivity, and the language associated with what we're describing now as cogenerativity, even if I wasn't using that actual word.

Linda

In my professional experience project, when I took on the role in 2014 as coordinator of a new Master of Teaching (Primary) (MTeach) program, my then head of school encouraged me to use cogenerativity to build effective partnerships between partner schools and the university. He knew about my parent-teacher engagement research and indicated that I should use similar ideas and principles in the new context. To his surprise, I commented that I didn't think the term cogenerativity was prevalent in the literature. I later conducted a thorough literature search and could find the term used in the title of only one article by Stetsenko (2008). Stetsenko's article drew on the sociocultural work of Vygotsky (1987) and Bakhtin (1986) to show how an individual's learning is connected not only to the roles immediate others play in their lives but also to society and culture which embodies and represents others. Stetsenko wrote that knowledge emerges from interacting with others as exchanges of information and ideas are by nature dialectical and relational. Hence, cogenerativity relies on the process of dialogical exchange as participants enter into relational spaces with others in a 'continuing and expansive collaborative quest for knowledge and the practical pursuits associated with this quest' (Stetsenko, 2008, p. 524). So, we can never 'arrive' in this quest as we're always comprehending and engaging with others in ways that are new, and information and ideas that emerge are inevitably taken up by others in new and different ways (Stetsenko, 2008; Willis, 2016).

Helen

I agree with what you've just said. I think even in trying to understand the nature of cogenerativity itself, there is never any point of 'arrival' because the concept will continue to change and develop and build constantly – in every new project. I think this makes it hard to come to a conclusive definition of cogenerativity, because the nature of the concept is that it is constantly changing.

Linda

I'm wondering what literature each of you drew on for your professional experience projects and how this compares to our developing understanding of cogenerativity.

Debbie

For me, the main literature was communities of practice as a means of supporting the development of learning across the lifespan of teachers' careers that includes the context of teacher education (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008; Lynch & Smith, 2012). A community of practice is defined as 'groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis' (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002, p. 4). The approach is based on the notion of situated learning that highlights the importance of the social aspect of learning within professional contexts (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In my project, a community of practice provided the space for situated learning to take place focused on the development or change in professional practice. It also provided opportunities for processing ideas and collaboratively developing new knowledge (Golden, 2016; Herbers, Antelo, Ettling, & Buck, 2011; Kennelly & McCormack, 2015). Communities of practice have been identified as mechanisms for impact, mediating change and driving curriculum development (Parker, Patton, Madden, & Sinclair, 2010). In the context of professional development, communities of practice provide an approach that supports the development of the connection between theory and practice for mentor teachers, administrators, teacher educators and preservice teachers. Adopting a community of practice approach in the system partnership project provided a process and time for collaboration. The meetings developed trust among the membership, allowing members to engage in 'deprivatising' practice and to develop shared understandings about expectations. Although Levine (2011) initially identified these features as important for effective professional communities for mentor teachers, they guided the development of the community of practice process in the project and proved important for all participants. One reason was how these features connected with the notion of the importance of building relationships that subsequently allows teachers to change their practice based on reflection on their work (Morgan, Brown, Heck, Pendergast, & Kanasa, 2013).

Helen

Apart from the co-teaching and cogenerative dialogue literature that we've already mentioned, I drew particularly on Anne Edwards' (2005, 2007, 2010) idea of 'relational agency' and also on the idea of 'mutual appropriation' (Downing-Wilson, Lecusay, & Cole, 2011). If I can read from Edwards' (2010) work, she defines relational agency as:

> In brief, it involves a capacity for working with others to strengthen purposeful responses to complex problems. It is helpful to see it (relational agency) arising from a two-stage process within a constant dynamic which consists of:
>
> (i) working with others to expand the 'object of activity' or task being work[ed] on by recognising the motives and the resources that others bring to bear as they, too, interpret it; and

(ii) aligning one's own responses to the newly enhanced interpretations with the responses being made by the other professionals while acting on the expanded object. (p. 14)

Edwards (2010) goes on to argue that relational agency is a capacity that can be learned and is crucial in the types of multidisciplinary teams that function across several professions. For example, you might have a speech therapist, a physiotherapist, a teacher and several other participants all working together on meeting the particular needs of a child. They're not just bringing their different individual expertise to the group but also working relationally to understand and respond to others' interpretations of the complex situation, so that the solutions they jointly create are beyond what any of them might have been able to do for the child individually. Likewise, Downing-Wilson et al. (2011) use the term mutual appropriation in a particular way to emphasise the hybrid activities that are created when different participants work together. During this work, the participants 'mutually appropriate' each other's practices while striving to act in 'mutually appropriate' ways that allow all partners to achieve not only their own unique goals but also new mutually shared goals.

Linda

So, from what we've talked about, what are we feeling about the concept of cogenerativity that's novel or different from the existing literature?

Helen

That's a good question.

Debbie

That *is* a good question because I suppose what I'm drawn to with cogenerativity is the focus on transformation. Cogenerativity seems to be about creating a space for transformation. I'm not saying that the idea of creating a space for transformation is not also featured in the literature we've discussed, just that with cogenerativity it is accentuated more.

Helen

I suppose that's the nature of 'generativity' – that you'll generate something new – and 'co', that we're doing it together. What I think is really important, and I'm not sure that this isn't also in the existing literature, is that because of what each

participant brings to the interactive space in which the dialogue takes place, you end up with something that actually none of those participants could have individually thought of. It's like someone comes in with an idea but because of some other idea that's added by someone else, actually something completely different from either of those two different ideas ends up being created, which, I suppose, is what relational agency and mutual appropriation are about: the idea that 'the whole is more than the sum of its parts'.

Debbie

I think the literature on communities of practice talks about the community creating products or artefacts that can be shared. The development of products is a process that is identified as occurring as the community of practice begins to mature (Wenger et al., 2002). I wonder whether this notion of product or artefact development has similarities to what you're saying Helen – that notion of actually capturing the process or the dialogue that different participants bring together to create products that no one person could actually achieve on their own. I think there is an undertone in the community of practice literature focused around the time when the community seeks to organise their knowledge. I feel that there is strength in the term cogenerativity because it really encompasses the collective work of the participants that might occur at any point rather than during the maturing phase of the community of practice. I also feel the term has a more everyday meaning that would connect with teachers and preservice teachers. Although we are mostly exploring conceptual ideas in this chapter, I wonder whether cogenerativity offers a term that is much more easily understood by participants in all different parts of the initial teacher education world. I know that teachers and preservice teachers were challenged by the meaning of community of practice during my project.

Helen

I'm also thinking that the difference is about the dialectical idea of process *and* product. Relational agency is perhaps more about the participants' capacity to contribute to the process, while the idea of communities of practice focuses more on the product or artefact. Cogenerativity might be conceived dialectically as process *and* product since, in thinking about the concept, these two aspects are inseparable: you're creating a product through the course of creating the process. So maybe rather than it necessarily being different from the concepts in the other literature, it's a more encompassing term that incorporates those other ideas as elements or aspects of what we're coming to see as cogenerativity. As a concept itself, it too is more than the sum of those other parts.

Linda

Yes, you gain a sense that together the participants are creating something completely different as process and product; so their joint work continues to unfold rather than there being an end point. In other words, cogenerativity refers to ongoing dialectical ways of thinking and operating with a focus on the future in that, for as long as those involved want to cogenerate, their work as a community will continue to expand and transform – potentially indefinitely. At this point in our metalogue, it might be worthwhile to provide a specific example from our professional experience projects to further probe the notion of cogenerativity and to illustrate its nature and potential in initial teacher education school-university partnerships.

Metalogue Part Two

The Role of Cogenerativity in Initial Teacher Education Partnerships

Example 1: Linda

I spoke earlier about my professional experience project example to explore cogenerativity beginning 3 years ago when I was coordinator, teacher educator and researcher in the first year of a new MTeach program at an Australian university. My various roles afforded me different opportunities to investigate cogenerativity as a conceptual lens for developing a new school-university partnership. The MTeach was an intense four-semester program that comprised 17 courses offered over 18 months. When thinking about it, the seeds for cogenerativity were probably sown initially by the program's existing structure which saw aspects of the first semester professional experience course delivered in situ by the principal, head of curriculum and mentor teachers at what was then the sole MTeach partner school. This contrasted with the usual arrangement where professional experience courses were delivered at the university by teacher educators. However, I recognised a possible opportunity to purposefully enable the work of cogenerativity in the context of a second semester social education course that I coordinated. The course had been co-taught since 2011, and I invited the head of curriculum at the partner school, Estelle, to join the co-teaching team (see Willis et al., 2014).

The course took place at the university for 9 weeks and involved a 2-h co-taught workshop followed by 1-h tutorials with individual teacher educators. There were 102 preservice teachers in the course – 7 from the MTeach and 95 from the Bachelor of Education (Primary) (BEd) programs – as the workshops for the MTeach and BEd equivalent course were taught together. During the semester, Estelle co-taught with me and another teacher educator four times. However, cogenerative dialoguing about what happened during co-teaching, co-planning and discussing the preservice teachers' coursework occurred throughout the 9 weeks during face-to-face and

online meetings. The course was interrupted between weeks 4 and 5 by a scheduled 4-week professional experience block which the MTeach preservice teachers undertook at the partner school.

Co-teaching on-campus allowed Estelle to experience the MTeach program and social education course together with the preservice teachers. In one cogenerative dialogue, Estelle indicated that co-teaching assisted her not only to make connections with what the preservice teachers were learning but also to ask, 'What does this mean in the real world?' (Cogenerative dialogue, 18 September 2014). She described the impact of her thinking on what she did during their professional experience:

> I think the work with the MTeach preservice teachers has given me scope, permission; yeah, you feel a responsibility in everything. It's like I approach them and say, "Look, I'm having this staff meeting". I never say that to a preservice teacher! And what I've found is that I'm doing things differently with these preservice teachers. For example, I sat down with one of them to talk about a lesson, I modelled it, and then we co-taught a small group together. I gave him the theory behind what I was doing. (Cogenerative dialogue, 18 September, 2014)

Estelle also invited the preservice teachers to year-level planning sessions, reflecting that:

> Some of them now have been to two planning sessions and they are more confident to have a say. A lot of what we do is digging into the curriculum and having a say about what we do and "what does that look like", and they're being included, but they are saying things, and I'll acknowledge it and say, "That's great that you're picking that up" and that builds their confidence. That's a scary thing to do as a beginning teacher. (Cogenerative dialogue, 18 September 2014)

Cogenerativity is evident in the transformed ways Estelle thought, spoke and acted during the MTeach preservice teachers' professional experience; she not only did things differently, she did different things. In later speaking about the planning sessions which involved looking at data in numeracy, Estelle indicated that she considered it would benefit the preservice teachers to participate in substantive conversations with teachers about interpretations of data and implications for future teaching. She elaborated that they 'got to see some of the real business of teaching' as they engaged in open professional discussions and that 'it wasn't everybody sitting around being told what to do' (Informal discussion, 16 October, 2014). Estelle also indicated that she distributed a research article at one planning session and gave the preservice teachers a copy, explaining that 'taking on board new findings and information from research was part of the role of teachers' (Informal discussion, 16 October, 2014). These examples show that Estelle shifted her view of the preservice teachers as being 'not really teachers' to seeing them more as 'professional colleagues' (Willis et al., 2014, p. 7).

Co-teaching and cogenerative dialoguing saw information and ideas exchanged among the co-teachers that were continued and expanded whenever Estelle and the preservice teachers engaged in conversations and activities. This exchange and engagement enabled ongoing dialectical possibilities between processes and products as Estelle adopted inclusive, responsive and reflexive practices and created opportunities to enhance their knowledge, skills and dispositions throughout their

professional experience and later when the preservice teachers resumed their co-taught course at the university. These processes and products continually unfolded in new, different and previously unimagined ways, illustrating the work of cogenerativity and its power as a concept to simultaneously encourage the development and learning of the MTeach preservice teachers and to facilitate the school-university partnership.

Example 2: Helen

As I mentioned earlier, my example is the piloting of a co-teaching triads model of professional experience, where two preservice teachers are placed with one mentor teacher so that all three of them co-plan, co-teach and co-evaluate together. I was able to introduce this approach under the umbrella of the larger, Victorian government-funded, Teaching Academies of Professional Practice (TAPP) partnership project involving six primary schools, three secondary schools and a university. This partnership structure provided time and space to cogenerate new ways of doing professional experience that were beyond any of our previous expectations.

The co-teaching triads were an extension of the 'WITHIN practice PD' model developed as part of my PhD research on in-service teachers' professional development (PD) (see Grimmett, 2012). The premise of this model is that co-teaching and cogenerative dialoguing WITH teachers, IN their own practice, provide shared experiences for developing teachers' conscious awareness of unified concepts (intertwining of theoretical and practical aspects) of teaching and learning and support deliberate and thoughtful expansions of their professional practice (Grimmett, 2014). I considered that the same principles that made this such an effective approach for in-service teachers would also apply to preservice teachers' development, so set about working with two of the Teaching Academies of Professional Practice (TAPP) schools to pilot this approach with second-year preservice teachers in an undergraduate early years and primary specialisation initial teacher education program.

After initially floating the idea of co-teaching triads with the two schools, the Teaching Academies of Professional Practice (TAPP) leader and I organised a half-day planning session with representative mentor teachers and leaders from each school. I introduced some of the theory behind the proposed idea and then gave each school team time to discuss and plan what that might look like in their own particular context. One school had a play-based 'discovery time' session each day, so they were very excited about the possibility of extra teaching helpers in the classroom to assist with the numerous demands for assistance that the children make during this time. The other school was very data driven and started imagining how each preservice teacher could take responsibility for a small focus group in mathematics during their placement and measure the impact of their own teaching on the children's growth in understanding of that topic through pre- and post-testing. These data would then be used as the focus for cogenerative dialogue sessions for the whole

cohort of preservice teachers at the school to share and compare the teaching strategies they had used.

Although neither of these plans were what my university colleague and I were expecting, or even imagining as possibilities for implementing co-teaching triads, we recognised that these were entirely appropriate instantiations for each particular context. What's more, in sharing their plans with the rest of the group, the plans started to cross-fertilise and inspire new ideas for each school team, so that the data-driven school also decided to involve the preservice teachers in establishing 'pop-up play' activities in lunch sessions, and the play-based school thought about ways they could create whole cohort cogenerative dialogues about the innovative teaching approaches used in the school.

The actual reality of how the co-teaching triads played out in each school was, of course, slightly different again, as unforeseen constraints *and* new possibilities appeared in each setting once the preservice teachers entered the picture and also negotiated their own ways of working with their partners and mentor teachers. However, each school was sufficiently pleased with the benefits they saw not only for the preservice teachers but also for their own teachers and their own students that they were willing to continue further iterations of the program in subsequent semesters with new preservice teacher cohorts. By looking at post-placement survey data from the preservice teachers and reflecting on their own experiences, the teacher mentors have continued to make modifications so that learning is enhanced for all participants. Importantly, they have also shared their successes and challenges with other schools in the TAPP cluster, showing how an initial idea can be developed, adapted and expanded to fit their own unique contexts. Several other TAPP schools have since implemented their own versions of co-teaching triads, continuing to build and expand our collective imagination about how professional experience can be enacted in a developmental environment.

Example 3: Debbie

In my example, I worked as a representative of the Sunshine Coast University with Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) and two schools to develop a partnership agreement. The ISQ Centres of Excellence (CoE) in Preservice Teaching program sought to achieve four outcomes: developing effective partnerships, engaging in the analysis of teaching and mentoring as practice, developing the capacity to make judgements based on evidence and developing teacher and preservice teacher understanding of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) (Australian Institute for Teaching & School Leadership [AITSL], 2011). Our first example of cogenerativity as both a process and product was the collaboration of all four partners to jointly create a formal agreement outlining the roles, responsibilities and outputs for our partnership. This process was iterative and generative, and the final partnership agreement was later de-identified by ISQ with agreement from all partners so it could be shared with others who might like to also develop similar agreements.

Another level of cogenerativity occurred at the site of each school where the partnership agreement was enacted in different ways in each context. In both contexts, after exploring different approaches, communities of practice were identified as an approach to professional learning. The development of communities of practice at each school site consisted of teachers, both those who mentor and those aspiring to mentor preservice teachers, preservice teachers allocated to the school for that particular calendar year, me (Debbie) as a teacher educator and the professional learning liaison allocated to the school for professional experience placements, the coordinators of professional experience at each school site and the project officer from Independent Schools Queensland (ISQ) who attended some meetings. The specific way the communities of practice developed at each site was a cogenerative activity that occurred between me as the university partner and the school coordinator at each site. Each school worked in similar but unique ways to generate and sustain their community of practice within each school for the 2-year project timeframe.

In summary, both school sites invited current and aspiring mentor teachers to participate in the community of practice as part of the Independent Schools Queensland Centres of Excellence (ISQ CoE) in Preservice Teaching project. An initial meeting was held with mentor teachers, the school coordinator and teacher educators to establish a meeting agenda format and possible topics that the group might like to explore. Each P-12 school developed its own agenda format and agreed to meet for a period of 3 h once a term for 2 years. Hence, the communities of practice at each school site worked together to create or cogenerate their community of practice format and agenda. Funding provided by ISQ facilitated teacher release so that community of practice meetings could be held during school time. Preservice teachers joined while they were on professional experience and often returned to additional meetings following their professional experience. At the end of the first meeting, the topic for the next meeting was identified. The topic was then connected to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) at the various levels of graduate, proficient, highly accomplished and lead teacher (see AITSL, 2011) to connect our conversation to the project outcomes: analysing practice, making judgements based on evidence and developing understanding of the APST.

At each meeting, all participants reflected on the identified topic and brought a positive example of their practice related to the theme to discuss how the example evidenced the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) and at what level. Some examples of community of practice meeting topics included communicating with parents, assessing student learning and differentiating learning in the classroom context. In addition to the sharing of practice at each meeting, the agenda included time for community building, reflecting on the previous meeting and sharing any news or updates, an opportunity to build knowledge on the selected topic usually with some input from a guest speaker and time at the conclusion of the session to reflect and identify the topic for the next meeting. Hence, these school site meetings were an example of cogenerativity in action as each school generated a community of practice in their own context that included mentor teachers, administrators, teacher educators and preservice teachers. As the communities continued to

meet and share their ideas, public products were developed and shared outside of our community of practice, first within the school, then with other schools and later through national conferences that included teacher education practitioners and researchers.

Metalogue Part Three

Learnings and Insights About Cogenerativity in Initial Teacher Education Partnerships

Linda

In light of our exploration of the literature and each of our specific examples, what learnings and insights about cogenerativity have we gained from our metalogue so far?

Helen

Thinking about our workshop discussions and the examples we've shared, it's quite clear that you, Linda, deliberately set out from the beginning to use the concept of cogenerativity in creating a school-university partnership. When Debbie heard us talking about the idea at the workshop, she thought, 'Oh yeah, I can see cogenerativity in the work I've done' without actually having used or heard the word before, whereas I was somewhere in between.

Linda

Helen, the ideas and example you described showed that you quite purposefully drew on your knowledge and understanding of cogenerativity as informed by your research, even if you weren't calling it that.

Debbie

I think that in each of your cases, Linda and Helen, knowing about cogenerativity was really empowering. Cogenerativity connects to notions of agency (i.e. the capacity to act in a particular sociocultural context [see Ahearn, 2001; Bateson, 1972, 1987; Sewell, 1992]). Within those spaces that were created among participants such as Estelle and the preservice teachers in the MTeach program (Linda) and in the co-teaching triads (Helen), and implicit in the concept of cogenerativity, was a sense of 'permission' to generate new things. Similarly, in my Independent

Schools Queensland Centres of Excellence (ISQ CoE) in Preservice Teaching program, permission to [re]imagine professional experience partnerships occurred within institutional frameworks that operate at schools and universities by opening up spaces where this potentially transformative work was 'allowed'.

Linda and Helen

Yes (said together).

Linda

That is actually a really good point about cogenerativity being able to occur within prevailing organisational frameworks, that is, it doesn't require a complete change in the way organisations are set up but can occur within already existing structures. The difference is that individuals are positioned to enter into new spaces with a cogenerative mindset and way of operating.

Debbie

Cogenerativity also needs drivers, individuals who can imagine the usual participants involved in initial teacher education partnerships in new roles, part of which is giving the participants permission to think and act differently than they have in the past. I wonder whether adopting the lens of cogenerativity enables you to look at changing the usual ITE power structures and create the spaces where participants can do things differently, is that how you generate cultural change? Because in the system partnership example that I shared, there's been a definite shift in the way preservice teachers are engaged within the schools. They are treated in a totally different way now than before the project started: they are considered more like staff members; they are given a lot more time to develop and learn things; the mentor teachers are given a lot more time to work with the preservice teachers; and those involved in the partnership make time to have conversations. I think that's a big shift in the school context where the perception previously was, 'We're doing the university a favour by having these preservice teachers here'. Now the discourse is more 'We're collaboratively creating the next generation of teachers and there's something in this for everyone'. Hence, there has been a recognition that the mentor teachers stood to benefit personally and professionally and that the partnership had the potential to improve school culture in real and concrete ways. At the same time, the mentor teachers in this context felt a much stronger connection to the teacher education program as a whole and developed understandings about how university coursework connected with professional experience.

Helen

That's definitely been the case in the co-teaching triad project as well. As our pilot schools talked to the other Teaching Academies of Professional Practice (TAPP) schools, you could see each school team start to think about how the ideas could be applicable to them and what they would be able to get out of it in their own particular context. You're right about the sense of permission. It was not just those of us who work in universities coming in and saying, 'This is how you must do it', but us coming in and saying, 'Here are some things to think about and some tools for you to use as you go about doing what you need to do'. The drivers, as Debbie talked about, have got to be prepared to offer ideas to get the ball rolling but also prepared to hold those ideas very 'loosely' or flexibly so that the ideas can take off in different directions. I think this notion of permission is really important in creating a space to do things differently from how they've always been done before. It's not necessarily always explicitly stated. Rather we create the sense of permission in the conditions that we establish through respecting each individual's ideas and showing them that their ideas are valued and useful. It's the way we act that can demonstrate that we're giving permission, setting up the conditions for creating agency. It's not just what we say, but also what we do that's important.

Linda

Another insight that I've taken from our metalogue is the versatility of the concept of cogenerativity for thinking about ITE school-university partnerships. Our different examples have not only illustrated the range of different situations and contexts in which the concept is useful but also highlighted levels of scale. Given its nature and size, the MTeach program, for example, showed cogenerativity at work on what could be considered a micro-scale. Helen's example in which participants from one school cogenerated with each other and then with a team from another school showed cogenerativity on a meso-level. Debbie's system partnership agreement example occurred on a much larger or macro-scale. However, in each case, similar principles and practices were adopted. The participants were invited to enter interactive social spaces for the purpose of dialogic exchange about topics of mutual interest and concern. These opportunities allowed the participants to ask questions about professional experience partnerships such as: 'What's really happening?', 'How are things working?', 'How might things work differently?' and 'What else might be possible?'. These conversations not only enabled ideas to be pooled but also to be purposefully connected continually (processes), leading to cogenerated decision-making (products) such that enhanced participant agency manifested in new and different ways of thinking, speaking and acting – individually and collectively.

Helen

We've also noticed in our metalogue that to set cogenerativity in motion is not easy. It's difficult for mentor teachers, for example, to create something different especially when they might think 'This is the way professional experience has always been done'. It's hard for participants in initial teacher education to see that just because things may have worked in the past doesn't mean that they're going to keep working in the future. Building the kind of knowledge and skills needed to work collaboratively to create positive change to support future generations of teachers is a complex work. It presents a constant challenge for those involved in initial teacher education in schools and universities.

Debbie

I think if we reflect on each of our examples, we also see the importance of time and how much time it takes to set things up. That's a particular challenge in the current higher education context when there are so many things to do.

Linda

Your point Debbie links to a particular challenge that I've experienced as the driver in the school-university partnerships in the MTeach program. I found the concept of cogenerativity valuable in assisting me initially to envisage and create a unique initial teacher education school-university partnership. However, given its nature, it is difficult to take advantage of all the opportunities and possibilities that cogenerativity might afford as has been the case for me given the rapid growth in the MTeach program over the last 3 years – the number of school-university partnerships has increased from one to seven, and preservice teacher numbers have increased from 7 to 50. At the same time, human (e.g. school and university personnel) and physical (e.g. financial support) resources have mostly stayed the same. The challenge for me has been to look at how I might harness the resources available to [re]imagine school-university partnerships beyond what began as a small program. Yet, I don't see this challenge diminishing the value of cogenerativity. Indeed, the concept is powerful, refreshing and even tantalising given its promise and hope that through more meaningful and sustained cooperation and collaboration among educational partners, the quality of preservice teacher mentoring and teaching in schools generally can continually be improved. However, to ensure the continuing, expanding and transformative work of cogenerativity into the future, I have realised not only the importance of beginning but also of continuing to begin. This will be especially important for those of us who work in ITE with its world of competing priorities and rapidly changing landscape.

Recommendations and Implications for Future Research and Practice

This chapter explored our evolving understanding of the meaning and nature of cogenerativity in the context of professional experience in initial teacher education school-university partnerships. Each of our examples provided insights and learnings into how knowledge and understanding of cogenerativity may assist to create the conditions for such partnerships to develop and flourish. These examples also highlighted the promise and hope of cogenerativity for assisting to [re]imagine possible futures for ITE partnerships in which all participants benefit from continual expansive transformative learning. As such, the findings from this chapter open a window to future research possibilities. These include probing the work of cogenerativity in other examples of ITE school-university partnerships and the idea of 'hope', implicit in cogenerativity, which we have only begun to consider here. More research on the role and important characteristics of those who act as drivers for cogenerativity is also necessary.

This chapter is significant for helping build knowledge about the little explored concept of cogenerativity. Of further significance is the unique context for this exploration, namely, ITE school-university partnerships. So too is our use of metalogue as an innovative methodology. By cogenerating new understanding of cogenerativity through our dialogical exchange, we have heeded Bateson's (1972, 1987) charge that the structure of the metalogue conversation should mirror the subject of the conversation. The metalogue enabled us to collectively develop our ideas of cogenerativity through discussion and analysis of the different ways cogenerativity worked in each of our initial teacher education (ITE) examples. This discussion generated insights about important aspects of cogenerativity as well as some challenges and limitations from which others can draw for future research and practice in their particular contexts and situations. Our discussion also spoke to gaps in the literature where the focus is often on individual small-scale cases. The metalogue provided a vehicle to draw our examples together to highlight the similarities and differences in the ways ITE school-university partnerships are developing.

At the same time, our use of metalogue to discuss cogenerativity provided an example of the concept's continuing expanding transformative work. The metalogue provided an interactive social space in which processes (e.g. respectful turn-taking in the conversation and building on ideas) and products (e.g. descriptions and explanations of our initial teacher education (ITE) examples) unfolded dialectically as together we explored and simultaneously demonstrated cogenerativity in practice. Hence, this chapter has made a contribution to research and scholarship by discussing what cogenerativity is, and through metalogue illustrated the work of cogenerativity, helping us to further advance knowledge and understanding of the concept and its potential. Indeed, our metalogue was a form of cogenerative action. Another value of metalogue was in the benefits of listening to and learning from one another. From our conversation, we developed solidarity and gained reassurance that we were not alone in striving for innovation in professional experience in ITE

school-university partnerships. It is our hope that our explorations of developing knowledge and understanding of cogenerativity will strengthen this work for all involved in this important enterprise.

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Chapter 5
Boundary Objects and Brokers in Professional Experience: An Activity Theory Analysis

Tony Loughland and Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen

Abstract Professional experience (PE) is a key element in the preparation of future teachers. However, a growing number of researchers have raised concerns about the need to enhance the effectiveness of the professional experience in teacher education programs and have called for innovations that will enhance the current school-based experiences within these programs. In response to this call, there have been many innovations which have been implemented worldwide. Most of the innovations place emphasis on bridging the gap between theory and practice by enhancing the quality of school-based experiences, including the one we describe in this chapter. Within the scope of this chapter, we report the findings of a case study that explored the learning experiences of preservice teachers through professional experience. The focus of this chapter is to examine the boundary objects and brokers that assisted the preservice teachers' boundary crossing between the university and school context. The innovation in this chapter is the novel use of activity theory to examine preservice teacher learning in professional experience.

Introduction

There is a trend towards restructuring teacher education around a clinical practice model that emphasises the shared responsibility and mutual benefits of schools and universities to educate prospective teachers. These efforts range from the intensively resourced and well-theorised model established by the Graduate School of Education at the University of Melbourne (McLean Davies et al., 2012) to radical school-based models that accentuate learning in practice as exemplified by the Teach For Australia program (Teach For Australia, 2009).

School and university partnerships have been a key strategy within a clinical practice model in an effort to improve the quality of initial teacher education. Accordingly, school-university partnerships have received significant attention in the literature (Allen, Howells, & Radford, 2013; Brady, 2002; Burton & Greher,

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2007; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Day & Smethem, 2010). Some of this research has examined partnership initiatives established for the purpose of developing more connections between schools and universities in teacher education (Brady, 2002; James & Worrall, 2000; Moss, 2008; Trent & Lim, 2010; Tsui & Law, 2007). Most of these studies identified the benefits of these partnerships, such as transformative change at both the university level and school level, a bridging of the theory-practice gap (Baumfield & Butterworth, 2007; Kershner, Pedder, & Doddington, 2012; Kruse, 2011), facilitating the development of teacher identity, contributing to teacher socialisation (Kruse, 2011) and promoting the learning of preservice teachers, school students, lecturers and teachers (Allen et al., 2013; Brady, 2002).

There is no consensus in the research literature that school-university partnerships automatically lead to better outcomes for all stakeholders (Douglas & Ellis, 2011; Johnston, 2010; Ledoux & McHenry, 2008; McLaughlin & Black-Hawkins, 2007; Moss, 2008; Smedley, 2010; White, Bloomfield, & Le Cornu, 2010). In a thorough review of literature on university and school partnership, Smedley (2001) identified a number of impediments to the partnership such as:

> … institutional inertia; the low status of teacher education and even lower status of field work; restructured and expanding workloads of teachers and lecturers; availability of suitable staff; the differing school and university cultures; the vulnerability of new ventures; the maintenance of initial enthusiasms; and, finally, the various financial and political pressures. (p. 203)

Given this finding, some analytical attention should be paid to the operation of these partnerships to ascertain if there are common factors that contribute to their effectiveness.

There is existing research that points to some of the factors that contribute to effective school-university partnerships. Using activity theory as a theoretical lens, Yamagata-Lynch and Smaldino (2007) identified three major factors significant to effective partnerships, namely, communication, a balance between theory and practice and winning stakeholder commitment. In a similar vein, Edwards, Tsui, and Stimpson (2009), who conducted a comprehensive review of the research literature on school-university partnerships, revealed the four factors that impact on the effective school-university partnership are collaboration, complementarity, equivalence and community. Bloomfield (2009) referred to the time and resource pressures experienced by both parties as well as highlighting the common understandings and commitments of the key stakeholders.

In a comprehensive study on school-university partnerships in Australia, Kruger, Davies, Eckersley, Newell, and Cherednichenko (2009) found that successful school-university partnerships were enhanced and sustained through committed efforts by key individuals involved. They also found that these successful partnerships were characterised by conditions of 'trust, mutuality and reciprocity among preservice teachers, teachers and other school colleagues and teacher educators' (2009, p. 16) but were also contingent on the provision of effective resources. One of the study's key recommendations was the need for conjoint policy development to guide partnership development beyond individual initiatives (Kruger et al., 2009).

Since the publication of the Kruger et al. review in 2009, there have been some federal government initiatives to establish school-university partnerships under the Smarter Schools National Partnerships project. Unfortunately they were not the product of conjoint policy development, as state government departments of education received the federal funding and shaped the agenda in their respective jurisdictions. However, there was a requirement to engage with teacher education faculties. One such example was a Partnership in Teaching Excellence (PiTE) centre of excellence partnership program in the state of Tasmania.

The PiTE was established between the Tasmanian Department of Education and the University of Tasmania. The goal of the project was to build a team and inquiry-based orientation in graduates of a teacher education program. Master of Teaching students were selected through a competitive application process and were placed in low socio-economic schools (SES) for both their mandatory professional experiences and spending two weeks at the beginning of the school year, a day a week during semester one and two days a week in semester two. The factors that sustained this effective partnership, according to the authors, were 'coherence and alignment between schools and the university'; 'communication, logistics and systemic considerations'; and 'equity issues' (Allen et al., 2013, p. 99). Similar initiatives to establish hub schools for school-university partnerships were implemented in New South Wales (NSW) from 2015 onwards.

The school-university partnership innovation for professional experience examined in this chapter originated the year before the publication of the Kruger et al. (2009) report. The innovation did not evolve through any conjoint policy development with government departments. It was more in the vein of 'determined efforts by key individuals' as the directors of professional experience sought to enhance the first professional experience of all undergraduate and graduate teacher education students in a large faculty of education. In this chapter, we describe the changes implemented in the professional experience and employ activity theory as an innovative frame from which to explore the objects and brokers that assisted preservice teachers to do the boundary crossing between school and university.

Theoretical Framework of the Project

Historically, the majority of the research on school-university partnerships in professional experience has been exploratory and descriptive. The research has in the main focussed on issues arising from implementation of discreet initiatives without the application of explicit theoretical frameworks (Edwards et al., 2009). There is an opportunity, therefore, for the application of theoretical frameworks to aid in the understanding of the complexity of interactions that occur in the context of school-university partnerships in professional experience. Activity theory is one such framework that has been employed in a small number of studies of school-university partnerships in a number of different contexts (Edwards & Mutton, 2007; Edwards & Protheroe, 2004; Roth & Tobin, 2002; Wilson, 2004). The data

Fig. 5.1 The structure of a
human activity system
(Engeström, 1987, p. 78)
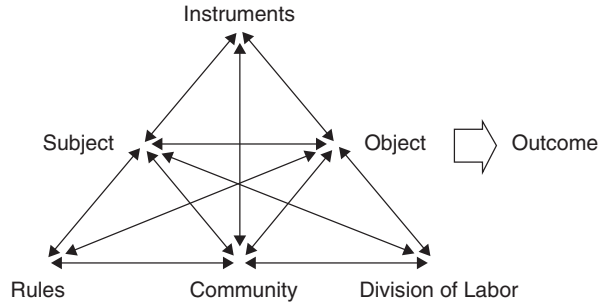
from the partnership program we describe in this chapter is analysed using activity
theory (Engeström, 1987, 2001) and, more specifically, literature around boundary
practices between activity systems (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011; Kimble, Grenier,
& Goglio-Primard, 2010; Tuomi-Gröhn & Engeström, 2003; Waitoller & Kozleski,
2013).

The analysis of the professional learning partnership model is framed by
Engeström's third-generation activity system. Cultural Historical Activity Theory
(CHAT) (Engeström, 1987) is used to explore the activity system in which learning
is socially situated and mediated by artefacts. Engeström proposes that CHAT has
evolved through three generations of theoretical development. The first generation
is based on Vygotsky's (1978) idea of the mediating role of artefacts (objects and
people) in learning and focusses on individuals. Second-generation activity theory,
further developed by Alexei Leont'ev (1978), emphasised the contextualisation of
learning and situated individual and group activity within a collective activity sys-
tem. It expands the subject-mediation-object triad with three added elements: rules,
community and division of labour (Engeström, 1987) (Fig. 5.1). This generation
marked the shift from an individual focus (on learning, meaning making or practice)
to a collective activity system. It is typically represented using the triangle featured
in Fig. 5.1.

The components of second-generation activity systems included the subject, the
individual or the group of people involved in the activity, endeavouring to achieve
an outcome through acting on an object using mediating artefacts/tools to achieve
that outcome (see Fig. 5.1). Action is regulated in the social element of the system
which includes the community within and for which the activity occurs, rules or
norms regulating the subject's participation in an activity and division of labour
(Engeström, Miettinen, & Punamaki, 1999).

In his proposal for a third generation of the theory, Engeström (2001) advocates
a conceptual tool 'to understand dialogue, multiple perspectives, and networks of
interacting activity systems' (p. 135). The third generation of activity theory uses a
joint activity system, which includes at least two interacting activity systems
(Fig. 5.2). The third-generation model highlights the role of contradictions that
occur within and between activity systems. These contradictions can be countered
through the mediation of boundary objects that facilitate boundary crossing.
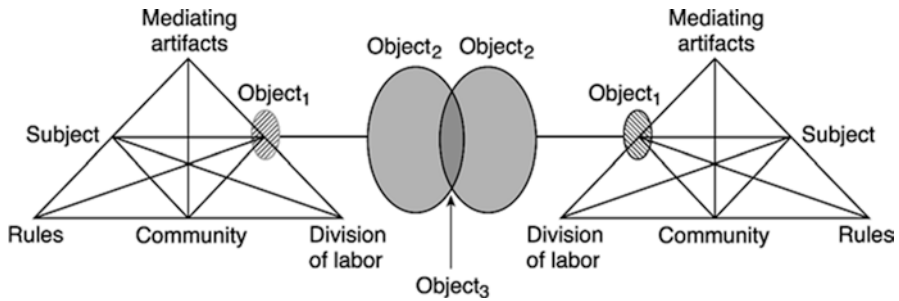
Fig. 5.2 Two interacting activity systems as a minimal model for third generation of activity theory (Engeström, 2001, p. 136)

Boundaries, objects, brokers and crossings are generative conceptual ideas from which to analyse professional experience. According to Akkerman and Bakker (2011):

a boundary can be seen as a sociocultural difference leading to discontinuity in action or interaction. Boundaries simultaneously suggest a sameness and continuity in the sense that, within discontinuity, two or more sites are relevant to one another in a particular way. (p.133)

Tsui and Law (2007) suggest the way to overcome contradictions between supervising teachers and tertiary mentors is to create a space where all participants can generate collective knowledge by crossing community boundaries in the professional experience. This third space creates conditions for boundary crossing (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011). Engeström, Engeström, and Kärkkäine (1995) argue that the negotiation and the use of the boundary object potentially facilitate boundary crossing. Akkerman and Bakker (2011) call for further exploration of the learning potential of boundaries.

In this chapter, we use third-generation Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) because it offers an understanding of the third space of the partnership between the university and school where professional experience resides. This chapter further develops Bloomfield and Nguyen's (2015) proposed theoretical framework for professional experience partnerships based on third-generation CHAT (see Fig. 5.3). Bloomfield and Nguyen argue that the primary focus of such a partnership is on developing a collective 'third space' (Bhabha, 1994; Gutierréz, 2008) which renegotiates and accommodates different elements of the two systems. In this case study of preservice teachers' learning in a 'boundary zone' (Tuomi-Gröhn & Engeström, 2003), the focus was on the space where the participants in both activity systems brokered their boundary objects to construct new understanding and practices.

The boundary broker is a critical actor in third-generation CHAT. The broker's role has been depicted as that of the interlocutor (Kimble et al., 2010). Wenger (1998) described it in the following way:
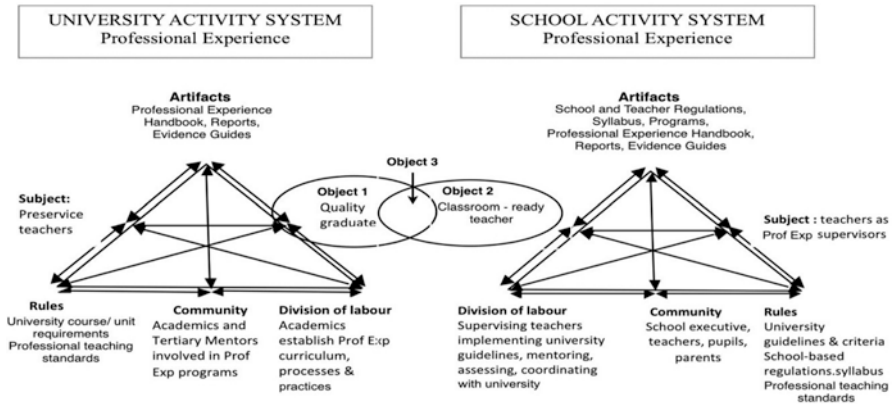
Fig. 5.3 Third-generation activity theory: Professional experience (After Engeström, 2001, in Bloomfield & Nguyen, 2015)

> The job of brokering is complex. It involves processes of translation, coordination and alignment between perspectives. It requires enough legitimacy to influence the development of a practice ... it also requires the ability to link practices by facilitating transactions between them and to cause learning by introducing into a practice, elements of another. (p 109)

The broker needs to be skilled at building productive relationships and needs to possess deft political skills as well as have the conceptual depth to do the necessary knowledge translation work from one group to the other (Kimble et al., 2010).

Boundary objects are critical elements in the communication between activity systems. The term has an interesting history, and it originally came from Star and Griesemer's (1989) study of Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology where they describe a boundary object as 'an object that lives in multiple social worlds and which has different identities in each' (p 409). The term 'object' can be misleading as they can be both virtual and physical entities. Boundary objects can be referred to as 'technologies, although they can be drawings, sets of rules, research projects or documents' (Kimble et al., 2010, p. 441) or they can be 'an analytical concept of those objects' (Wong & Edwards, 2009, p. 133). Carlile (2002) further argues that familiar and routine situations only require a simple boundary object, such as a single word, to coordinate activities. During the professional experience where the learning context is complex, participant stakeholders including preservice teachers, supervising teachers and university mentors need to create a common ground that is shared among themselves. This requires the boundary object to be flexible and feasible in order to accommodate different needs from people from different communities of practice. However this does not always reap fruitful outcomes as it encounters the tensions and contradictions as the result of the political nature of these processes (Carlile, 2002).

Professional Experience Initiative

The changes to professional experience were implemented across the major teaching degrees in this faculty from 2008 to 2014. It was first implemented in the Master of Teaching (primary) program in 2008 followed by the Bachelor of Education (primary) program in 2009. The Master of Teaching (secondary) adopted the approach in 2013, and the Combined Degree (secondary) commenced in 2014. The innovation began with eight partnership schools in 2008, which increased to 56 schools by 2014. Each school was assigned a mentor from the university who developed and maintained a productive relationship with the school and acted as the communication conduit with the faculty. The university mentor conducted weekly group meetings with those preservice teachers placed in the school and liaised closely with their supervising teachers and the school professional experience coordinator. The group meeting with the university mentor discussed the focussed observations that preservice teachers had made of classroom teaching and learning and discussed issues around their learning using the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) at the graduate level as a guide for reflection and critical inquiries. At some schools, the university mentor scheduled separate group meetings with both the supervising teachers and preservice teachers. At some schools, the supervising teachers did not want to make this extra commitment, and at others the school supported the initiative by allocating extra time for cooperating teachers to participate in the project.

Preservice teachers were allocated to schools in groups of six or eight. Preservice teachers worked with a partner in pairs either on the same class, grade or faculty and conducted peer observations as part of the requirements of the professional experience. Preservice teachers were supported to make focussed observations of their supervising teachers and peers using a scaffold that focussed on descriptors from the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the graduate level.

Research Methodology

Using activity theory framework, this case study set out to examine what factors supported preservice teachers to mediate the two activity systems in order to enhance their learning whilst on professional experience. A case study research design was employed to explore the learning experiences of 20 volunteer preservice teachers in their first professional experience in their Master of Teaching program. Data were collected from ongoing and retrospective interviews with preservice teachers, supervising teachers and university mentors during and after their first 4-week professional experience in their graduate teaching program. The researchers also had access to a database generated from an overarching postdoctoral project that included lesson observation notes, professional experience reports, transcripts of supervising teacher mentoring conversations and university mentor meetings.

This study primarily analysed the interview data, but the exposure of the authors to the broader study expedited the process of thematic and selective coding.

Findings

Boundary objects and brokers are common objects that serve to bring two different activity systems together. Boundary objects and brokers are important objects of analysis for professional experience, such as this case study, where the preservice teachers' learning involves the interaction between the activity systems of the school and university. This chapter reports on the two elements which were important for the preservice teachers' learning on professional experience in our case study: teaching methods as a boundary object and university mentors as brokers.

Teaching Methods as Boundary Objects

As argued earlier in this chapter, boundary objects are often technologies, although they can be drawings, sets of rules, research projects or documents. In this case study, we argue that teaching methods learnt at university act as a boundary object for preservice teachers on professional experience. The term teaching methods is used deliberately here in recognition that preservice teachers learn teaching strategies (or methods as we call them), in their curriculum units at university that they attempt to apply on professional experience. Herein is the manifestation of the theory-practice gap.

The teaching methods learned by the preservice teachers at the university were mediating artefacts that acted as boundary crossing objects between the university and school activity system. Their induction into the school activity system was made easier when they were able to translate some of their methods into classroom practice. The translation ranged from direct transference of strategies and lessons learned at university to a critically reflexive adaption of theories and methods into their practice.

On their first professional experience, these preservice teachers saw the worth of basic teaching strategies such as lesson introductions and questioning techniques that they had learnt on-campus. Both introductions and questioning are evident in the following excerpt from an interview with a preservice teacher:

> Yeah, in terms of the introduction they always say 'Ask them questions, get them to think about the last lesson, don't just let them sit there and feed them information, get them involved'. I think that was the main thing about today in maths that was good, they were all involved.

Another preservice teacher explained how they valued the questioning strategies that they had learned on-campus:

> And a lot of prompting and questioning and getting them to think more than us just telling them has been really helpful, like in guided reading asking 'What's this story about?', that kind of thing.

These very basic but fundamental teaching methods outlined in the above quotes mediated these preservice teachers' induction into their first professional experience providing them with strategies they could employ from day one.

It might be expected that preservice teachers on their first professional experience would be concerned about managing their class. One preservice teacher could identify the techniques learned on-campus as contributing to learning:

> I guess behaviour management techniques, we learnt them and now putting them into action I realise what's actually really beneficial for learning in class.

This direct link of classroom management to student learning demonstrates that the teaching methods learned at university mediated this preservice teacher's induction into their first professional experience.

The preservice teachers in this study recognised the quality of the lesson models that they had been exposed to in their on-campus learning. One preservice teacher in their postexperience interview recalled these lessons as the most memorable for the following reasons:

> … and then I did some lessons that I'd learnt at uni and really liked, and those were the lessons I've remembered most. I guess because I saw them as higher order thinking lessons and interesting lessons and given the fact that I was given the opportunity to teach those interesting lessons I also learnt from the experience.

The preservice teacher describes their own learning occurring because they were teaching interesting lessons that involved higher-order thinking. This is further evidence that the teaching methods learned on-campus mediated these preservice teachers' entry into the profession during their first professional experience.

It is noteworthy that these preservice teachers on their first professional experience were able to see beyond their own learning to those of the students they were teaching. One preservice teacher in their postexperience interview described the challenge of teaching a diverse range of learners:

> … because we've done a lot about different learners, which is something that I kind of thought about. But I didn't realise how big an effect it is when you have a child that's all the way down the bottom and then you have a really high achieving child in your class, I think the spectrum has been really overwhelming.

It is impossible to claim from this excerpt that an awareness of diverse learners mediated a successful teaching response on the part of this particular preservice teacher. However, this awareness is something that sometimes eludes much more experienced teachers and is quite an achievement for a preservice teacher on their first professional experience, who is generally more concerned with their own learning than the learning of the students they are teaching.

In this study, critical reflexivity was a key aspect of the preservice teachers' methods. Critical reflection of the preservice teachers ranged from the simple awareness that they were applying teaching methods' theory learnt at university to a broader conceptualisation of their professional learning trajectory. The adoption of a reflective practitioner approach might be regarded as a separate mediating artefact acting as a boundary object between the two activity systems.

The acknowledgement of the transference of university learning to professional experience was the first level of reflection evident among the preservice teachers in this study. This is apparent in an interview from the postexperience interview of one preservice teacher:

> Because even though I feel we would have started the prac [practicum] thinking 'Oh my god I don't know anything' but you do, it's just about taking all that knowledge and applying it.

This is the most basic level of translation, but it still exists as a repudiation of the discourse that establishes a false binary between theory and practice. This discourse is evident in the following excerpt from another postexperience interview with a preservice teacher:

> And even teachers will say 'forget what they taught you at uni, now you're in a school' and [preservice] students will say 'we learnt more in those three weeks than we did in the whole semester' and I get cranky when they say that because it's different learning, it's not better learning.

The different learning alluded to here is amplified by this preservice teacher:

> You're not just learning about behaviour management theories like Skinner's and Glasser's; they're not just people, you don't just say 'Glasser says this and Skinner does that'. It's to give you a grounding in what you see in the classroom so when you think about what you're doing [so] you realise how you're positioning yourself in the equation. I think if you make that context [the school] obvious then hopefully the learning's a bit more meaningful.

The preservice teacher is translating the theories of Glasser and Skinner into their context and practice in their words 'positioning yourself in the equation'. This is evidence that teaching methods combined with a critically reflexive approach can act as boundary crossing objects for preservice teachers on their first professional experience. It can be seen that in this case, a reflective approach and the teaching knowledge they learned in university-based courses can develop their capacity to cross boundaries to develop their effective teacher repertoire. It is important to see evidence of the preservice teachers' theory and practice application in this professional experience.

The University Mentor as Boundary Broker

The community is an important aspect of the activity system. In our model, there are two different communities situated in the activity systems of the school and the university. The university mentor and preservice teachers are the only people

common to both of these activity systems involved in professional experience. In Wenger's (1998) words, they are 'boundary crossers' or 'brokers'. Wenger (1998, p. 109) posits that brokering is a complex process of 'translation, coordination and alignment between perspectives'. The university mentor in this case study played a critical role in assisting students to bridge the theory-practice gap as well as to contribute to a supportive and cohesive learning environment for preservice teachers and supervising teachers.

The theory-practice gap is a common theme in the professional experience literature. In this study, the university mentor perceives that one of their roles is to mediate this gap:

> We need to have theory and we need them to strongly see how it's implemented. Not one or the other. Not 'this is how the school does it and this is what they told me at uni'. We need it to be brought together.

As part of both the university and school activity systems, the university mentor is in a good position to enhance the praxis for preservice teachers during professional experience. In this respect, the university mentor is an important boundary broker between the two activity systems in professional experience.

The university mentor is also a key community builder as they join in an ongoing relationship with the same school. In this study, the university mentors identified that working with the same schools allowed them to build a robust, dynamic relationship that involved reciprocity in professional learning that constitutes boundary crossing in professional experience. One of the simple innovations in this study was to implement measures that assured university mentors visited the same schools over a 5-year period. One of the university mentors commented that this led to a feeling of authenticity:

> I really like it when I get to go to the same schools because then I can establish a relationship with the principal, with the teachers and the prac coordinator and it becomes very authentic and we can help each other.

This is supported by another university mentor who believes that:

> … what I wanted to do [is to] develop strong ties with schools so that our [preservice] students weren't sent out randomly to someone who said 'I want a student'. They were going to the same site every year, and at that site the same person would be there so that they would be happy to talk to the university from the point of view of knowing the person. They don't have to ring up and ask 'I've got a problem here', they know who's going to be there and we put a face to it. So all the inclusion developments that we want at the university, I thought this was a strong grassroots way to do it where we actually brought professionals together.

Such genuine and ongoing relationships are of great assistance when there are problems experienced by the preservice teacher on professional experience according to one of the mentors:

> … if the mentor has a strong relationship with the school it's much easier for everybody, for that [preservice] student, because we can ease over the problems, but also to guarantee future placements because they understand that everyone can't be perfect.

This university mentor recognises that a strong relationship between the two activity systems can help to ameliorate the inevitable challenges that occur on professional experience.

The university mentor is in a strong position to act as a boundary broker for the supervising teachers in the school as well. This can occur outside the realm of the professional experience according to one mentor:

> It should be an ongoing dynamic relationship that can be helped and nurtured by people like me who are in the school on a frequent basis.

One of the ways that this mentor nurtured the relationship was through ad hoc and formally organised professional learning sessions with supervising teachers:

> I've done staff meetings or I've sat with teachers and helped with their planning and programming.

In this way, the university mentor can act as a boundary broker for both preservice and supervising teachers as they build a learning community that spans the two activity systems of the school and university. Most of the university mentors were professional learning advisors for schools. Some of them conducted a number of professional learning workshops on teaching methods with schools. They were brokers in the sense that they created a connection across the school and university community. This assisted the teachers in the partnership schools to become familiar with the teaching methods taught at university.

The establishment of a community of learners facilitated by the university mentor that can bridge the activity systems of the school and university is of great assistance to preservice teachers completing their first professional experience. A university mentor describes this community of practice in an interview:

> I think that's important and it comes back to what I was saying before about teaching being more than a class and a teacher, it's about a community and I think our professional experience is that too. The relationships [that] mentors build up between teachers and schools can support the [preservice] student too.

A preservice teacher was also able to recognise the support provided by this community of learners:

> Well the school's been very supportive, which is good. We're student teachers but they treat us like we're teachers and it's a quite good professional relationship …

An expression of this support was the willingness of other teachers in the school to participate in the learning of the preservice teachers; or in the words of one of the preservice teachers:

> … the cooperation of other teachers who aren't the cooperating [supervising] teachers but are quite happy for you to sit in their classroom and see how they teach.

This learning community is different from a traditional master-apprentice model where the preservice teacher may only have access to the support of their supervising teacher.

In summary, the university mentors played a critical role as brokers who assisted the learning of the supervising teachers and preservice teachers. Through the

professional learning relationships with the supervising teachers and school, they brokered the theory taught by the university. Through the weekly meetings with preservice teachers, they negotiated this theory to assist preservice teachers towards effective teaching practices in schools.

Discussion

We argued earlier in this chapter that boundary crossing is a generative standpoint from which to understand the cross-institutional collaboration required for effective professional experience. In the findings reported in the previous section, we were able to identify a boundary object and broker that mediated the boundary crossing from university to school for preservice teachers on their first professional experience. These were teaching methods as the boundary object and the university mentor as boundary broker. In this section of the chapter, we discuss how this boundary object and broker mediated a third learning space for preservice teachers on their first professional experience.

The teaching methods the preservice teachers learnt on-campus enabled their boundary crossing into successful classroom lessons on their first professional experience. Engeström, Engeström, and Kärkkäine (1995) argue that the potential for boundary crossing depends on several factors such as the way boundary objects are used and negotiated by all stakeholders. It was evident from this case study that only some of the preservice teachers were able to negotiate the implementation of the teaching strategies learnt on-campus. This finding suggests that the context will not always be conducive for this boundary object to mediate learning as well as the importance of the interaction of this boundary object with a boundary broker doing the political and philosophical work of negotiation and translation.

The boundary broker that mediated border crossing for the preservice teachers in this case study was the university mentor. The actions of the university mentors reported here are emblematic of Tsui and Laws' (2007) suggestion that the way to overcome contradictions between supervising teachers and university mentors is to create a space where all participants can generate collective knowledge by crossing community boundaries in the professional experience. The university mentors in this study helped to create that space through offering informal professional learning for supervising teachers and building a relationship of trust over time. In this case study, the university mentor seemed to be a key person in the creation of a shared community of practice between the school and university that facilitated the boundary crossing of these preservice teachers on their first professional experience. This evidence raises the awareness of the importance of the role of university mentors in the school-university partnership as the boundary brokers in transforming the preservice teachers' learning in the professional experience.

Conclusion

We complete this chapter by noting the implications of our case study for the practice and research of innovation in professional experience. The implications for practice relate to boundary objects and learning communities, whilst the implications for research focus on the use of Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a generative tool as well as a call for researchers to be aware of the politically contested nature of research in professional experience.

This case study has drawn attention to the importance of boundary objects and brokers when innovation is attempted in professional experience. An implication that might be drawn from this is that teacher educators should identify the boundary objects or brokers that mediate boundary crossing when attempting innovation in their own professional experience programs. They can then ensure that these objects (or people) do not fall prey to arbitrary budget cuts or other program changes. Professional experience programs should prioritise strong relationships with partnership schools and endeavour to build robust learning communities of practice that include high-level academic and school staff.

This case study has provided some evidence that Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) is a generative theoretical lens with which to examine innovations in professional experience. The theoretical work in CHAT around boundary objects and crossing boundaries is particularly fruitful for examining professional experience that exists as a contested third space between the activity systems of the school and university (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011; Engeström et al., 1995). Furthermore, CHAT can be used as a framework for establishing, planning, analysing and evaluating systematic reforms in professional experience. CHAT has been used extensively by Engeström and colleagues in the Centre for Research on Activity, Development and Learning at the University of Oslo as a framework to guide formative interventions to understand and improve organisational culture and learning (Engeström, Sannino, & Virkkunen, 2014).

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Part II
Guiding, Supporting and Mentoring

Chapter 6
Distinguishing Spaces of Mentoring: Mentoring as Praxis

Debra Talbot

Abstract Against a landscape of accreditation and accountability mechanisms that seek to govern the work of teachers from afar, this chapter draws on research and recent innovations in mentoring practices to move discussion on from an historical focus on definitions of the roles of mentors and mentees to consideration of the actual doings of those involved in mentoring relationships. In so doing, it aims to contribute to a conceptualisation of mentoring as praxis, that is, a morally and ethically informed practice. A vignette of dialogic mentoring involving a preservice teacher with a school-based and a university-based teacher educator is drawn on to illustrate the enactment of mentoring as praxis in which all three learn more about the complicated and complex practice of teaching.

Introduction

Given the pace with which the profession has evolved in the past decade, it is important to revisit mentoring as praxis, with a view to the work that is currently being done in Australia, particularly in relation to teacher accreditation and accountability mechanisms. In this chapter I draw on relevant research and recent innovations in mentoring practices to move discussion on from an historical focus on definitions of the roles of mentors and mentees, in what might be considered as largely 'supervisory arrangements', to consideration of the actual doings of those involved in mentoring relationships. In so doing, I aim to contribute to a conceptualisation of mentoring as praxis – morally and ethically informed practice (Kemmis & Smith, 2008) – that it is transformative and mutually educative.

This chapter is concerned with the spaces in which mentoring might occur, particularly physical spaces, who might be in those spaces and what might they be doing there that constitutes a mutually educative approach to mentoring. It seeks to offer a justification of why I believe it is necessary to the interests of ongoing teacher education, and particularly initial teacher education, to trouble the existing paradigm

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and enactments of mentoring that continue in many institutions. These reimagined spaces of mentoring acknowledge notions of working dialogically, learning to be, the importance of context and the possibilities for online mentoring. Together, these reimagined spaces contribute to an understanding of the praxis of mentoring.

It is timely for the mentorship of both preservice and beginning teachers to be considered in a more expansive way. Too often mentoring is considered as an isolated activity akin to supervision, in which a designated mentor and a mentee are given structure and time for conversations that are conceived of as an induction into 'how we do things here'. By way of contrast, mentoring may be considered as:

- A broad activity that takes place in a wide range of contexts and arrangements yet always involves the opening up of a communicative space in which mutual learning takes place.
- Involving the greater community of teachers. Even when it is enacted as a one-on-one dialogue between a mentor and mentee, it is both influenced by and influences this greater community. Richer mentorship programs can be developed through conscious involvement of this greater community.
- An intersubjective activity that extends beyond the boundaries of professional activity. A consciousness – and perhaps playfulness – around this role of mentoring in developing individuals, who are learning to be, can give nuance to the pedagogical approach of mentors and contribute to a higher quality of praxis of preservice and beginning teachers.
- Playing a role in transforming the profession through dialogic interactions as an influential way in which knowledge, understanding and values are negotiated and developed by teachers. A high quality of praxis in mentorship contributes to a high quality of praxis in teaching, a base for the profession to continue to adapt, grow and transform.
- An integral part of professional experience and the process of becoming in which a teacher learns to be.

Mentoring relationships involving preservice, early career and mentor teachers cannot be prescriptive or defined by fixed expert-novice relationships. The learning needs of each participant in the relationship and the context of the learning must always be considered. Mentoring relationships are more fluid and flexible when learning needs are met through a differentiated approach that is sensitive to educational setting in early childhood, primary school, secondary school and tertiary contexts. Within the various spaces for mentoring discussed in this chapter, 'learning to be' emerges as an important consideration for the effectiveness, sustainability and transformative potential of mentoring relationships.

Mentoring as Support

The concept of mentoring might have first been written about in Homer's poem The Odyssey. The poem is often cited as a touchstone for the space in which 'mentoring' once occurred and how the actions associated with 'mentoring' appeared (Anderson & Shannon, 1988; Orland-Barak, 2014). In the poem, Athena, goddess of wisdom, appears to Telemachus in human form as Mentor. It is Mentor's responsibility to develop Telemachus to his full potential, offering himself as a role model while simultaneously allowing Telemachus to develop his own perspective and style. Mentor's actions could be viewed as constituting a 'supporting and guiding' model of mentoring in which a mentor assists a mentee to reflect on their practice and supports them to explore and experiment with their practice, providing suitable challenges and advice along the way. Many teacher mentors would recognise their own actions within this model of mentoring as they engage in a professional learning space with preservice, early career and, sometimes, more experienced colleagues. Thus, for them, the most common conception of a space for mentoring is within educational settings, both inside and outside the classroom, and the actors in that space are preservice, beginning and supervising teachers. The 'supervising' role, however, is also a common conception of how teacher mentors in these spaces carry out their role. This is because the actions of these people are so often perceived of as primarily evaluative (Kemmis, Heikkinen, Fransson, Aspfors, & Edward-Groves, 2014). An alternative conception of teacher mentor would see those in the role focus on processes of collaborative and mutual ongoing education.

According to Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, and Tomlinson (2009), mentoring, as a relational space in which ongoing teacher education might occur, has featured in research literature since the 1980s. Those involved in mentoring relationships, however, hold different views as to the purpose and practices of mentoring, and such views often reflect both the context and the times (Ambrosetti, 2010; Devos, 2010), particularly in relation to education policy. Thus, as Kemmis et al. (2014, p. 155) explain, mentoring remains a contested concept in need of further exploration and elucidation. In mentoring relationships, the mentor is usually considered as the 'expert' person and the mentee as the 'novice'. Indeed, the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2012) make it clear that only those teachers working at the level of 'Highly Accomplished' would be offering support and advice, as a more experienced teacher, to another colleague.

Unlike traditional pairings, where these roles are fixed for the duration of the relationship, I see the mentor/mentee roles as fluid and reciprocal. In any given mentoring relationship, the mentor is the person who takes the lead in facilitating the learning process at a particular point in time. In the next learning moment, they may be the mentee. The aim of mentoring is not to preserve the status quo (Kennedy, 2005) by inducting new teachers into 'the way we do things here' but rather to transform teaching work through the ongoing education of all involved. Thus, transformation implies change, but I do not advocate change for its own sake. Rather, the

focus is on teacher education that enables teachers to grow and renew aspects of their teaching work in order to better respond to the needs of their learners, whether those learners be fellow teachers or students. The notion of mentoring as ongoing teacher education points to an expansion of the mentoring space, beyond practices associated with feedback to the mentee and also to the inclusion of other actors in this space. It also implies an expansion of the notion of teacher educator to include school-based as well as university-based teacher educators in a collaborative endeavour aimed at ongoing teacher education for all those involved in the enterprise of education.

Mentoring in educational settings during the professional experience component of initial teacher education can involve a variety of participants in the mentoring space. Such educational settings range from early childhood centres through to secondary schools and may also include students with both short- and long-term special needs, for example, intensive English centres. Experienced teachers and leaders, preservice and beginning teachers and university-based teacher educators may engage in this space in generative relationships focused on contextualised learning about teaching work. A collaborative space between university and the educational settings (Le Cornu, 2015), both inside and outside classrooms, offers the potential for sharing in relationships that are more equal and democratic in their acknowledgement of what each party brings to the relationship. Within the mentoring relationship, mentor and mentee may share philosophies of practice along with technical skills and professional and personal support simultaneous with challenge and experimentation. Such relationships can serve as a stepping stone to the elusive 'community of practice' (Hord & Sommers, 2008; Lave & Wenger, 1991) and can make an important contribution to professional learning that leads to changes in the culture of the educational setting when the mentoring is focused on transforming teaching work. It is in this collaborative space that the quality of conversations (Coombs & Goodwin, 2013; Timperley, 2001) can open up or shut down the learning resulting from mentoring work. The vignette offered later in this chapter illustrates one case of how such collaboration between school-based and university-based teacher educators resulted in transformative learning for those involved.

From Support to Supervision

The space of mentoring has been dramatically altered by the introduction of professional teaching standards in Australia (AITSL, 2012) and elsewhere, which seek to describe and mandate the actions of both mentees and mentors for the purpose of teacher accreditation. The processes of accreditation and registration of teachers against such standards can serve to entrench a 'supervisory' model of mentoring focused on the documentation of a mentee's performance using 'specialist discourses of …professional standards' (Kemmis et al., 2014, p. 159) for the purposes of compliance. In the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL 2012), the actions associated with mentoring are described in the standards for 'Highly

Accomplished'. In order to gain or maintain accreditation at 'Highly Accomplished', a teacher must engage in accredited professional learning that is designed to meet these professional standards. Thus, the supervisory model of mentoring and many of the professional learning programs designed to assist mentor teachers develop their mentoring practices in line with the use of standards run the risk of normalising the governing of teacher learning by professional standards (Bloomfield & Nguyen, 2015; Devos, 2010) in line with accountability agendas. The focus of the actions associated with mentoring shifts from support for the immediacy of teachers' work at the frontline to a text-based process of compliance and accountability as teachers produce portfolios of evidence designed to demonstrate that they have met these standards. Such a process assumes that all mentees in all contexts have the same learning needs. Mentor teachers do not have the flexibility to produce a rich and extensive portfolio of evidence that demonstrates how they have responded to the differentiated learning needs of their mentee if such mentoring meets too few of the standards. Policymakers thus become important actors in this mentoring space as they seek to govern teachers' work and learning from a distance (Smith, 2006; Talbot, 2015) through processes that influence both the design and accreditation of professional learning.

The historical model of 'supportive' mentoring, which includes a focus on the mentee's professional and personal well-being (Ambrosetti, Knight, & Dekkers, 2014), may be supplanted by a more bureaucratic and supervisory attention to checklists of standard statements and reduced to 'coaching', which is much more focused on the acquisition of technical skills (Kennedy, 2005). Lesson observation schedules, supplied by many universities for the purposes of mentoring preservice teachers, routinely include lists of professional teaching standards that the supervising teacher is required to check against, thus focusing the supervising teachers' attention on technical descriptors of practice. Incidentally, professional standards are not the only factor that has contributed to a 'supervisory' model of mentoring, particularly of preservice teachers. It has long been part of professional experience practice in most universities that either the supervising teacher or the tertiary mentor is responsible for writing the evaluative final report that determines the preservice teacher's fate as either a 'classroom-ready' teacher, or not.

If accountability agendas, operationalised by professional standards, support and entrench supervisory models of mentoring, I ask what, if anything, can be done to move towards mentoring as a democratic practice or praxis? How might university mentors and mentors in other educational settings learn to improve their mentoring practices without succumbing to the dangers of 'institutional capture' (Smith, 2005, p. 156) whereby they become complicit in supporting the accountability regime that governs their practice in restrictive ways? How do mentors learn to resist mentoring that attempts to create a 'mini-me' – the mentor expects the mentee to emulate their practice – and enter into more equal learning relationships with their mentee? Recent research around teacher professional learning and mentoring practices has sought to engage with such questions and to build something of a foundation for envisioning mentoring in ways that offer a space of resistance to models focused on

supervision and accountability (Coombs & Goodwin, 2013; Kemmis et al., 2014; Talbot, 2016; Timperley, 2001).

Transformative Teacher Education

Moving forward to consider an expanded notion of the potential of mentoring for ongoing teacher education requires insight into what we know about mentoring as a means for transforming how educators change, grow and renew their practices in response to both learners and context. It seems, however, that what exactly mentees learn from mentoring in formal mentoring arrangements, whether good or bad, remains a largely unanswered question (Rajuan, Beijaard, & Verloop, 2008). What we do know is that mentoring can be 'haphazard' (Hudson, 2007, p. 363), can be largely variable and can even be 'harmful' (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 214). Some 'teacher-mentors themselves hold a 'transmission perspective' on teaching and learning and thus focus almost exclusively on matters of 'technical rationality' (Hobson et al., 2009, p. 211) that tend to reinforce the 'mini-me' model through advice that encourages the mentee to unquestioningly adopt the methods of the mentor. But before we throw our collective hands in the air and abandon mentoring in favour of learning in isolation from one's own experiences, let's consider this warning offered by Schwille: '… experience without guidance and reflection can often be a fickle and misleading teacher' (2008, p. 156).

Learning in isolation presents a troubling consideration, particularly from an equity perspective, and can be highly dependent on context. For instance, there is often a lack of access to formal mentoring arrangements for early childhood educators in the prior to school sector due to the complexity of this sector. If mentoring is supportive of teacher learning, then it should be available to all educators irrespective of the age group of students they teach or the educational setting, including universities, in which they are employed. While it may occur in some very remote locations that an educator works alone in their institution, it seems reasonable to assume that it should be possible, with access to supportive technologies, for educators to form mentor-mentee relationships that are mutually educative.

Unfortunately, being a good classroom teacher, in whatever the educational context, is not sufficient to guarantee that one will be a good mentor (Schwille, 2008, p. 139). There are specific 'pedagogical knowledge practices' (Hudson, 2013, p. 363) that include 'broad picture strategies' and 'deeper, more focused strategies' (pp. 376–377) that must be learned, implemented, reflected upon and refined over time. Herein lies the next barrier to establishing transformative mentoring relationships. Prospective mentors will need a 'space' in which they have opportunities to, at the very least, audit their existing mentoring practice, read and reflect on research concerned with both the pedagogical skills of mentoring and the development of mentoring as an educative stance and implement and critique innovations in their mentoring practice. Several Australian universities are currently working to develop new approaches to mentoring courses that provide opportunities for teacher

educators in all educational settings to work together on mentoring practices. Such approaches are mindful that good mentoring is differentiated to meet the specific needs of the mentee (Schwille, 2008) and are sensitive to context (Devos, 2010; Kline, White, & Lock, 2013). To this end, some mentoring courses are coupled with opportunities for practitioner inquiry as not only an authentic means to connect practice to context (Timperley, 2001; Talbot et al., 2017) but as an educative intervention in which mentor and mentee explore teaching and learning practice together.

Traditionally however, the roles of mentor and mentee, whether that is between university-based educators and teachers or experienced teachers and beginning or preservice teachers, are fixed in their designation for a given period of time and thus incorporate certain relationships of power in terms of knowledge and expertise (Aspfors & Fransson, 2015; Orland-Barak, 2014). Such fixed power relationships can work against the development of collaborative relationships that contribute to the learning of both mentor and mentee, but this need not be the case. Taking the case of learning how to teach literacy, Comber (2006) explains how experienced classroom practitioners and beginning teachers with up-to-date theoretical knowledge of literacy teaching practice worked together as co-researchers in mentor-mentee relationships that were temporally flexible. What Comber illustrates in this research is supportive of the claim that mentor-mentee relationships work well when there is an acknowledgement at the outset that one participant cannot always be the 'expert' and the other always the 'novice'.

Mentoring is a relational practice that relies heavily on conversations for learning between mentor and mentee. Learning to be a good mentor, therefore, should include opportunities to develop skills for conducting mentoring conversations, including online opportunities (Coombs & Goodwin, 2013; Schwille, 2008; Timperley, 2001). Mentoring conversations, however, also vary in their quality and usefulness to the purpose of transforming practice. When mentoring conversations are limited to the mentor advising the mentee what they themselves would have done in a similar situation, they fail to acknowledge the mentee's teaching philosophy that gave rise to their actions that may indeed be different from the mentor's own. When mentoring conversations avoid analysis and problem-solving directed towards difficult situations that have arisen in some aspect of the mentee's practice, they fail to assist the mentee in transforming their practice. Timperley (2001) posits that a quality mentoring conversation should begin with the mentor articulating an area of concern and finding out whether the mentee shares the concern. This gives the mentee time and a space in which they might explain the underlying reasons for and philosophy guiding their actions. Accordingly, the mentor may in turn learn something about the mentee's rationale for practice that was not obvious just by observation.

Such quality conversations, however, require time. The allocation of time to conduct such conversations needs to be supported by the educational setting and built into the processes so it is privileged and preserved, not undertaken when there is five minutes to spare. In some educational settings, particularly the early childhood sector where teachers have day-long responsibility for their students, teachers' anecdotal comments indicate that time for quality mentoring conversations can be hard to find.

In the vignette of mentoring practice provided in this chapter, the 'mentoring conversation' is replaced by a dialogic approach to mentoring that considers meaning making in interindividual territory (Voloshinov, 1973).

Making Meaning in Inter-individual Territory

I turn now to a description of the theoretical frame that will be useful in understanding how the vignette presented in this chapter contributes to a more democratic enactment of mentoring, of mentoring as 'praxis' rather than 'practice'. It is an account of a communicative space for mentoring involving more than just robust conversations that draw on evidence and do not avoid the difficult issues. Indeed, I argue that transforming practice requires more than good-quality conversation and other pedagogical skills for mentoring. It requires a form of sharing that results in new meaning being made between those engaged in the dialogue and activities of mentoring and is thus dialogic.

The writings of Mikhail Bakhtin and Valentin Voloshinov provide insight into what it means to interact dialogically. The essential difference between engaging in a dialogue and working dialogically occurs when:

> The speaker strives to get a reading on his own word, and on his own conceptual system that determines this word, within the alien conceptual system of the understanding receiver; he enters into dialogical relationships with certain aspects of this system. (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 282)

In order for the mentor and mentee to engage in a shared experience of meaning making, as described by Bakhtin, each must be prepared to 'struggle' over the word and change the direction of their talk to accommodate changes to their 'inner world' through a shared, 'structured and stabilized expression on experience' (Voloshinov, 1973, p. 91). Working dialogically is not akin to 'telling' or 'instructing', as may be the case in learning through coaching, but rather the existence of '(a)ctive agreement/disagreement stimulates and deepens understanding, makes the other's word more resilient and true to itself, and produces mutual dissolution and confusion' (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 142). When mentors and mentees interact in ways that are dialogic, the roles of each are not fixed across time, be it instantaneous or extended. Dialogic mentoring gives rise to relationships between mentor and mentee that are fluid and flexible. Dialogic mentoring provides an opportunity to construct a 'space' for mentoring in which the word or action of the 'other', be it mentor or mentee, is engaged with, through disagreement as well as agreement, defended and changed. Learning happens as a result of genuine engagement with the word and actions of the 'other'. Such fluid and flexible relationships, based on an understanding that agreement and difference in each other's perspective provides the concrete substance of the learning, also make traditional power relationships associated with notions of 'expert' and 'novice' more difficult to maintain. This concept of dialogic

interactions as a powerful tool for mentoring relationships that have the capacity to transform practice is illustrated in the following vignette.

A Dialogic Space for Mentoring

The vignette of mentoring practice reported on here comes from one case (Talbot, Denney & Henderson, under review), part of a pilot study for a much larger and continuing research project. Various components included in the case study conditions had existed historically in a variety of forms, but several have recently been reimagined and reconfigured. Over a number of years, the academics responsible for professional experience placements at this university had worked to establish 'professional partnerships' with schools for the purpose of enhancing the quality of placement experiences for preservice teachers. More recently a focus on professional learning about mentoring had been introduced not only to further this purpose but also to expand on this university's growing focus on teacher education 'writ large'. The initiative sought to bring all actors involved in teacher education – academics, supervising teachers, preservice teachers and tertiary mentors – into a learning experience that would assist each actor to better respond to the needs of learners and the context in which the learning was situated. The transformative learning that occurred for each of the actors in this case was complex and occurred as a result of the genuine commitment to, and persistence with, dialogic attempts to make new meaning in the inter-individual territory between shifting relationships of mentor and mentee.

The space in which the mentoring practice discussed here occurs spans a large metropolitan university and a comprehensive high school located some 30 km from the university. The three actors in this space and case are Sarah, a preservice teacher completing her internship as her final professional experience placement; Jane, an experienced teacher and school-based teacher educator also responsible for the overall coordination of professional learning in her school; and Debra, a university-based teacher educator who took on a number of roles in this vignette including teaching a mentoring course to in-service teachers at the school, tertiary mentor for the preservice teacher interns placed at the school and action research project seminar leader for Sarah back at the university.

Sarah was completing her internship as the final professional experience of her two-year Master of Teaching degree. At the same time, she was also required to complete an action research project inquiring into an aspect of her own teaching practice. Sarah was dissatisfied with her success at engaging her Year 10 Science class in their learning. Both Jane and Debra had been present in the classroom to observe Sarah teaching this class and were well aware of the challenges she faced. It should be noted here that normally an intern would be teaching independently by this stage but Sarah had invited both Jane and Debra into her dilemma with Year 10 Science. Often, in the course of a lesson that Sarah was responsible for, Jane and Debra would make independent observations of individual student's work and later discuss

these observations with Sarah. This three-way dialogic interaction concerning the perceived learning needs of individual students was incredibly rich and helpful to Sarah in formulating the pedagogical interventions she intended to experiment with in her research project. The interactions exemplified a dialogic approach to pedagogy not only in Sarah's responses to the needs of her student learners but also through Debra and Jane's pedagogical responses to Sarah. Debra and Jane were conscious of the need to carefully select and negotiate the content and skills to be learned by Sarah in order that she might transform her practice.

In consultation with Jane and Debra, Sarah decided to investigate whether differentiating classroom activities based on the learning needs of her students would improve their engagement in learning. Jane was experienced at making both planned and contingent adjustments to her teaching, but how she came up with her good ideas remained something of a mystery to Sarah. Debra was able to articulate a planning scaffold for differentiation that made planning differentiated learning activities more manageable for Sarah. Debra was also providing support to Sarah in the formulation of her action research project primarily to ensure that what she was planning was achievable in the time frame for the project. Debra also found it necessary to regularly encourage Sarah away from a focus on measuring the success of her transformed pedagogy through 'improved results' as measured on topic tests and the like and towards consideration of how she might 'measure' improvements in engagement, her original focus.

As mentioned earlier, Jane was an experienced teacher and school-based teacher educator. It was Jane who had arranged and supported the school's component of the partnership with the university, and she also encouraged the participation of other teachers in the school in the mentoring course that Debra taught on-site. The course required teachers to not only attend face-to-face seminars but also to collect evidence of the mentoring practices that they then annotated and critiqued in light of assigned readings of research literature. Each seminar involved a high level of participant discussion in relation to theoretical perspectives and its relationship to their evidence of their mentoring practices. Jane was particularly interested in the notion of mentoring 'in the action' (Schwille, 2008) in which the preservice teacher and supervising teacher have previously arranged how the supervising teacher might intervene in the lesson in progress when necessary, to assist the preservice teacher to learn and make accommodations to their practice.

When Jane stepped into the action of the lesson that Sarah was teaching, it was with the intent of making shared meaning with Sarah about the action and the range of possibilities arising from the action. Jane's stepping in was often initiated by 'I wonder if…' statements directed towards what the students were doing. In directing her comments towards the students' actions, Jane took great care that her stepping in did not signal to the students or to Sarah that there was something not going right but rather that she had noticed potential for further exploration, comment or depth of response from the students. As Debra observed these classroom interactions, she felt that she was the one being mentored by both Sarah and Jane as they provided the 'actual doings' of what mentoring in the action can look like when it is genuinely dialogic. The learning through dialogic interaction continued 'outside the

action' between all three actors as they deconstructed and reflected on these moments of mentoring in the action. The 'struggle' over a shared meaning of events that had occurred during lessons and responses that might be made in future lessons encompassed consideration of each other's philosophy of teaching and learning. It required genuine engagement with the notion that there was no one right answer.

There is no doubt that the combination of actors in the mentoring space described above was somewhat serendipitous. From the university's point of view, it is not easy to organise that the same academic teaches the mentoring course in schools and the action research project at university is also the tertiary mentor who visits students on their internship professional experience. Not to mention the difficulties associated with making this combination work, as in Sarah's case, for more than one student at a time. The research project arising from this case's combination of unlikely events seeks to investigate ways in which elements of the dialogic interactions that so clearly supported transformative learning for those involved can be offered by additional actors working across the school-university space in the interest of ongoing teacher education.

Mentoring as Praxis

The 'space' of mentoring, then, is very much a communicative space in which mentor and mentee might learn together in ways that incorporate considerations of praxis rather than practice. Stephen Kemmis has written extensively on how a praxis view of learning about teaching, and teaching for learning, involves consideration of a philosophical aim of living well (2009, 2010). Kemmis defines praxis as 'morally committed action oriented and informed by traditions of thought' and draws on Dunne (1993) to comment that 'praxis is always as much a process of self-formation as it is a matter of achieving an external goal or satisfaction' (2009, p. 465). In the vignette described above, Debra, Jane and Sarah were each engaged in a process of self-formation as they supported both their own and each other's learning. This self-formation through learning went well beyond the pragmatic goal of Sarah passing her internship, Jane working towards accreditation against professional teaching standards and Debra fulfilling the requirements of her varied roles in this space. Kemmis explains that engaging in praxis is not only a way of conducting education work, consistent with an Aristotelian interpretation, but also a means of guiding 'history-making' changes to educational work, in a post-Marxist sense (2010, pp. 9–10). The description of the dialogic space for mentoring is offered in the spirit of supporting a vision of mentoring as mutually educative (Feiman-Nemser, 2001) and democratic (Kemmis et al., 2014). I hope that it may contribute to changing mentoring practice in ways that see such practice actively engage with the knowledge, understanding and values of all actors in the space, thus contributing to the development of mentoring as praxis.

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Chapter 7
Reconsidering the Communicative Space: Learning to Be

Mia O'Brien, Bronwen Wade-Leeuwen, Fay Hadley, Rebecca Andrews, Nick Kelly, and Steven Kickbusch

Abstract In this chapter, we ask the reader to set aside existing perceptions of mentoring, supervision and their relatedness to professional experience and instead join us in a sharply reconsidered analysis of the communicative space in which teachers and preservice teachers negotiate the phenomenon of 'learning to be'. We take the Habermasian concept of communicative space (Habermas J, Theory of communicative action, vol 2: Lifeworld and system: a critique of functionalist reason (trans: McCarthy T). Beacon, Boston, 1987) and earlier notions of lifeworld (Heidegger M, Being and time (trans: Macquarrie J, Robinson E). SCM Press, New York, 1962/1927; Merleau-Ponty M, Phenomenology of perception (trans: Smith C). Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1962/1945; Sandberg J, Dall'Alba G, Organ Stud 30:1349–1368, 2009) as a theoretical frame to foreground learning and practice as 'ways of being in the world'. A series of three vignettes are presented to illustrate how mentoring is both epistemological (what we know or can do) and ontological (how we are learning to be). It is this learning to be, in the teaching and learning to teach relationship, that we aim to identify, illustrate and elaborate in this chapter.

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Introduction

This chapter seeks to open up existing conceptions of mentoring, supervision and the professional experience. The constructs of communicative space (Habermas, 1987), communicative action (Habermas, 1984) and an Integrative Pedagogy Model (Tynjälä, 2008) are used as theoretical frames to 'see' professional experience in learning and teaching differently. To bring life to these discussions, a series of vignettes illustrate how mentoring and being mentored is at once an epistemological (what we know or can do) and ontological (how we are learning to be) experience.

This analysis highlights the characteristics and complexities inherent within professional experience, which can be seen to entail a particular kind of learning (drawn from the Habermasian notion of lifeworlds) known as learning to be (Dall'Alba, 2009). That is, in the professional experience setting, mentor teachers, teacher educators and preservice teachers are engaged in ongoing negotiations of identities in practice or 'learning to be' teachers and mentor teachers. Mentoring and being mentored is thus an experience that requires complex and recursive negotiation of social and intrapersonal worlds concurrently. This view of the professional experience highlights new ways of understanding the pedagogical challenges faced by both mentors and mentees. We propose that an integrative pedagogical approach can strengthen practices for mentors and enhance the learning experience of mentees as they work together to navigate the professional experience space (Tynjälä, 2008).

Mentoring in the Changing Landscape of Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning to teach occur in a complex, changing landscape (Clandinin, Downey, & Huber, 2009). The rich and multifaceted research base that now shapes professional experience practices in Australia and beyond, includes strategies for generative partnerships (Kruger, Davies, Eckersley, Newell, & Cherednichenko, 2009) and strengthens reciprocal learning relationships (Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008). Additionally professional experience supports learning communities (Le Cornu, 2009) and communities of practice (Sim, 2006) with the importance of ongoing academic commitment (Zeichner, 2005) and increased scholarship (White, Bloomfield & Le Cornu, 2010).

In this chapter, we look closely at the personal and relational complexities specific to professional experience and in particular give our attention to what some have described as the significant epistemological, ontological and personal-psychological shifts that preservice teachers must undergo (Bahr & Mellor, 2016; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Le Cornu, 2009). These shifts are transformative and so demand particular kinds of awareness and dispositions on the part of both the mentor and the mentee, if the experience is to be positive and transformative. These are addressed in the discussion section of this chapter.

Our focus is on the lived experience and day-to-day realities of praxis, as it plays out for preservice teachers, teachers and teacher educators, within our framing of mentoring as 'learning to be'. In the series of vignettes presented here, we illustrate how 'mentoring' might be usefully explained by an analysis of the professional experience setting as a communicative space and through a discussion of the mentor/mentee relationship as communicative action.

Professional Experience and Learning to Be: Pedagogical Nuances

Learning to teach is a social practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Kemmis et al., 2014). It is demanding in terms of personal learning (Bahr & Mellor, 2016; Le Cornu, 2009). Habermas (in Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998 p. 29) notes there is 'no individuation without socialisation, and no socialisation without individuation'. Professional experience entails the concurrent interrelatedness of individual or 'inner' learning in the context of 'learning to be' in a specific social setting. Learning is both social and individual, it is system and lifeworld, and it draws on what we know and come to know (epistemology) as well as who we are and are 'learning to be' (ontology) (Dall'Alba, 2009). In this way, learning, particularly professional learning, is about knowing, acting and being (Dall'Alba, 2009).

In the context of the professional experience setting, preservice teachers are expected to demonstrate professional knowledge and practice-based competencies, as well as positive personal attributes considered important to teaching, such as kindness, fairness, humour and open-mindedness (Bahr & Mellor, 2016). A praxis perspective highlights how this process of learning requires significant situated and intrapersonal work on the part of the preservice teacher (mentee). That is to say, praxis is considered a process of becoming, which involves consideration of 'character, conduct and consequences' of action for self and others (Kemmis et al., 2014). It also assumes informed and willing pedagogical empathy on the part of the supervising teacher (mentor) and teacher educators. From the practice theory perspective, the professional experience can be framed as a recursive, socially mediated learning experience that is iteratively personal and professional. That is, the professional experience requires the preservice teacher to concurrently demonstrate emergent professional practice and knowledge as a focus for analysis and critique. A praxis perspective assumes that the mentor teacher/teacher educator role is to facilitate a collegial, collaborative analysis of the preservice teacher's actions and then scaffold the reformulation of pedagogical thinking in relation to future actions. As Dall'Alba (2009) reminds us, this facilitation should take account of the ontological as well as the epistemological and therefore include consideration of the personal, individual dimensions of mentees.

In this way, learning in the professional experience can be likened to critical, participatory action research that has its theoretical roots in communicative action

(Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Action research directs the researcher's attention to an analysis of social practices in consideration of explicitly held values and beliefs about what is good and of benefit (Kemmis, McTaggart & Nixon, 2014). Critical, evidence-based discussions about what is being achieved in practice and what may need to change for future practice are central to action research, and that in turn relies on communicative action. Similarly, in the professional experience, the pre-service teacher considers the social practices of the placement setting and enacts his/her emerging ways of knowing, understanding and being as 'teacher'. Their practice, knowledge and 'being' are at the same time subject to critique.

As with action research participants, preservice teachers must be deliberate, intentional and participatory about the ways in which they critique and interpret their actions in the social and material world. In turn, this recursive process assumes that individual preservice teachers are aware of the way in which knowledge, identity and agency are reflexive and, indeed, the way in which their existing views of self may be shaping (and possibly constraining) current interpretations of what is valuable for practice in action. A critical disposition and willingness to reformulate not just ways of knowing and ways of being becomes important. In this way, navigating the professional experience space effectively relies on having the personal and psychological infrastructure to support this challenging space.

For preservice teachers, as with many professional learning settings, the realisation that there is a genuine need for reconstruction and deepening personal knowledge base and identity can be unsettling. Moreover teacher education is replete with forms of practice and ways of working that can challenge existing perceptions of the profession (Lingard, Nixon & Ranson, 2011). Integrating these professional ways of being, which includes the process of becoming in the context of transitioning from one way of being to another (Dall'Alba, 2009), can be intimidating. When we acknowledge that professional experience is thus a process of becoming, a distinctive shift in learning to be, we will be in a better position to more effectively facilitate learning (and the mentoring of learning) in the professional experience.

The Professional Experience as Communicative Space and Action

The Habermasian notion of communicative space and communicative action (1984) has specific theoretical and conceptual potential for moving our thinking within professional experience, and our practices as mentors and mentees, forward. As a heuristic, communicative action highlights three key features of a morally just, fair and equitable approach to communication (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005), in those participants who would consciously and deliberately aim to:

1. Reach intersubjectivity agreement, as a basis for
2. Mutual understanding, so as to

3. Reach an unforced consensus about what to do in the particular situation in which they find themselves (p. 293).

In his later work, Habermas (1996) identified the ways in which communicative action opened a particular kind of space. It was a space that built solidarity between participants, enabled their understandings and decisions to be legitimated and in turn facilitated a sense of agency in that people could identify what was true and authentic in relation to the circumstances in which they found themselves. As such, in situations where we are genuinely acting collaboratively with others in the context of practical and collectively shared reason, communicative action is an invaluable social resource for navigating the process of learning and reformulating what is of value and what is or is not to be valued.

Current research (Hudson, 2013) indicates Australian universities are often limited in the necessary resources for effective mentoring of preservice teachers during their professional experience in tertiary education. Concurrently, Australia's primary teachers are generalists, teaching from Foundation/Reception to Year 6/7. The Australian curriculum supports eight key learning areas including English, Mathematics, Science, Health and Physical Education (HPE), Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS), The Arts, Technologies and Languages. These key learning areas interconnect to seven general capabilities: Literacy, Numeracy, Information and Communication Technology Capability, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding and Intercultural Understandings towards developing lifelong learners. The Australian Curriculum also embeds into the curriculum three cross-curriculum priorities that are to be developed: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia and Sustainability (ACARA, 2017, v8.3). As such, primary generalist teachers are expected to integrate learning across the curriculum by embedding at least one of the three cross-curriculum priorities into their programs in order to equip young Australians with twenty-first century skills (ACARA, 2017; Chapman, 2015).

A concern, highlighted by Kampylis (2010) and expanded on by Wade-Leeuwen (2015), was uncovered through an investigation into the implicit theories of preservice teachers on creativity and how their implicit theories could influence their everyday practices in the classroom. Questions arose as to whether they were being supported in their role of fostering creativity in children. In this chapter, we argue that effective mentoring relationship strategies, established within tertiary teacher education programs, not only enhance preservice teachers' confidence but also contribute towards their professional knowledge and capacities.

The literature shows the characteristics of an effective mentoring relationship that involve an emphasis on high-quality relationships that build on trust, mutual respect and non-judging ways of being and are affirming and empowering (Meyer & Wood, 2017). According to Wenger (2000), a mentoring relationship is a dynamic intentional relationship in which one person enables another to grow and learn in the role. The effectiveness of the relationship is dependent on the resources, including time and space, allowed for this relationship to grow. A growing body of research

(Cochran-Smith et al., 2016; Gay, 2010) demonstrates a reciprocal relationship between teacher educators and preservice teachers could put equity at the centre and have a lasting effect on improving their vocational, academic and behavioural outcomes.

Mentoring and Innovation: Applying an Integrative Pedagogical Model

Several scholars assert teachers' professional experience should emphasise the interplay of theory and practice advocating for the use of 'praxis'. A central part of Carr and Kemmis (2009) and Mattsson, Eilertsen and Rorrison (2011) claim is that 'praxis refers to the sayings, doings and relatings that people enact when they take into account the universal values embedded in history and when they try to improve the world' (p. 3). Kemmis and Smith (2008) state:

> Praxis is a kind of action. It is action that is morally committed, and oriented and informed by traditions in a field. It is the kind of action people are engaged in…when they consider all the circumstances and exigencies that confront them at a particular moment and then, taking the broadest view they can do what it is best to do, they act. (p. 4)

Working with the notion that praxis is a theoretically informed action, Tynjälä, Slotte, Nieminen, Lonka and Olkinuora (2006), Tynjälä (2008) and the revised Integrative Pedagogy Model (Heikkinen, Tynjälä & Kiviniemi, 2011, p. 97) support the unification of theoretical and practical 'praxis' by engaging learners in four highly integrated elements that they call '(1) theoretical and conceptual knowledge, (2) practical and experiential knowledge, (3) regulative knowledge and (4) sociocultural knowledge' (Heikkinen et al., 2011, p. 107, italics from original).

Heikkinen et al. (2011) argue that theoretical knowledge is universal, formal in quality and often referred to as declarative knowledge. It could be more clearly explained by considering theoretical knowledge as contrasting and yet complimentary to practice knowledge. Practical knowledge tends to emerge from practical experiences, procedural knowledge and when developing diverse skill sets. Whereas the third form of knowledge in the Integrative Pedagogy Model is self-regulative knowledge, this is where the learner allows space for reflection on their metacognitively informed actions. Mediating tools such as informal discussions with mentors are needed to make tacit knowledge more explicit. The fourth component of the Integrative Pedagogy Model is the sociocultural knowledge, where cultural tools and artefacts become embedded in social practices. This supports Wenger's (2010) and Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion that sociocultural knowledge can be stimulated by one's participation in a community of practice. Together, these four different forms of knowledge expertise form the foundations of an integrated pedagogical process.

At one university, the Integrative Pedagogy Model (Heikkinen et al., 2011) assisted the preservice teachers in gaining a deeper understanding of their conceptual,

practical, metacognitive and social knowledge by learning how to communicate through effective problem-solving processes and using inquiry-based learning during their tertiary education program. The Integrative Pedagogy Model is explored further in the following vignette.

Vignette 1: Preservice Teachers' Learning Through a 'Spirit of Play'

In this vignette, the second author, Wade-Leeuwen, examines the relationship between preservice teachers' reflective practices using arts-based research methodologies during studio-based workshop in teacher education programs. The study (Wade-Leeuwen, 2015), held at an Australian metropolitan university, shows how inquiry-based learning can be used to engage the learner's sensory experience and enhance participant's imagination through a 'spirit of play', supporting the notion that a strong mentoring relationship established prior to and during preservice teachers' professional experience builds twenty-first century capacities (Cutcher, 2014; UNESCO, 2006; Wade-Leeuwen, 2016). This vignette discusses an interdisciplinary research project, drawing on theories in arts-based inquiry, psychology, early childhood and primary education. The literature acknowledges twenty-first century pedagogical goals need to focus more on developing critical and creative skills in children (ACARA, 2011, 2014; World Economic Forum, 2016). However, limited research has been conducted in preparing preservice teachers in early childhood or primary education to foster creativity (Kampylis, 2010; Prentice, 2000; Sternberg, 2012) in themselves and the children they teach. Moreover, Australian universities are generally limited in the resources needed to build intercultural capacities of preservice teachers for active global learning communities.

The initial teacher survey (Wade-Leeuwen, 2015) indicated that 80% of the 350 third-year and final fourth-year preservice teachers in the Bachelor of Education program did not feel competent in building twenty-first century capacities of critical and creative thinking skills. The research found that half the cohort (50%) of these preservice teachers felt limited in their creative and artistic arts knowledge prior to commencing the teacher education undergraduate degree program. Another finding from the research (Wade-Leeuwen, 2015) was that all the preservice teachers interviewed indicated inadequate knowledge and understanding of the multifaceted aspects of creativity (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 2011) and voiced that they were unprepared to foster critical and creative thinking skills in the classroom.

The mentoring program adapted elements from the Integrative Pedagogy Model (Tynjälä, 2008) as an effective strategy in developing preservice teachers' reflective practice and creativity. This was conducted in a systematic way by providing preservice teachers with opportunities during their teacher education programs and professional experience to discover artistic material explorations through a 'spirit of

Fig. 7.1 Preservice teachers using bamboo sticks with brushes attached in the studio-based workshop

play' (Wade-Leeuwen, 2011) using the creative arts. In this way, participants developed deeper understanding of the different elements in the Integrative Pedagogy Model. For example, in the studio-based workshop, the preservice teachers used long bamboo sticks with Chinese brushes attached and dipped them in Chinese black ink before collaboratively exploring a variety of different mark-making strokes during the creative process, which meant they were focusing more on the process than the product (Fig. 7.1). The studio workshop experiences were later discussed during the postworkshop interviews. Twelve preservice teachers reflected on the value of using arts-based research within the framework of the Integrative Pedagogy Model (Heikkinen et al., 2011). Most voiced views that the model provided a tangible structure for them to reflect on the integration of theory, practice, self-regulation and the sociocultural experiences during the creative process, which they felt enhanced their overall self-efficacy and confidence to teach the creative and visual arts.

This research study (Wade-Leeuwen's, 2015) provided three significant insights. The first emerged from notions of communicative space in which these preservice teachers negotiated the phenomenon of 'learning to be', that is, allowing time for discovery of their physical and emotional space within the studio-based workshops where they could notice and reflect on how they interacted, reacted and worked collaboratively together. Collaborative creativity was something they had not considered before the workshops and they had sufficiently improved on their communication and collaboration skills during this process. The second was that the preservice teachers experienced what it is like to be in an artistic classroom setting. This

generated creativity dispositions such as risk-taking attitudes, resilience, flexibility, fluidity and avoidance of premature closure in their material exploration practice. The final insight related to establishing trusting relationships and the potential for lifelong learning practices (Wade-Leeuwen, 2016, 2011) to develop between the mentor and mentees, as well as between each other.

Findings from this research show what appear to be new synergies emerging when intentionally allowing time and space for preservice teachers to think, experience together and reflect more deeply on their professional practice. In other words, they discover new ways of being together during their professional experience. As an outcome of the study, all preservice teachers voiced an awareness of the communicative space as one where the mentor teachers, teacher educators and preservice teachers engage and negotiate the phenomenon of learning to be an effective teacher.

Vignette 2: Learning to Be (Managing Diversity in Perspectives During Professional Experience)

Nurturing the mentoring space requires both the university-based teacher educators and the preservice teachers being available to 'be' and to 'learn' from each other. Approaching mentoring from this pedagogical frame refocuses everyone's role in the mentoring space. Co-authors of this chapter Hadley and Andrews refer to research conducted since 2012 with Diploma students entering their first university professional experience at a metropolitan university. This research focused on these students 'learning to be' in the university system and their understanding of professional experience. This research enabled a space for the university teacher-based educators and the preservice teachers to navigate the process of 'learning to be'.

When university teacher educators prioritise the development of knowledge and practice, other important areas such as nurturing quality mentoring relationships and the facilitation of communicative spaces that enable genuine opportunities for 'learning to be' can be neglected. By being involved in this research and running the workshops, we found that our, and the preservice teachers', beliefs and practices shifted as we developed skills in 'learning to be'. This required rethinking what we 'thought' we knew about these students and opening up communicative spaces to hear their ways of being (Hadley & Andrews, 2012). Since this research began, the strategies for opening up this communicative space have included additional workshops, online discussion forums and, since 2016, an online module that was available to all Diploma students 1 week before the semester began.

The original workshops in 2012, and subsequent adaptions, gave us insights into the preservice teachers' knowledge, skills and fears. These spaces for additional communication also provided opportunities for them to get to know us and to feel more comfortable with us. By expanding our approach, we found these interactions (that offered experiences above and beyond normal tutorial classes) made us appear

more approachable in the eyes of the preservice teachers. When interviewed after the workshops, students noted:

> Having the extra support there, just knowing that the teachers understand where we're coming from. I found this very beneficial (Student A).

> Actually the workshop helped me more than the lectures and on campus days. It was … because it was like small group. I felt like I was able to discuss my concerns and get feedback and … it was very good … I felt very strong after that (Student Y).

We had to again rethink the language we used in the 2016 online module. We had thought we were being supportive of the diversity of pathways to university, but one of the Diploma preservice teachers interpreted this as being condescending. The student noted:

> Don't assume that all Diploma students are going to struggle in the unit. Please help them to celebrate and use their experience during their university placements … Just because someone has a Diploma does not mean they will not have the academic language to complete the unit – e.g. I didn't finish year 12 due to health reasons, not because I was incompetent, and completed my Diploma to gain entry to university (Student X).

The research findings have also been disseminated to the university-based educators through various forums. The following reflection from one very experienced tertiary supervisor (who visits students when they are on placement) captures the diversity of the preservice teachers, particularly when compared to the past, and how this diversity has impacted on her role as a mentor:

> The background of the students has changed during the time that I have been a tertiary supervisor – nearly 20 years. The students are entering this degree with so much diversity themselves. There are students who have Recognised Prior Learning (RPL), who are international students, students who are not from this country, some may have a degree in a very different field and some may have a degree from their country of origin which may not be recognised here, so need to upgrade their skills. I have also found that the diversity in terms of the student's own lifestyle has changed incredibly over the 20 years. When I first started the majority of students were studying internally but now there is a combination of internal and external students as they are often combining part-time work with their university commitments. There is so much more diversity today in my role as a tertiary supervisor compared to when I began this role in the late 1990s (personal communication, 18 August 2016).

Being involved in rethinking how we support the Diploma students' transitioning into their first professional experience placement has made us stop and think about our own beliefs and about our approachability and helped us to adapt the way we conducted ourselves not just with this group but the whole preservice teacher cohort. We now actively encourage preservice teachers to meet with us. We do this by inviting them in different ways, including verbally, through our discussion forums and most recently through the online module we have developed. We also meet individually with students early in the semester to ensure they are feeling supported and to open up these communicative spaces. By opening up and being available to the preservice teachers, we are conveying that we want to know each and every one of

them as individuals, not just as the second-year Professional Experience or Diploma cohort.

Since this study, we have changed many aspects of our unit and have formally evaluated our strategies, including obtaining direct feedback from the students completing the unit. We will continue to collaborate with our preservice teachers, to adapt, to listen, to think, to ask and to invite them into our space so that we can continue learning to be, together.

Vignette 3: When 'Learning to Be' Gets Personal and Personally Difficult

This final vignette is drawn from current research into preservice teachers nominated 'at risk' during their professional experience placement. It is not uncommon for preservice teachers to be labelled 'at risk' during a placement on the basis of specific areas of professional knowledge and practice that are identified by mentor teachers as in 'urgent' need of strengthening (such as classroom management, curriculum planning and/or specific pedagogical practices). However the examples in this vignette are distinctive in that they reflect areas of professional learning that can be difficult to qualify and describe but that are nonetheless present and influential. These are areas that teacher educators might describe as the preservice teacher's attitude, disposition or demeanour. These areas can overshadow or interfere with the professional learning process. As examples of 'learning to be', these experiences reflect quite challenging yet not unusual situations. Nevertheless they reflect authentic ways of being, from both the mentor and mentee perspectives, and are real, relational, personal and difficult. This vignette offers two 'case stories' for consideration. All names are pseudonyms.

Zandra's Story

Zandra is a preservice teacher in her second year of study. Zandra's mentor teacher (Ms. McManen) described her general demeanour as 'bullish and slightly aggressive'; she noted that her presence in the classroom was 'unsettling' and that their professional learning conversations became 'highly strained' after the first few days of the placement. Zandra was eventually asked by the school coordinator to leave the setting well before the placement should have concluded. In the debriefing interview with the first author (O'Brien) and the teacher educator (course convenor) that followed, Zandra arrived wearing a black heavy-metal t-shirt, baggy shorts and black, chunky-soled lace-up boots. She sat well back in a chair with her arms folded tightly across her body and kept the ankle of one leg resting on the knee of another. She shrugged and mumbled inaudibly when she was greeted by the course convenor

and rolled her eyes regularly as the conversation about how the placement had progressed. Eventually O'Brien asked Zandra directly how she thought the placement had gone and why Ms. McManen requested that it be terminated.

Zandra replied:

> That teacher was an absolute bully, I wouldn't treat my worst enemy that way and I'd never be that kind of teacher in a million years! She just got cut 'cause I was nice to the kids and they liked me and started hating her. She's got no business teaching other people how to teach when she shouldn't be teaching herself!

O'Brien and the course convenor continued to facilitate what was a stilted and difficult conversation and inevitably turned towards some critical discussion of what Zandra could have done to approach the situation differently. At that point, Zandra showed signs of visible distress. She was angry, frustrated and upset at the same time. When it was pointed out that she was in fact acting very defensively, and that such an approach in the placement could have been challenging for the teacher and other staff to respond effectively to, Zandra broke down into tears. After some silence and supportive encouragement, Zandra disclosed that she had recently left an abusive relationship, and whilst she had felt confident enough starting her studies after resettling in another state, there were characteristics that her teacher mentor regularly demonstrated that (to her mind) reminded her of that relationship. This 'pushed buttons' she'd thought were long extinguished. She responded to the firm (possibly stern) approach of her mentor teacher by being, in her words, 'tough and uncompromising back' during their time together. In her words, 'I can give as good as I get'. In appeared that where Zandra perceived a 'bully' teacher mentor, her defensive, somewhat automated response was perceived (by Ms. McManen) as being 'bullish' in return.

Sebastian's Story

Sebastian was well known to most of the teacher educators in his program because he went out of his way to be charming, conversational and affable to staff and his peers. He was a keen student, who regularly espoused his commitment to changing the lives of young people, whom he hoped would eventually share his passion for learning, especially science and great novels. He presented well and was enthusiastically welcomed by his mentor teacher (Mr. Rashna) and the school staff who eagerly included him in their lunchtime conversations and after-school planning sessions. However the placement took a difficult turn by the midpoint, where a meeting between the teacher mentor, teacher educator and Sebastian was called. In the preparation notes and mid-placement report, the mentor teacher affirmed Sebastian's pleasant nature and apparent willingness to learn but questioned his commitment to teaching children in a primary school setting. Sebastian prepared for the meeting by sending the teacher educator his notes reflecting on his progress to

date. The concerns of his mentor teacher had not gone unnoticed, but he was confused about why he felt he was 'unsuitable' for primary school teaching.

In the meeting, it became clear that at the heart of the matter was the mentor teacher's concern that Sebastian demonstrates his ability to scope and sequence a lesson or series of lessons appropriate for his Grade 4 class and, more generally, to communicate with them 'at their level'. In contrast, Sebastian talked mostly of his love of science and learning and his keenness to 'reproduce' what he felt were some of his own most inspiring experiences as a student. It was difficult to get Sebastian to pay close attention to what his mentor teacher was saying about the need to 'recalibrate' pedagogical designs. He would close down and display feelings of being hurt, despairing and defeated. The placement progressed but required regular mediation from the university-based teacher educator, not to deflect a defensive or deteriorating relationship but rather to scaffold the focus of both mentor and mentee on the renegotiation of Sebastian's existing view of self as teacher and its interrelationship with Sebastian's practice as a teacher within that setting. Sebastian was successful in passing his placement. However his mentor teacher felt his impact on Sebastian's progress was minimal; and Sebastian himself reflects on the placement as a 'personally and professionally confusing experience, since I felt Mr. Rashna never really understood who I was as a teacher'.

This final vignette serves to illustrate how the professional experience placement when seen as an experience of 'learning to be' can be a challenging pedagogical space, particularly where there is inner personal conflict. In general, when mentor teachers and preservice mentees focus only on the 'knowledge and practice' aspects of the placement, at the expense of managing the communicative space with deliberation and intentional communicative action, then important areas of learning to teach (being) can be overlooked or become the cause of confusion and concern. These case stories illustrate how the learning that needed to be addressed explicitly in the professional experience was in relation to how each respective preservice teacher was *learning to be*, as a teacher. Addressing these shifts relied upon a change in ways of 'being' on the part of the preservice teacher mentees but also presented challenges to the mentor teachers in relation to 'being mentor' that communicative action may have effectively addressed.

In Zandra's case, her immediately negative perceptions of the mentor teacher, and the deeply personal experiences that shaped her emotional reactions to that teacher, governed the way she chose to act and be in that classroom. In turn Zandra's mentor teacher found it difficult to interpret Zandra's actions and overall demeanour. The challenge for the mentor teacher was to find ways to address Zandra's actions, to carefully point out the limitations of 'being' a certain way and to promote and encourage the potential advantages of being and acting in different ways in that setting whilst working within the bounds of 'mentor' (and avoiding the territory best left to counsellors and related experts). The challenge for Zandra was to be willing to look carefully and critically at her perceptions and to gain some insights into the ways in which her emotional experiences were negatively impacting on her approach to 'being' a teacher. Unfortunately the confusion and mutual defensiveness quickly led to an unworkable professional relationship.

Similarly for Sebastian, his fixed view of 'himself as a teacher' limited his capacity to be flexible in the teaching environment and got in the way of his ability to see himself doing teaching differently. His mentor teacher struggled to understand what was a potential disconnect between Sebastian's commitment to his teaching identity and his enacted practice as teacher. Instead, he 'read' Sebastian's dogged commitment to one line of pedagogical thinking as an unwillingness to teach at a level appropriate for his primary school students.

What this vignette also illustrates is the complex and recursive process of socially mediated learning that can comprise the professional experience. For teacher mentors and preservice teacher mentees, this is an experience they must work deliberatively together on, with the principles of communicative action in mind, if they are to navigate the experience effectively. Moreover, since the professional experience traverses the social, interpersonal and intrapersonal concurrently, mentoring practices and perspectives must find ways to take account of the inherently challenging task that learning to teach entails.

Earlier we proposed that effective teaching demands an ability to connect with one's sense of self-worth and self-esteem, as well as the capacity to develop a strong connection to the situation and its cultural context. When we see professional experience as the development of pedagogical knowing, acting and being (Dall'Alba, 2009), we can better articulate and make possible the kinds of mentoring relationships that will support preservice teachers and their mentors through an otherwise difficult process of 'learning to be'.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have proposed that in the professional experience setting, teacher educators and preservice teachers are engaged in ongoing negotiations of identities in practice or 'learning to be' teachers and mentor teachers. In this way, mentoring and being mentored can be seen as an iterative negotiation and renegotiation of social, relational and intrapersonal worlds concurrently. This view of the professional experience highlights new ways of understanding the pedagogical challenges faced by both teacher mentors and their preservice teacher mentees. Doing so acknowledges the identity work that mentoring in learning to teach entails, which is distinctively different to the domains of professional knowledge and practice that professional experiences are required to formally report on. Bahr and Mellor (2016) go some way to addressing this gap by noting the 'positive personal qualities' that denote 'quality' in teaching yet remain unacknowledged by regulatory bodies. Similarly the vignettes presented here attempt to offer new insights into the kinds of challenges that 'learning to be' can entail. These include the importance of scaffolding risk-taking, creativity and a 'spirit of play' with preservice teachers as outlined in vignette 1; the benefits of fluid and reciprocal reformulation of 'knowledge, skills and fears' in collaboration with preservice teachers as outlined in vignette 2; and the

significance of understanding the influence of identity and identity work in professional experience learning as outlined in vignette 3.

In each vignette, the principles of communicative space and communicative action reframe our views of mentors and mentees within the professional experience. Mentoring conversations and processes can be viewed in terms of intersubjectivity, mutuality and solidarity within an overarching commitment to an educative moral purpose (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). Together with the notion of mentoring as 'learning to be', these principles can also serve as a blueprint for enacting mentoring as intentionally communicative action within a deliberately communicative space.

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Chapter 8
Raising the Quality of Praxis in Online Mentoring

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Abstract The decisions made by the designers of mentorship programs impact upon the development of the praxis of the teachers involved. The recent development of online mentoring provides an opportunity to revisit the question of how to design mentoring programs that support the development of a high quality of praxis in the participants. This chapter argues for a broad understanding of mentoring as formally convened, dialogic communities of teachers that include arrangements such as online, peer and group mentoring. It suggests that a high quality of praxis occurs in a space where mentors adopt a critical stance for reflecting upon the intentions behind the technical skills of mentoring. The theoretical understanding of the praxis of mentoring is explored by describing a design-based research project, TeachConnect, that facilitates online mentoring aimed primarily at preservice teachers. The challenges experienced in convening communities within TeachConnect are used to highlight some of the key issues in fostering a high quality of praxis of mentoring in the online space, including the need to balance a fluid adoption of roles within mentorship with the need for well-prepared mentors.

Introduction

Praxis is the union of theory (knowledge about how situations relate to one another) with action (knowing how to act in situations to cause effect in the world). The *praxis of mentoring* thus involves bringing an awareness of theory – borne of critical reflection – into the acts of mentoring (Ax & Ponte, 2008; Orland-Barak, 2010). In

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this chapter, we consider the way that an understanding of mentoring as praxis can inform the design and implementation of online mentoring communities in an effort to raise the quality of mentoring. Online mentoring is still in its infancy, changing as the affordances of connected technology have advanced (Jones, 2015). There is a need for inquiry into the praxis of online mentoring; how should an understanding of praxis inform the design of online communities that support teachers? This chapter focusses upon the design of an online mentorship community that is particularly aimed at supporting preservice teachers during professional experience.

We adopt Habermas's conception of praxis as a natural condition of human beings that is present in all activity (Habermas, 1984). The consequence of this is that we speak not of the presence or absence of praxis but rather of the *quality* of the praxis in mentoring. Mentoring is thus conceived of as an activity that can be done intentionally to a greater or lesser degree, where the quality of that intention is open to critical reflection (Ax & Ponte, 2008). Mentoring occurs within a hierarchy of contexts (educational setting, community, system, state, nation, individual worldview). This questioning of the quality of praxis can be made at the level of individuals – a specific mentor teacher may have a higher or lower quality of praxis – or at the level of a system, where a system may support a high quality of praxis to a greater or lesser extent. Consideration of the praxis of mentoring extends to the social, philosophical and moral understanding of the individuals involved in the action and to the context in which the action occurs.

The notion that praxis is always present but may be of higher or lower quality begs the question who is it that judges this quality of the values that inform practice? We do not wish to enter this philosophical debate around the quality of the values themselves. Rather, the aim is to suggest that the quality of praxis is improved through the presence of mentoring conversations that interrogate theoretical foundations and their relationship to practice. Mentoring, we argue, should be conceived of as the *dialogical community* through which this higher quality of praxis is achieved (Bernstein, 2011). Mentors bring to the act of mentoring, in the dialogue between mentor and mentee, their conception of how they understand the teaching profession. Hargreaves and Fullan (2000) hold that '[m]entoring … will never reach its potential unless it is guided by a deeper conceptualization that treats it as central to the task of transforming the teaching profession itself' (p. 1). It is a fundamentally Freirean argument (Freire, 1970/2007) that mentoring without considered intention may lead a mentor to perpetuate the status quo, whilst with intention mentoring can become a transformational act at various levels in the hierarchy of teaching contexts. This theoretical lens of critical pedagogy provides a perspective for talking about mentoring as having the potential to transform rather than reproduce educational systems. The sentiment is summarised by Kemmis (2010) who argues that research into praxis has twin goals, '(1) to guide the development of educational praxis and (2) to guide the development of education itself' (p. 9).

Striving for high-quality praxis in mentoring is thus of great significance to the teaching profession. Mentoring of both preservice and early career teachers is a key means of sharing knowledge and theory between one generation of teachers and the next. The development of high-quality mentoring programs is not an 'end in itself'

but rather a part of the broader aim to support the profession in building better teaching and learning (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009). Mentoring in this project is conceived more broadly than involving a mentor and a mentee; rather it involves the wider teaching community (Kelly, Clará, Kehrwald, & Danaher, 2016) and is an 'integrated part of broader improvement efforts to reculture our schools and school systems' including early childhood (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000, p. 5). Mentoring often takes place both for preservice teachers during professional experience (Mattsson, Eilertsen, & Rorrison, 2011) and for beginning teachers in their early years of practice (Hobson et al., 2009).

Quality mentoring leads to improved teacher satisfaction and a greater likelihood of retention, based upon self-reported data from beginning teachers as to whether they found their mentor helpful (DeAngelis, Wall, & Che, 2013; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Much of the literature on mentoring focusses upon the organisational considerations that can hamper the quality of a mentoring program, such as poor structuring of the mentoring program, inadequate time allocation and personal differences (Hobson et al., 2009). However, focussing on these technical issues of management and policies can overshadow inquiry into the moral and ethical dimensions of the conditions for mentoring programs that support high-quality praxis. When considering the design and implementation of mentoring programs, there is a need to ask questions of praxis: How should mentors be, act and behave? How can the education and training of mentors support them in bringing their knowledge to the mentoring relationship? This is consistent with Freire and the idea that 'teacher preparation should go beyond the technical preparation of teachers and be rooted in the ethical formation both of selves and of history' (Freire, 1970/2007).

Where Praxis Occurs

Mentoring is then conceived as a dialogic community within which praxis can be raised through conversations about the intentions behind teaching practice. In order to understand the impact that this may have for the design and implementation of online mentoring programs, we use the technical dimensions of mentoring as a prompt for the type of critical reflections that may occur within these dialogic communities. We argue that a critical stance on the part of the mentor, and the system that prepares mentors, forms a basis for amplifying the quality of praxis.

There are a number of frameworks that give voice to the technical skills for mentoring (Barrera, Braley, & Slate, 2010; Hobson et al., 2009; Orland-Barak, 2010). A useful and widely used synthesis of common components of mentorship is the five factor model of mentoring (Hudson, 2004; Hudson, Skamp, & Brooks, 2005). The five factor model was selected as a way to structure the discussion of the technical dimensions of mentoring due to its relevance to the current context in Australia and around the world. Programs based on the five factor model have been funded by a number of states and territories throughout Australia, such as Queensland through

the Mentoring Beginning Teachers program and others through the Mentoring for Effective Teaching program, as well as internationally in Hong Kong, the Philippines and the United States. The five traits that are expected of mentors are listed in the Hudson model as (a) the ability to introduce mentees to the requirements of the educational system, (b) the ability to share pedagogical knowledge with mentees, (c) the ability to model teaching practice for the mentee, (d) the ability to provide feedback to the mentee and (e) the possession of personal attributes by the mentor. These concepts have a firm basis in the literature as types of knowledge important to preservice and beginning teachers (Barrera et al., 2010; Clark & Byrnes, 2012; Hobson et al., 2009). Each of the activities involved in the five factors will be briefly described as both a technical ability and a basis for critical dialogue that brings into question the underpinning values and beliefs of the mentee.

It is expected that mentors can *teach system requirements* to mentees. A teacher is embedded within many systems and must learn to navigate the rules and social norms of many of these systems simultaneously. A preservice or beginning teacher discovers that there are expectations of them that exist at the level of the classroom, the educational setting, the broader community of teachers, the state or independent teaching system that they are a part of, the national teaching system and the profession. All this is filtered by the individual understanding that the teacher has of those systems (Jakobsdóttir, McKeown, & Hoven, 2009). Each has its own obligations, be they enforced, encouraged, assumed, cultural or moral. A preservice or beginning teacher needs to learn how to function within these different systems and that a mentor can support the mentee to negotiate them, for example, working with the preservice or beginning teacher to develop teaching outcomes that are coherent with the learning frameworks, national quality standards or curriculum documents, developing an understanding of policy and codes of conduct and taking part in the curriculum planning with other teachers (P. Hudson & Millwater, 2008). A praxis-based understanding of these activities is that the mentee has a role to play in shaping these systems – by moving beyond the essential skills of survival and focussing on nurturing the mentee's *critical facility* to engage with the systems in which they find themselves – helping them to recognise the activity systems of which they are a part. For example, it is a frequent refrain within the teaching profession that the administrative and bureaucratic obligations of accountability within the various systems can prevent a teacher from having the time to plan and deliver effective teaching programs (Fenech & Sumsion, 2007; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009). Mentoring is an opportunity for teachers to critically engage with all of these systems within which they are embedded, asking questions such as why is there often a gap between educational theory and the range of pedagogical practices used in the school? How do curricula come to be developed? What are the ethics of practising as a teacher embedded within so many (potentially conflicting) systems?

We recognise the implicit hierarchy of needs in Hudson's second element of the five factor model and that preservice and beginning teachers must learn to survive if they are to be transformational – yet Freire's critical pedagogy can be used to suggest perhaps these two need not be separated. Just as a teacher can teach a child to become literate either with or without teaching them that literacy is a powerful tool

for their own emancipation, it is possible that so too can a mentor teach navigation of system requirements in a way that moves towards emancipation of the mentee preservice or beginning teacher. As a way of explanation, let us assume that it is expected that mentors can aid the development of a mentee's *pedagogical knowledge*. In this activity, a mentor supports the mentee in developing content knowledge, assessment and questioning skills, planning/timetabling/preparation strategies and classroom management skills – as well as the integration of these skills with problem-solving (Fenech & Sumsion, 2007; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009). In developing a praxis of pedagogical knowledge, the mentor assists the mentee to develop the critical faculties to question pedagogical assumptions. For example, some preservice or beginning teachers enter a school and are told by the principal that the school is a 'Marzano' school that teaches using dimensions of learning framework (Marzano, Pickering, & McTighe, 1993) or an early childhood setting that uses a 'Reggio Emilia' philosophy (Gandini, 1993; Tomlinson, 1996). Through a praxis-based understanding, mentors can assist mentees to develop the critical faculties to understand how a particular educational philosophy may be productive/unproductive or lead to greater equality/inequality.

The third activity involved in mentorship is the effective *modelling of classroom practice*, in which the mentor provides the mentee with exemplars of what they should be aiming for. These include important abilities of enthusiasm, lesson design, language, teaching structure, effective teaching, classroom management, rapport with students and 'hands-on' lessons (Hudson et al., 2005). A praxis-based account suggests that mentors will aid mentees in developing the skills to reflect upon their own practice and of the practices of others. Rather than simply showing a teacher what a successful class looks like, they reveal their own areas of confusion and use these as an opportunity to reflect critically with the mentee upon practice.

The fourth activity involved in mentorship is providing *critical* feedback for the mentee. The practice of providing feedback involves the mentor setting expectations for the mentee, reviewing lesson plans, observing teaching, providing both oral and written feedback and guiding self-reflection. These are all activities that can have a high or a low quality of praxis brought to them. A typical example is the provision of oral feedback to a mentee teacher. A mentor can assume a position of authority in telling a mentee teacher what they have done well – or they can help the mentee to see multiple perspective upon their own teaching and assist the mentee to learn the skills for reflecting upon their own practice by approaching this through the lens of allowing the mentee to lead these conversations (Hudson, 2014). This question of authority within the mentoring dialogue is an important discussion but beyond the aim of this chapter.

The final element required of a mentor is that they have the right *personal attributes* that contribute to effective mentoring. For this factor, practice and praxis are closely aligned. Hudson et al. (2005) report that being a good mentor teacher requires a teacher to have an ability to facilitate reflective practice, be an attentive listener, develop positive attitudes, be comfortable and confident talking about teaching and be able to instil confidence in a mentee. A high quality of praxis in

these abilities comes from situating them in a critical understanding of the theory of the aims of mentoring.
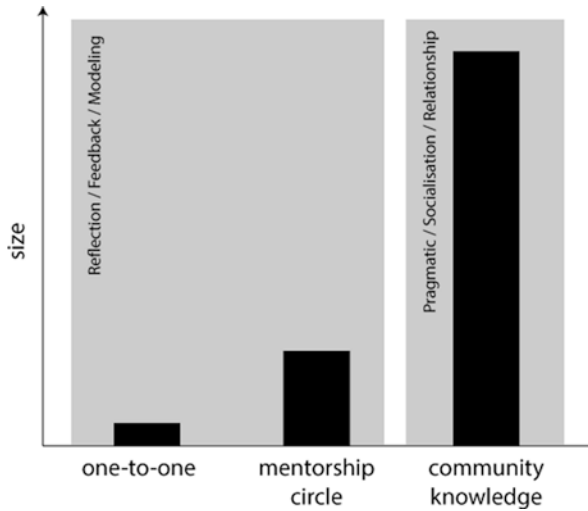
Praxis in Online Mentoring

The idea that mentoring programs can support a high quality of praxis was explored through practice, by developing an online mentoring ecosystem between the years 2014–2017 and ongoing. TeachConnect (www.teachconnect.edu.au) is an online platform that supports teachers in the transition from preservice into the profession, particularly during professional experience (Kelly et al., 2016; Kelly, Clará, & Kickbusch, 2015; Kelly, Reushle, Chakrabarty, & Kinnane, 2014). At the time of writing, TeachConnect involves over a thousand Queensland teachers, with the majority of these being preservice and beginning teachers. Despite this uptake, the online community is still in its developmental phase, and the program has not been formally evaluated. Discussion will focus upon the mentoring program that has been put in place.

TeachConnect was developed as a platform that supports dialogic communities of mentorship in many different configurations. It was developed as design-based research over four phases of consultation, design and testing with participants to inquire into the design needs for teachers within online communities (Kelly et al., 2016, 2014). A brief description of TeachConnect serves to describe the communication channels that it affords, the communities that were convened within it and the understanding of praxis for online mentoring that resulted.

The main channel for mentoring in TeachConnect is through what is termed in the platform *mentorship circles* – private spaces (closed to non-members) that are small by online standards whilst being large by the standards of group mentoring (<60 people). A second space of mentoring is through one-to-one contact, what is termed *messaging* (similar to email) within the platform. Finally, all members also have access to a single *community knowledge space*. The community knowledge area is designed to support conversations around specific themes, responding to the questions posed by members of the community. This allowed support for many types of mentorship within the platform: group (one to many with preservice and experienced teachers in mentorship circles), peer (preservice and beginning teachers helping one another in mentorship circles and community knowledge) and one-to-one mentorship (messaging an experienced teacher).

One way to consider the affordances of these different channels of communication is by examining the six ways in which teachers can support one another online (Kelly & Antonio, 2016): through support in reflecting on practice, providing feedback, modelling practice, socialisation in the profession, pragmatic support and convening relationships. Figure 8.1 shows which of the six types of support prevail within each of the different areas of TeachConnect. Whilst each of these channels for communication can support the formal convening of dialogical communities

size

Reflection / Feedback / Modeling

Pragmatic / Socialisation / Relationship

one-to-one   mentorship   community
                  circle   knowledge

Fig. 8.1 Types of support within areas of the TeachConnect platform

around teaching practice, they aim to support the development of different types of knowledge.

A question that we came up against in designing TeachConnect is whether the ability for a dialogic community to support a high quality of praxis is dependent upon the affordances of its channels for communication. An argument made by Clarà, Kelly, Mauri and Danaher (2015) is that sharing of teaching practice (i.e. modelling practice, supporting reflection and providing feedback) is best supported by private, stable and trusted relationships within small groups. From Fig. 8.1, we have an expectation that interrogation of teachers' values and the relationship of those values to practice is unlikely to occur within the community knowledge (large, unstable membership) but may well occur within messaging and mentorship circles.

Within the smaller and more stable mentorship circles and messaging spaces, design decisions were made to promote a high quality of praxis in mentoring. Firstly, the allocation of members into mentorship circles was designed to have approximately 30 members; usually 28 preservice teachers were placed with two experienced teachers. Pragmatic concerns led to these numbers ranging from as few as 9 members in one circle to as many as 59 in another. The expectation was that mentorship circles were the place in which a high quality of praxis could best be developed. Conversations that required more privacy could move from these circles into the space of one-to-one messaging, whilst realisations that would benefit the wider community could be replicated within the community knowledge in what Clarà et al. (2015) refer to as *fractal design*.

Secondly, experienced teachers who were placed within the mentorship circles received 2 days of training in facilitating mentorship. These experienced teachers were selected through direct invitation and a call for expressions of interest, with

selection based upon the breadth of their curriculum vitae, their experience in supervising preservice teachers and whether they had received any teaching awards. Twenty such mentors were recruited. Of the selected mentors, 18 attended a two-day face-to-face workshop in online mentorship using a variation of the 'Mentoring Exceptional Teachers' course in which participants learnt about the praxis of mentoring using the five factor model as a framework (Hudson et al., 2015). The technical skills of mentoring were taught to mentors by going through each of the five factors in turn. Each factor was approached through questions and exercises that elicited the experiences of the mentors to be and then built upon these to arrive at advice for mentoring. There was also a mentorship circle in which mentors themselves could experience peer and group mentoring – a 'circle of mentors'. This circle was supported by two teachers with at least 10 years' experience as supervising teachers.

The complex relationships within the TeachConnect ecosystem are shown in Fig. 8.2 as a network diagram. Many teachers come together in a mentorship circle, in which there is more than one experienced teacher with mentorship training present. Many mentors come together in the circle of mentors in the presence of experienced supervising teachers. One-to-one connections occur organically within this ecosystem.

The *aim* of this ecosystem was to support conversations in which a high quality of praxis was supported. For example, the hope was that preservice teachers in professional experience would commence discussions by relating their day-to-day experiences within their schools. Through dialogue within the mentorship community, and at the appropriate level, these discussions would lead to critical reflection and the linking of theoretical notions to the *techne* of teaching. Participants in TeachConnect would be supported in developing their praxis through both the medium and the messaging, where the medium of the social spaces is inherently collegial and participatory, relying upon mutually beneficial relationships (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Alternately the messaging (through the design of the site, e.g. quotes displayed on each page, and framing of correspondence with participants, e.g. emails) attempts to emphasise the need to consider the philosophical underpinnings for teaching practice.

However, the outcomes from this phase of the TeachConnect platform as a design-based research project suggest that a high quality of praxis was not sufficiently supported by this design. What we observed in the platform is that members are often unwilling to discuss their teaching practice until others within the group had normalised this kind of sharing. In many mentorship circles, this never occurred, and conversations remained stilted or superficial (e.g. focussing on discussion of resources).

A further phase of the platform is currently being implemented. The two main areas being explored are the use of existing dialogical communities of teachers that have relationship in the physical world (to see if the depth of the relationship changes the possibilities for online mentoring) and the way in which experienced teachers are trained (explicitly discussing the support for a high level of praxis). A further consideration is that external policy decisions continually impact upon
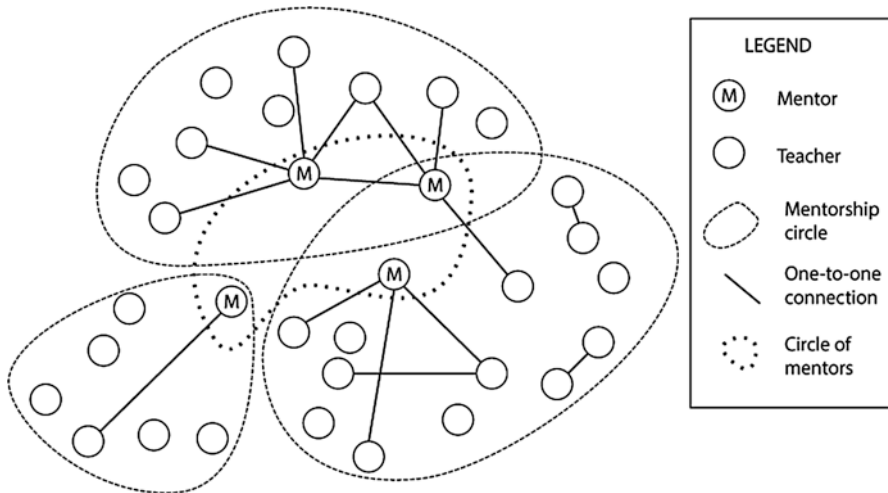
Fig. 8.2 Mentor relationships within TeachConnect: mentorship circles, one-to-one relationships and a circle of mentors

mentorship communities. For example, the implementation of professional standards (AITSL, 2011) led to a redesign of aspects of our mentor training. These standards have a focus upon the more technical aspects of teaching. Despite this, the standards and the regulation around them can be viewed as an opportunity to provide both structure and motivation for critical engagement and conversations that raise the quality of praxis.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter has described some of the key issues involved in fostering a high quality of praxis within online mentoring. It has argued for embracing a broad understanding of mentorship, one that includes online mentoring as well as group and peer mentoring. It has defined mentoring as occurring within formally convened dialogic communities of teachers and has identified the design of mentorship programs as an opportunity to raise the quality of praxis of teachers. Typically, it is teacher educators who mentor preservice teachers and either bureaucracies or teachers within schools who design mentorship programs for beginning teachers. We have argued that the designers of mentorship programs have an opportunity to raise the *quality* of praxis of the teachers involved. There is an opportunity to support praxis when designing online spaces within which the mentorship community interacts when planning the membership of the community and when planning for training of mentors within the community.

One way in which we have suggested that a high quality of praxis can be supported is through adopting a critical stance when teaching the skills of mentoring. Mentorship communities can support their membership in questioning the different skills involved in being a teacher, whether that be aligning with the requirements of an education system or learning the curriculum and how to teach it. Any of these skills of teaching can and, we argue, should be subjected to critical (philosophical and moral) questioning for the development of a higher quality of praxis. Mentorship spaces, as formally convened communities of teachers (one-to-one or group), provide a promising space within which this questioning can occur.

In this chapter, we have focussed upon the mentoring of preservice teachers within the online space. The online space provides even more opportunity to control the design of a community: its membership, the space within which it occurs and the way that members interact. However, designing for a high quality of praxis in the online domain adds further complications. How can a high quality of praxis be supported within the different types of mentorship that exist? An example of the TeachConnect platform has been described where group, peer and one-to-one mentorship were all present. However, our experiences in designing and building this ecosystem for mentorship have uncovered a range of critical questions that we struggle to address. For example, the participants in our online space seem to be more willing to engage in discussion of specific technical aspects of teaching practice and less willing to engage in a deep and critical discussion about how these aspects of teaching practice relate to the different contexts of the classroom, school, community and nation.

The contribution of the chapter is to identify the potential of online mentorship as a support mechanism for mentor-mentee discussions that go beyond the technical aspects of teaching to the deeper epistemological and critical questions. We begin to address questions like what would an online community of teachers that support a high quality of praxis look like? What are the preconditions for dialogic communities of teachers to begin engaging in deep discussions about the values underpinning their practice? And finally, how can we reconcile the desire for fluid roles of mentor-mentee within a community of equals whilst also supporting groups of teachers by preparing them for facilitation of a high quality of praxis? It is our belief that we should continue to explore how critical theory can align with online mentoring and open up the discussions between teachers and designers about the potential of the online space.

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Part III
Enabling Dialogues

Chapter 9
Using a Developmental Assessment Rubric to Revitalise Stakeholder Conversations in Professional Experience

Trudy-Ann Sweeney and Barbara Nielsen

Abstract This chapter reports a study that sought to examine the impact of introducing a developmental assessment rubric for professional experience for preservice teachers in one South Australian university. The rubric was designed to focus the mentoring and formative and summative assessment of professional experience to align with the new Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST). The study engaged with all the stakeholders on multiple dimensions of the mentorship and assessment of professional experience. The aspects selected for reporting in this chapter focus on the scope, value and changes in the nature and quality of the conversations between various stakeholders. The study has produced evidence that as a result of introducing the developmental rubric, the conversations changed from generalities and platitudes to more professional conversations that encompassed the full scope of what is expected of a graduate teacher, clarifying their level of performance and informing their orderly development. Those engaged in the assessment process using the rubric valued the shared language to talk about teaching and its developmental properties. The use of the rubric was shown to increase preservice teachers' capacity and willingness to exercise agency in managing their own learning needs. This chapter argues that such an approach makes professional experience a pivotal element that defines, forms and assures the readiness of preservice teachers to teach and, more importantly, prepares them to be active agents of their learning in their future teaching careers.

Introduction

Schools of education in Australian higher education institutions are being called upon to justify their approaches to initial teacher education to assure the government and the profession that at the completion of their courses, graduates are competent

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to teach. This reflects an international trend in which most high-performing school systems work 'in partnership with schools to train teachers' (Ingvarson et al., 2014, p. 51). This imperative to assure the learning of preservice teacher education graduates against nationally imposed standards provided a stimulus for the development of a unique developmental preservice teaching assessment rubric for our courses. The intent was to facilitate a more transparent, focused, consistent and accountable assessment of preservice teachers' development during their professional experience.

The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) articulates the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required of preservice teachers at the point of graduation, which is the focus of this study, as well as mapping the development of professional expectations of teachers across their careers (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], 2014). The APST provides a framework organised in four career stages: graduate, proficient, highly accomplished and lead (AITSL, 2014). The framework provides teachers the opportunity to self-assess their performance and leadership capabilities and inform and plan the development of their professional learning goals. Yinger and Hendricks-Lee (2000) systematically researched the efficacy and impact of a similar process of teacher standards in the United States, arguing that they are a powerful tool in the development and empowerment of teaching as a profession. More recently Clinton et al. (2015) argued that engagement with standards is most effective in professional practice in schools as a reference point for efforts to improve professional learning.

As a result of the APST at graduate level being the final achievement standard for graduation from an initial teacher education program, it is imperative that a pregraduate level framework be developed against which supervising teachers, school coordinators and teacher educators can assess and guide the developing capabilities of preservice teachers during their studies in terms of their emerging competence to teach. In response to this gap, a new multifaceted, developmental assessment rubric was created to explicate a developmental learning process, making clear what is expected of preservice teachers as they progress through their program of studies at our university. Through this rubric, we can also address the critical need to accurately assess preservice teachers' emerging knowledge and capabilities and assist in the formation of more valid and reliable judgements to support and guide their learning (Sim et al., 2012).

The developmental assessment rubric (hereafter referred to as 'the rubric') describes the professional expectations leading up to the APST graduate level, providing two additional levels (novice level and emerging), which precede the expectations of a graduate teacher. Ure, Gough, and Newton (2009) found that without such explicit expectations, preservice teachers received very limited feedback on the full scope of professional practice. A potential benefit of the alignment of the rubric with the APST was that graduates would be better prepared to confidently guide and demonstrate their ongoing professional development throughout their teaching careers.

This chapter discusses the findings from the trial of the rubric in the Bachelor of Education (Primary)/Bachelor of Arts double degree in 2015, with 438 third- and fourth-year preservice teachers across 172 schools in South Australia. The findings suggest that the use of the rubric resulted in a qualitative difference in preservice teachers' conversations with their supervising teachers, school coordinators and teacher educators. When using the rubric, conversations about teaching were comprehensive and complex and clarified the various roles in the formative assessment processes. Furthermore, the focus of conversations shifted from what has previously seemed to be intuitive judgements towards evidence-informed practice that was appropriate to the context. Whilst there was a mindfulness of the need for a formal summative assessment of learning as a judgement of preservice teacher capability, the conversations now epitomised the language of assessment for learning. The rubric was actively used from the outset of the placement conversations to review, shape, plan and enact preservice teachers' learning goals. Our findings uncovered that the rubric encouraged better learning and engagement, strengthened the relationship between the School of Education and the host schools and encouraged preservice teachers to become active agents of their own learning.

The Developmental Assessment Rubric

The backward mapped rubric describes preservice teachers' emerging capabilities in three levels as they develop their professional practice to graduate level across the 37 focus areas of the APST. The rubric also includes the proficient level as a fourth element to accommodate those students who are already achieving this level. 'Backward mapping' is defined as the process that educators use to design learning experiences and instructional techniques to achieve specific goals. 'One starts with the end – the desired results (goals or standards) – and then derives the curriculum from the evidence of learning (performances) called for by the standard and the teaching needed to equip students to perform' (Wiggins & McTighe, 2000, p. 8).

The novice level outlines an expectation that for most APST focus areas, preservice teachers will already have an awareness and appreciation of the significance of specific aspects of classroom teaching. At the novice level, it is understood that preservice teachers may possess limited domain-specific knowledge and basic skills to complete focused tasks. It is also considered reasonable that at this level, preservice teachers will require considerable guidance in implementing teaching plans. At the emerging level, there are increased expectations of preservice teachers to research, plan and implement more complex teaching activities with increasing independence and to undertake informed critique of their teaching practices and students' learning performances.

The graduate level, as outlined by the APST, expects preservice teachers to have developed a sophisticated capacity to plan and carry out complex teaching responsibilities and attend to the diverse needs of students. It is expected that through their engagement in the classroom and the school, preservice teachers will generate valid

evidence regarding their fitness for teaching and provide a well-reasoned justification as to its validity. The APST proficient level is also included after the graduate level in the rubric. The rationale for this inclusion was that whilst it is not expected that preservice teachers will attain this standard across all focus areas, there are some preservice teachers who enter the program with considerable life and employment experiences and skills, who can demonstrate that they are able to perform, in some aspects, as a practiced and effective classroom teacher.

The rubric is introduced to preservice teachers at the start of their studies to familiarise them with what is expected of them over time and to engender their capacity for self-assessment and self-monitoring of their developing knowledge and practice. The deliberate development of preservice teachers' awareness of their emerging capabilities was designed to provide them with a sense of personal agency in their own learning (Billett, 2008). The underlying premise is that there is long-term value in promoting self-regulation of their learning in school environments where learning is more contextual, ongoing and collaborative than academic learning (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005; Tynjala, 2008). Preservice teachers need to learn to deliberately plan their own learning, in addition to learning to manage well-designed and structured learning tasks for their students (Niemi, 2002).

A primary intention of the rubric is to prompt preservice teachers to engage in professional conversations to reflect on their progress towards becoming 'classroom ready' (Craven et al., 2014). Its intention is to provoke conversations about how their behaviour as a teacher impacts on students' learning and their own learning (Endedijk, Vermunt, Verloop, & Brekelmans, 2012). It is also designed to contribute to the formation of their professional identity as they actively form and reform their ideas of self and belonging (Ruohotie-Lyhty & Moate, 2016) and meet challenges of working in contexts where there are discrepancies between their own beliefs and the teaching practices preferred in their placement school (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009).

All three professional assessors are required to use the rubric in a moderation process to ensure that preservice teachers' practice is aligned appropriately and consistently with the performance levels, thereby increasing the reliability of the summative assessment. The goal of using the rubric is that there will be greater consistency of focus by multiple, independent assessors (Ingvarson, 2011). Jonsson and Mattsson (2011) make the point that 'assessors need to be well acquainted with the criteria and concepts used in the rubric so that they interpret the criteria in a similar way' (p. 174). The teacher educator assessor is an employee of the university as well as an experienced classroom teacher, whilst the supervising teacher's role is to provide incremental feedback and guidance on all aspects of a preservice teacher's performance as he/she gradually assumes the role of the teacher. Because supervising teachers often invest significantly in the development of the preservice teacher and develop a strong personal connection, there is a perception that there is a risk that supervising teachers 'are unlikely to recommend failing a preservice teacher' (Parsell, 2013, p. 15) where it is warranted. As such, a supervising teacher's assessment is often regarded as 'highly subjective' reflecting their 'personal principles and prejudices' (Parsell, 2013, p. 15). The rubric aims to assist supervising

teachers to provide explicit statements of their assessment regarding how well the preservice teacher has performed and progressed.

The third professional assessor is the school coordinator of preservice teacher professional experience, who provides a broader perspective to the assessment process related to the complex and multidimensional realities of a school's internal and external environment (Cohen, Hoz, & Kaplan 2013). These coordinators are employees of the school and are well placed to support preservice teachers to engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community beyond the scope of a specific classroom. In addition, in comparison to most supervising teachers, school coordinators are exposed to many preservice teachers over time; thus, their judgements are informed by their capacity to make more moderated comparisons regarding the stage of development of preservice teachers' performances. Similarly, the teacher educators from the university often have many years of experience in supporting a number of preservice teachers, frequently across multiple schools, states and even countries, thus having the capacity to moderate summative judgements.

Formative and summative assessment conversations are informed by the rubric. Preservice teachers are expected to engage with the rubric at the start of the professional experience to identify what is important to learn and to do in practice, to self-assess their areas of strength and development and to verify their assessment with their supervising teacher, school coordinator and teacher educator. They then use it to plan and track the progress in their learning during the initial period of classroom experience, after which they independently complete an interim review. The review is shared with their supervising teacher who prepares a formal interim report that is discussed with the teacher educator. This process enables a timely identification of preservice teachers at risk of not satisfactorily completing the formal teaching practice and ensures appropriate support for risk mitigation and improved classroom performance (AITSL, 2015). Similarly, at the end of the professional experience, the supervising teacher reviews the achievements of the preservice teacher against the expected stage of development and prepares a final report including comments from the school coordinator and teacher educator. The preservice teacher also submits a reflection on their school experience and a professional learning plan. Both reports form the basis of a concluding discussion between the supervising teacher, school coordinator and teacher educator. If there is disagreement, the latter makes the final judgement on the assessment, informed by the three-way conversation.

The Study

Considerable research and time were employed to develop both the rubric and the supporting self-assessment and goal-setting processes. The final shape of the rubric and processes was derived from rigorous discussion and critique within the School of Education Professional Experience Team and in consultation with school

Table 9.1 Demographic details of the teacher educators, school coordinators and supervising teachers

Participants	Years of experience (equivalent full-time teaching)	Years of experience in this role
Teacher educators	100% ($n = 12$) had >11 years	80% ($n = 12$) had >2 years
		60% ($n = 9$) had 3–5 years
		20% ($n = 3$) were new to role
School coordinators	69.6% ($n = 16$) had >20 years	95.7% ($n = 22$) had >3 years
		30.4% ($n = 5$) had 2 years
		26.1% ($n = 6$) had 5+ years
Supervising teachers	56% ($n = 52$) had >15 years	62.6% ($n = 57$) supervised 1–3 preservice teachers in the last 5 years
		37% ($n = 34$) had 4+ preservice teachers in the last 5 years

coordinators in 2014. Ethics approval was granted and a pilot study was conducted in the third- and fourth-year primary program in 2015 to investigate the research questions: to what extent does the rubric and the self-assessment and goal-setting process facilitate conversations (a) to achieve greater clarity and shared understanding regarding the expectations of preservice teachers' performance during professional experience, (b) to encourage preservice teachers to be self-regulating agents of their own learning and (c) to guide formative feedback and summative judgements about preservice teachers' teaching capabilities aligned with the APST?

Participants

Four main participant groups were involved in the evaluation: teacher educators, school coordinators, supervising teachers and preservice teachers from the third year and fourth year. The same rubric and assessment process was used for both placements. Table 9.1 provides a summary of the demographic details of the teacher educators, school coordinators and supervising teachers. This shows that the majority of stakeholders supervising preservice teachers had between 11 and 20 years of teaching experience, and their supervisory role experience was between 3 and 5 years. This suggests that the assessor participants were experienced teachers familiar with the roles and responsibilities related to the supervision of preservice teachers ensuring their responses are less likely to be connected to issues associated with early career teachers or inexperienced supervisors in professional experience contexts.

Table 9.2 Survey participants and number of completed surveys

Target group	Total number of target group	No. of completed surveys	Percentage of surveys completed
Fourth-year teacher educators	40	15	37.5%
Fourth-year school coordinators	105	23	21.9%
Fourth-year supervising teachers	206	89	43.2%
Fourth-year preservice teachers	206	13	6.3%
Third-year preservice teachers	105	20	19.0%

Data Collection and Analysis

SurveyMonkey™ was used as a platform to create five comparable surveys. The survey questions sought to collect data from participants related to their:

- Demographic details
- Evaluation of the new developmental assessment rubric, self-assessment and goal-setting processes using a five-point Likert scale
- Perceptions about the use of the developmental assessment rubric, self-assessment and goal-setting processes using open-ended questions
- Perceptions of the most significant changes that occurred as a result of the innovation

Section 4 of the survey was restricted to teacher educators, school coordinators and supervising teachers and was to be completed if these participants had experience with the university's professional experience supervision prior to the introduction of the rubric and new process. The surveys were distributed via a link identified in an email. Participants were encouraged to complete the survey within 1 month. When the surveys were closed, the data was cleaned to remove incomplete and/or duplicate entries. This resulted in a small number of surveys being removed from the dataset. In the reporting of the findings, qualitative statements made in anonymous surveys and focus groups were included. No identifiers were given in order to preserve the anonymity of participants.

Elaboration of the survey responses was sought through conversations in two focus groups of 12 teacher educators. Teacher educators were chosen for the focus groups as their perspective of the process as a whole was of particular interest in this study. These participants had long-term prior roles as classroom teachers and school leaders and were experienced teacher educators. Some were also employed as casual academic tutors within the teacher education program.

Table 9.2 identifies the five participant groups and the survey completion statistics. A limitation of the study was the small percentage of preservice teachers' responses, especially from those in the fourth year.

Table 9.3 The rubric and self-assessment and goal-setting processes were useful to understand the full scope of capabilities preservice teachers were expected to develop

Group	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Teacher educators	0%	0%	0%	66.67%	33.33%	15
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(10)	(5)	
Supervising teachers	0%	0%	5.43%	58.70%	35.87	92
	(0)	(0)	(5)	(54)	(33)	
School coordinators	0%	0%	0%	45.45%	54.55%	22
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(10)	(12)	
Fourth-year preservice teachers	0%	10.00%	10.00%	60.00%	20.00%	20
	(0)	(2)	(2)	(12)	(4)	
Third-year preservice teachers	0%	7.69%	7.69%	61.54%	23.08%	13
	(0)	(1)	(1)	(8)	(3)	

Findings

The findings of the survey and focus groups identified the impact of the implementation of the new rubric. This section is presented in three parts aligned with the research questions.

Conversations Clarifying the Expectations of Preservice Teachers

A major intention of the APST and the development of the rubric was that preservice teachers be assessed against a comprehensive conception of teachers' work. The study sought to investigate if the rubric and the self-assessment and goal-setting processes expanded the scope of conversations between preservice teachers, supervising teachers, school coordinators and teacher educators. The findings suggest that all stakeholders either strongly agreed or agreed that the use of the rubric and assessment processes had a positive impact on the scope of the conversations about teaching in professional experience contexts (see Table 9.3).

The strong stakeholder agreement indicated by the survey results was also supported by their qualitative comments. School coordinators noted that they used the rubric to ensure the school provided the required experiences for preservice teachers, and it directed their attention to monitoring preservice teachers' developmental needs. Supervising teachers described how they used the rubric to classify, monitor and plan the development of preservice teachers' understanding and skills that aligned with expectations and developmental needs, rather than simply discussing only things noticed during the lessons observed. Several supervising teachers noted that the rubric prompted them to provide more comprehensive feedback to address a number of APST focus areas that would otherwise have been overlooked.

Preservice teachers reported using the rubric as a checkpoint to ensure they addressed all of the requirements and confirm their self-assessment of their practice with their supervisors.

Compared to previous years, and as a result of using the rubric, school coordinators reported that they observed a decrease in the frequency of platitudinous comments made by supervising teachers related to preservice teachers' performance in the interim and final reports. They also reported they were able to identify the developmental needs of preservice teachers earlier in the professional experience placement and direct the preservice teachers to appropriate resources. Additionally, both supervising teachers and school coordinators reported that as a result of using the rubric, preservice teachers were able to engage in professional conversations about their strengths and areas of focus for their development.

Fourth-year preservice teachers reported they felt their supervising teachers and teacher educators were able to engage in more informative and concise conversations because they were focused on the same focus area descriptors. Some third- and fourth-year preservice teachers noted that some supervising teachers were reluctant to refer to the rubric as they were unfamiliar with the APST. A similar problem was described by Jonsson and Mattsson (2011) where preservice teacher competency was not recognised in the rubric resulting in its nonuse. This points to a need to improve the validity and reliability of the rubric by providing more implementation support focused on establishing common understandings about the concepts related to the generic descriptors, as well as strategies for how to use the rubric to assist preservice teachers set professional development goals and track their development through the provision of nuanced feedback.

Conversations of Self-Regulation and Agentic Learning

An important goal underpinning the rubric was that preservice teachers would become agents of their own learning whilst in the school environment, in other words, self-regulated learners. Characteristics of these learners include self-assessment and goal setting. The majority of teacher educators, supervising teachers, school coordinators and preservice teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the rubric and self-assessment and goal-setting processes assisted preservice teachers to confront challenges, set themselves new learning goals as well as self-assess their progress towards the graduate level of the APST (see Tables 9.4 and 9.5).

Goal Setting

A noteworthy 30.7% ($n = 7$) of fourth-year preservice teachers indicated they did not believe that the rubric would assist them in goal setting. This less than affirming outcome could be attributed to the fact that these participants were the first to use the new rubric and assessment processes and had less preparation for its use than

Table 9.4 The rubric and self-assessment and goal-setting processes helped preservice teachers set specific goals to progress towards the achievement of the graduate level of the APST

Group	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Teacher educators	0%	0%	0%	73.33%	26.67%	15
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(11)	(4)	
Supervising teachers	0%	1.10%	6.59%	57.14%	35.16%	91
	(0)	(1)	(6)	(52)	(32)	
School coordinators	0%	0%	4.55%	50.00%	45.45%	22
	(0)	(0)	(1)	(11)	(10)	
Fourth-year preservice teachers	0%	30.77%	7.69%	38.46%	23.08%	13
	(0)	(4)	(1)	(5)	(3)	
Third-year preservice teachers	5.00%	5.00%	25.00%	30.00%	35.00%	20
	(1)	(1)	(5)	(6)	(7)	

Table 9.5 The new rubric and assessment processes assisted the preservice teacher to self-assess their progress towards the achievement of the graduate level of the APST

Group	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Teacher educators	0%	0%	0%	60.00%	40.00%	15
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(9)	(6)	
Supervising teachers	0%	0%	2.17%	64.13%	33.70%	92
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(59)	(31)	
School coordinators	0%	0%	0%	59.07%	40.91%	22
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(13)	(9)	
Fourth-year preservice teachers	0%	15.38%	0%	61.54%	23.08%	13
	(0)	(2)	(0)	(8)	(3)	
Third-year preservice teachers	0%	5.00%	15.00%	40.00%	40.00%	20
	(0)	(1)	(3)	(8)	(8)	

subsequent cohorts. This was due to the final professional experience placement being conducted in semester one. By contrast, the third-year students who had greater induction and preparation for using the rubric as their professional experience placement that was conducted in semester two were more affirming of its value in their learning and goal setting.

Self-Assessment

A key principle of a quality assessment system is that it 'enhances the capacity of preservice teachers for self-assessment and reflection on their developing knowledge and practice' (Queensland College of Teachers [QCT], 2012, p. 72). Well-designed assessment protocols can equip students to become reflective practitioners, sensitive to their own ongoing professional developmental needs (Parsell, 2013).

The findings suggest that the use of the rubric, self-assessment and goal-setting processes had a positive impact on these aspects of professional experience.

Tables 9.4 and 9.5 indicate that participants largely agreed or strongly agreed that the rubric assisted the preservice teacher to self-assess their progress towards the achievement of the graduate level of the APST and set specific goals. This view was supported by the open-ended survey comments related to the most significant changes that occurred as a result of the innovation. A summary of the range of comments is provided below. This indicates that compared to previous years, and as a result of using the rubric, preservice teachers:

- Demonstrated a greater awareness of performance expectations
- Took greater ownership of the assessment and reporting process
- Spent more time self-reflecting and monitoring their professional growth
- Improved the quality of their self-reflections and goal setting
- Were more motivated to meet expectations and respond to feedback
- Were proactive in asking questions, seeking feedback and engaging in conversations
- Were more open and honest discussing the assessment of their performance

The proactivity of preservice teachers was reported to be particularly evident by the school coordinators and teacher educators in two key aspects. Firstly, they reported that preservice teachers were more likely to notice, research and adopt focused strategies to attend to students with particular needs. Secondly, they reported that preservice teachers actively sought and utilised feedback to inform and modify their behaviour. Supervising teachers reported finding it helpful when preservice teachers initiated research regarding effective teaching strategies to employ in the classroom. One school coordinator remarked that the feedback-seeking behaviour of preservice teachers was a contrast to that of previous years (prior to the introduction of the rubric), when supervisors had felt their advice was not listened to, valued or heeded. Fourth-year preservice teachers' comments described how they used the rubric with their supervising teacher for formative assessment, to evaluate existing knowledge, understanding and skills and monitor the development of these throughout the professional experience. One preservice teacher commented:

> I found the guide especially valuable as the common language of the AITSL standards was familiar to my supervising teacher and Principal, and it was easy to see how my placement experiences were helping me to attain the graduate level. I used the guide to identify which areas I had the least experience with so far and used these to ensure I had a chance to experience these areas. I feel using the guide has given me more confidence in self-assessing against the standards, and I can see the value of this in creating my teaching portfolio.

Another wrote:

> I found it extremely valuable to have the standards set out in terms of Novice, Emerging, Graduate and Proficient. It showed clear difference in terms of the language used to describe achievement for each standard e. g. Emerging teachers are expected to 'discuss' whereas Graduate teachers may be expected to 'create and implement'.

Table 9.6 The rubric was used to assist the evaluation of preservice teachers' teaching and learning

Group	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Teacher educators	0%	0%	0%	73.33%	26.67%	15
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(11)	(4)	
Supervising teachers	0%	2.20%	6.59%	52.75%	38.46	91
	(0)	(2)	(6)	(48)	(35)	
School coordinators	0%	4.55%	18.18	50.00	27.27%	22
	(0)	(1)	(4)	(11)	(6)	

Conversations Focused on Teaching Capability Aligned with the Standards

This study also sought to investigate to what extent the rubric impacted on professional conversations associated with formative feedback and summative judgements about preservice teachers' teaching capabilities aligned with the APST. The intention was to identify whether these conversations between preservice teachers and their supervisors were transformed from being largely based on personal opinion towards using evidence to demonstrate achievement of specific focus areas. The rubric was designed to evaluate and guide conversations that were integral to the formative, as well as the summative, assessment processes in the professional experience program. Table 9.6 shows that the majority of teacher educators, school coordinators and supervising teachers agreed that they used the rubric to assist evaluating preservice teachers' teaching and learning.

During the focus groups, some teacher educators reported that preservice teachers ensured they were very familiar with all aspects of the rubric in preparation for their professional experience placements and were worried if they felt that a particular school might not give them the opportunity to gain feedback on some aspect of teaching. Consequently, they described how some preservice teachers were proactive in securing professional experience placements in schools they were confident would support their learning. In particular, some preservice teachers had elected to undertake an extended internship professional experience placement in schools which provided a high level of support for a group of preservice teachers over a 60-day placement (as opposed to the standard 40-day placement with few preservice teachers). The extended option was attractive as it often led to employment after graduation; however, this frequently resulted in reduced income from part-time employment.

Throughout the open-ended survey comments and focus group interviews with the teacher educators, there was frequent mention that the rubric was well received by supervising teachers, school coordinators, teacher educators and preservice teachers as it used a common language to discuss teaching. In contrast to this view, a final-year preservice teacher questioned the utility of the rubric and the interim and final reporting process. She commented:

Honestly, I am not sure any of it was valuable. I saw it only as a necessity. The verbal feedback I received was most valuable. I reflected on my lessons and practice as I went along each day and had discussions with my supervising teachers, the TRTs [temporary relief teachers] and the teacher educator.

This comment raises the problematic issue of preservice teachers' professional experience subject to chance rather than 'subject to proper and systematic assessment' (Jonsson & Mattsson, 2011, p. 185). In the case of this preservice teacher, she reported a successful professional experience. However, her comment raises doubt about the systematic assessment of her capabilities against the graduate level standards and the inequalities that may occur between supervising teachers when they are reluctant to adopt required formative and assessment processes. As previously mentioned, the reluctance by some supervising teachers to refer to the rubric was a problem similarly described by Jonsson and Mattsson (2011) based on supervising teachers' lack of familiarity with the APST and preservice teacher competency not being recognised in the rubric. Continuing the theme of resistance to the innovation, a few supervising teachers noted that they preferred to evaluate preservice teachers' achievement using the AITSL website to access the standards and view the Illustrations of Practice as they were familiar with this resource. This may be helpful for final-year preservice teachers who are expected to meet the graduate level standard. However, the rubric aims to support preservice teachers to distinguish the increasing levels of complexity required leading up to this level.

A preservice teacher and a supervising teacher both commented that the interim review based on the rubric was valuable for evaluating preservice teachers' progress and providing feedback, enabling preservice teachers to improve to meet the graduate standard before the end of the professional experience. Teacher educators in the focus groups also pointed to the value of the interim report recognising this as an opportunity to ensure that all parties were interpreting the standards in a similar way. It was a time to discuss interpretations, gaps and plans for further learning in very precise ways ('nothing airy fairy' was one remark).

The majority of teacher educators, school coordinators and supervising teachers agreed that they used the rubric to guide conversations with preservice teachers about generating evidence about their teaching capability (see Table 9.7). A third-year preservice teacher wrote that she used the rubric 'to identify the areas that hadn't been covered and discuss ways to gather this evidence'. A school coordinator commented that conversations about what and how to collect evidence to demonstrate achievement were integral to exploring with preservice teachers what each focus area descriptor meant and could look like in the specific context.

A final-year preservice teacher suggested that the professional experience assessment guide could be improved by including a section that requires us to obtain evidence about each of the focus areas. He commented:

I found that I knew and my supervising teacher knew that I could fulfil all the requirements but when it came to providing evidence I became stuck. A reminder that evidence needs to be collected would be very valuable.

Table 9.7 The rubric was useful to guide conversations with preservice teachers and their supervising teacher to discuss and plan how they could produce evidence aligned with specific focus areas

Group	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Teacher educators	0%	0%	6.67%	46.67%	46.67%	15
	(0)	(0)	(1)	(7)	(7)	
Supervising teachers	0%	1.09%	15.22%	58.70%	25.00%	92
	(0)	(1)	(14)	(54)	(23)	
School coordinators	0%	0%	0%	52.38%	47.62%	21
	(0)	(0)	(0)	(11)	(10)	
Fourth-year preservice teachers	7.69%	23.98%	15.38%	30.77%	23.08%	13
	(1)	(3)	(2)	(4)	(3)	
Third-year preservice teachers	0%	20.00%	35.00%	40.00%	5.00%	20
	(0)	(4)	(7)	(8)	(1)	

Table 9.8 The rubric was used as a reference to identify and communicate specific feedback the preservice teacher needed as part of post-lesson evaluations

Group	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Total
Teacher educators	0%	0%	6.67%	66.67%	26.67%	15
	(0)	(0)	(1)	(10)	(4)	
Supervising teachers	0%	8.70%	9.78%	58.7%	22.83%	92
	(0)	(8)	(9)	(54)	(21)	
School coordinators	0%	4.76%	9.52%	57.14%	28.57%	21
	(0)	(1)	(2)	(12)	(6)	
Fourth-year preservice teachers	23.08%	23.08%	0%	38.46%	15.38%	13
	(3)	(3)	(0)	(5)	(2)	
Third-year preservice teachers	15.79%	10.53%	21.05%	52.63%	0%	19
	(3)	(2)	(4)	(10)	(0)	

This comment is consistent with another final-year preservice teacher who wrote: 'I wasn't really aware that I was supposed to be discussing evidence showing reaching the standards with my teacher'.

The majority of teacher educators, supervising teachers, school coordinators and preservice teachers agreed, or strongly agreed, that the rubric was used as a reference to identify and communicate specific feedback needed by the preservice teacher as part of post-lesson evaluations (see Table 9.8).

It is noteworthy that 46.2 % of fourth-year preservice teachers disagreed, or strongly disagreed, that the rubric was used as a reference to identify and communicate specific feedback the preservice teacher needed as part of post-lesson evaluations. One third-year preservice teacher expressed frustration because her supervising teacher did not use the rubric, and this meant that she was unable to connect the general feedback she received on lessons to her development for specific focus areas. Thus, using the rubric to provide feedback increased its utility relevance.

In contrast, school coordinators reported that as a result of the implementation of the rubric and self-assessment and reporting processes, there was a significant improvement in the provision of feedback provided by supervising teachers which now had a clear focus and direction.

Discussion

Assessing preservice teachers' developing capabilities is a complex undertaking. It is important to assess, track and support preservice teachers throughout their development, as well as be able to certify that they have achieved acceptable standards when they graduate (Jonsson & Mattsson, 2011). The aim of this study was to examine the impact of introducing a new developmental assessment rubric, self-assessment and goal-setting processes on preservice teachers' learning in professional experience. Six key features of a high-quality assessment system underpin this innovation as it (1) is based on principles of authentic assessment, (2) enhances the capacity of preservice teachers for self-assessment and reflection on their levels of developing knowledge and practice, (3) captures the complexity of teaching, (4) captures the multifaceted nature of teaching in a comprehensive manner, (5) aligns with current national professional teaching standards and (6) 'has support from key stakeholders' (QCT, 2012, p. 4). The findings in relation to the three research questions provide evidence as to the extent the innovations facilitated conversations:

1. To achieve greater clarity and shared understanding regarding the expectations of preservice teachers during professional experience
2. To encourage preservice teachers to be self-regulating agents of their own learning
3. To support formative feedback and summative judgements about preservice teachers' teaching capabilities aligned with the APST

The development of the 'backward mapped' rubric implemented during this trial study based on the APST was designed to address the problem of an emphasis on summative assessment at the end of teacher education programs. Research suggests that the formative use of rubrics can mediate improved student performance by increasing transparency of what is expected (Good, 1987) aiding the feedback process, improving student self-efficacy and/or supporting student self-regulation (Panadero & Jonsson, 2013). The rubric and self-assessment and goal-setting processes were welcomed and endorsed by all stakeholders involved in this study. As a result of the use of the rubric, school coordinators reported being better prepared to plan and manage the full scope of capabilities that preservice teachers are expected to develop. Preservice teachers and supervising teachers also reported they engaged with focus areas they would otherwise have overlooked. School coordinators noted that the innovation encouraged conversations with supervising teachers about the knowledge, practice and professional engagement required of preservice teachers leading up to the point of graduation, as well as the expectations of teachers engaging

in continuous professional development throughout their careers (AITSL, 2014). It is noteworthy that two supervising teachers raised concerns that the expectations at the graduate level identified in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers were 'very high' and 'unrealistic for the amount of teaching experience of the students'. In contrast, other supervising teachers commented on the clarity of expectations between their work as experienced teachers and the evaluation of preservice teachers' capabilities. Multiple supervising teachers commented on the value of the rubric and assessment processes for inducting preservice teachers into the language they are expected to understand and confidently use.

The commitment to the key feature of authentic assessment of preservice teachers' developing capability for this innovation necessitated making a 'trade-off' between the formative and summative purposes of the rubric (Jonsson & Mattsson, 2011, p. 180). Reliable assessment rubrics should preferably be analytical (rather than holistic) and task specific (as opposed to generic) and have few quality levels (Jonsson & Svingby, 2007). However, these attributes must be balanced against other needs and purposes. The rubric used in this study was analytical but not task specific and had four quality levels (novice, emerging, graduate and proficient). Therefore, it was not designed for maximum reliability but to support preservice teacher learning through nuanced feedback and the tracking of progress over time to help them 'perform better next time they encounter a similar (but not identical task)' (Jonsson & Mattsson, 2011, p. 173). The provision of developmental feedback at several levels appears to improve preservice teacher learning and agency which was an important finding to emerge from this study. However, the impact of the design decision to use multiple levels appeared to reduce inter-rater reliability of the rubric, as not all assessors used the rubric as intended due to being based on the language of the national standards which some participants found unfamiliar requiring them to operationalise each descriptor before it could be assessed. Despite this difficulty, the findings indicated that the rubric prompted supervising teachers to adopt a more deductive approach which directed their attention to the full scope of capabilities preservice teachers were expected to develop. This resulted in preservice teachers focusing more attention on addressing equity goals of specific subgroups of students and ensuring excellence in educational outcomes for all students (QCT, 2012).

The findings indicate that further actions are needed to ensure that all assessors are able to interpret the assessment criteria and quality levels of the rubric in a consistent and reliable manner. This is important so that preservice teacher assessment is not dependent on which assessor is assigned to the preservice teacher (Jonsson & Mattsson, 2011). The problematic issue which arises from attempting to capture the complexity of teaching in a generic multilevel rubric can be addressed through the distribution of examples relevant to different contexts and student needs to exemplify the concepts and observable performance features aligned with each standard and level. Given the new national requirement for partnership agreements between all teacher education providers and schools, there is also an opportunity to strengthen the mentoring of all preservice teachers through professional development activities which use these examples as part of practice moderation processes.

There is long-term value in promoting preservice teachers' self-regulation of their learning (Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005; Tynjala, 2008). The use of rubrics combined with self-assessment, goal setting and self-reflection can provide students the opportunity to perceive learning progress which can lead to a powerful 'mastery experience' (van Dinther, Dochy, & Segers, 2011, p. 105). This can create a strong sense of self-efficacy that plays a key role in human agency (van Dinther et al., 2011). The findings of this study suggest that the rubric and self-assessment and goal-setting processes provide preservice teachers with an awareness of their emerging capabilities and sense of personal agency in their own learning (Billet, 2008). The qualitative statements emerging from the survey and the focus groups indicated that there had been a significant change in preservice teachers' personal agency in regard to their management of their learning in contrast to their counterparts of previous years. Preservice teachers were prompted to adopt a proactive role in planning and managing their learning whilst undertaking professional experience. This may support the formation of their professional identity as they critically ponder what they are doing and why (Ruohotie-Lyhty & Moate, 2016).

A question arising from this study is what evidence supervising teachers, school coordinators, teacher educators and preservice teachers have when making assessment judgements using the rubric. The findings suggest that whilst the introduction of the rubric had a positive impact on conversations about the different types of evidence relevant to demonstrating preservice teachers' developing capabilities, this did not occur consistently or in a systematic way. This is problematic as the intent of the rubric was to facilitate a more transparent, focused, consistent and accountable assessment of preservice teachers' development during their professional experience. This necessitates making judgements about, and reporting on, preservice teachers' development based on evidence rather than intuition. Jonsson and Mattsson (2011) described a similar challenge in their study where they found that very little data was documented or could be used to re-evaluate preservice teachers' performance.

With the introduction of new national teacher education requirements related to a teaching performance assessment for final-year preservice teachers, and creation of a portfolio of evidence of their achievement of the graduate level standards, there is an opportunity to support preservice teachers' collection of evidence which captures the multifaceted nature of teaching in a comprehensive manner by focusing on the four interconnected stages of teaching: '(i) Planning and preparation; (ii) Classroom instruction and implementation; (iii) Assessment and feedback; (iv) Reflection and professional dialogue' (QCT, 2012, p. 28).

This study has provided coherent evidence that the new developmental assessment rubric, self-assessment and goal-setting processes have made a positive impact on the approaches of all stakeholders to the assessment of third- and fourth-year preservice teachers' professional knowledge, practice and engagement. The findings of this study confirm those reported by Panadero and Jonsson (2013), showing that rubrics can assist students to engage with feedback and develop a realistic opinion about their developing capabilities. These findings are also confirmed by Sim et al. in their 2012 report. The findings indicated that compared to previous years,

all stakeholders played a more active role in the learning, reviewing and assessment process. Specifically, school coordinators and supervising teachers more accurately targeted the developmental needs of preservice teachers earlier in the professional experience placement and were more accountable for the provision of formal feedback related to monitoring preservice teachers' progress aligned with developmental expectations. Additionally, the use of the rubric for self-assessment and goal setting shared the responsibility for assessment between the supervising teacher and the preservice teacher and placed a much stronger emphasis on formative feedback and evidence-informed practice (QCT, 2012).

Conclusion

> Assessment is never simply a technical exercise of measurement. It always involves specifying a set of learning outcomes based on a vision of what is worthwhile learning in the first place. (Parsell, 2013, p. 10)

The findings here suggest that the use of the new developmental assessment rubric and self-assessment and goal-setting processes had a substantial, positive impact on the assessment of teaching capability. Assessment of professional experience in teacher education in Australia has taken on a significant level of attention and importance with the introduction of the APST. Many teacher education providers are seeking their own way to assure that their graduates have attained the required level of performance. This study describes one possible approach and its qualitative impact on preservice teachers' engagement in their professional experience and those who guide and assess their performance.

The introduction of the rubric resulted in a qualitative difference in preservice teachers' conversations with and between their three assessors (a supervising teacher, school coordinator and teacher educator). As a result of using the rubric, conversations were transformed to become more comprehensively based on evidence appropriate to the context and focused on the developmental needs of preservice teachers. Additionally, there was a notable shift in shared ownership and accountability of the assessment process with preservice teachers playing a more proactive role in their professional development and supervisors reporting increased levels of confidence in their ability to make judgements about the performance of preservice teachers. Conversations between stakeholders were deepened, expanded and more focused. These changes have strengthened the relationship between the university's School of Education and the schools that host preservice teachers, based on trust and confidence in the new assessment and goal-setting processes. Following the 2 years of consistent positive responses that the innovation has had on preservice teachers' engagement with their professional experience, the approach has now been implemented across all initial teacher education programs offered in the School of Education. In addition, an evaluation infrastructure has been designed and established to enable ongoing scrutiny of the efficacy of the tools, the process and its continued enhancement and development.

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Chapter 10
Fostering Professional Learning Through Evidence-Informed Mentoring Dialogues in School Settings

Jeana Kriewaldt, Melanie Nash, Sally Windsor, Jane Thornton, and Catherine Reid

Abstract This chapter examines how the use of a descriptive observation tool mediates post-lesson conversations that teacher educators and mentor teachers have with preservice teachers. Our principal focus was to investigate the effects of the use of evidence-informed lesson observations in combination with a dialogic approach, as the basis for feedback on teaching practice and student learning. An interpretive case study approach was designed to investigate how mentor teachers and teacher educators used the observation tool. The findings provided data about the effects the tool had on the dispositions of the participants towards collecting and interrogating classroom evidence and how these impacted on their post-lesson conversations with preservice teachers.

Preliminary findings suggested that some mentor teachers found it difficult to use description rather than judgement when discussing teaching and learning. This diminished opportunities for the construction and interrogation of professional reasoning in post-lesson discussions. Later findings, however, indicated that the use of the descriptive observation tool for the recording of evidence-informed observations fostered an inquiring and collaborative stance in post-lesson reviews. Collaborations of this nature, between mentor teachers and preservice teachers, provided the preservice teachers with greater agency during the professional dialogue and enhanced their capacity to reflect on their teaching.

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Introduction

This chapter outlines a study that investigated how a descriptive observation tool used by mentor teachers, other school-based teacher educators, university-based teacher educators and preservice teachers enables and guides professional conversations during the placement experience. The tool, a clinical observation protocol, guides an observer to log teacher and student activities and interactions during a lesson. The conversations that are based on the clinical observation tool provided multiple loops of evidence-informed feedback on teaching practice. In this respect, the provision of evidence plays an essential role in a clinical model of teaching (Burn & Mutton, 2013; Kriewaldt & Turnidge, 2013; Kriewaldt, McLean Davies, Rice, Rickards, & Acquaro, 2017). Used as the foundation for discussion, this tool encourages the preservice teacher to develop as a reflective professional during placement experiences. This chapter draws on Timperley's (2001) research that identified the importance of structured mentoring conversations and draws on Edwards' work (2010) in theorising 'relational agency' in collegial conversations. By providing preservice teachers with a variety of evidence from their practice, it enables them to examine pathways to improvement from multiple perspectives, thus creating an environment to help them develop as expert practitioners.

This research project is situated in the Master of Teaching (MTeach) program in the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) at the University of Melbourne. The MTeach is a 2-year postgraduate initial teacher education program that is structured around the nexus of theory and practice together with the concept of clinical teaching informed by evidence. Each preservice teacher is supported by a mentor teacher in the preparation and teaching of classes. At a group level, preservice teachers are organised into groups of about 25 across three to five schools. Each of these groups is monitored by a school-based teaching expert known as a teaching fellow and a university-based expert known as a clinical specialist, who draw connections between school placement experiences and academic coursework. The preservice teachers are placed in a school for 2 days a week from early in the MTeach program and, in addition, complete an intensive 4-week block placement of 20 consecutive school days in that school. This program structure enables the preservice teachers to implement strategies and theoretical approaches discussed at a university, on a weekly basis. In addition, theory-practice integration is supported by designing course assessment tasks that are founded on the collection and analysis of school-based evidence.

Background Literature

Professional Conversations

Preservice teacher programs, research and policy, situate school-based learning as essential to the development of classroom-ready teachers (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). As preservice teachers spend significant time in schools, the relationships between them and their mentor teachers are crucial. Mentor teachers can fulfil many roles including that of supporter, role model, collaborator, coach and assessor (Ambrosetti & Dekkers, 2010). Commonly, mentor teachers' practices include guiding preservice teachers' planning, observing them teach and providing feedback. The nature of this feedback and preservice teachers' engagement in professional conversations, and how this might encourage critical reflection, varies. Developing teacher expertise is enhanced when teachers have opportunities to discuss their practice (Timperley & Alton-Lee, 2008; van Kruiningen, 2013) and this correspondingly applies to preservice teachers. Quality conversations are vital and are characterised by a focus on student learning, attending to evidence and making reasoning transparent (Kim & Silver, 2016; Timperley, 2015).

In this study, one of these characteristics – classroom evidence – forms the basis for the professional conversations between preservice teachers and their mentor teachers. Access to a range of evidence provides preservice teachers with opportunities to rethink their beliefs and to adjust their practice in new and different ways (Clarke, 1995; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Earl & Timperley, 2009; Kriewaldt & Turnidge, 2013; McLean Davies et al., 2013; Timperley, 2001). When fostering reflective practice in preservice teachers, the role of mentor teachers is 'not so much in providing a list of issues for the students to reflect upon but rather in providing a variety of perspectives from which students might examine their practice' (Clarke, 1995, p. 258) through dialogue. This notion of mentoring dialogues is aligned with principles of 'educative mentoring' in which preservice teachers learn from their practice supported by their mentor who guides learning opportunities and is a co-inquirer (Feiman-Nemser, 1998, 2001; Schwille, 2008). Educative mentoring is used to distinguish mentoring that is founded on reciprocal and trusting relationships (Trevethan, 2017) and underpins the conversations reported in this study.

Research advocates the benefits of joint observation and tripartite dialogue in developing 'horizontal expertise in and for teacher education' (Mtika, Robson, & Fitzpatrick, 2014, p. 67), with professional conversations involving multiple actors playing important roles in the development of professional identities and positions (van Kruiningen, 2013). Such 'educational meetings' assist preservice teachers to 'navigate between the hierarchical relationships of course-owner/non-owner, advice-giver/advice-receiver, expert/lay person and those of equal colleagues within a team' (van Kruiningen, 2013, p. 119). The positioning of preservice teachers as equals who collaborate with mentors from both school and university contexts in the process of giving and receiving feedback is critical to this project. Dialogue or professional conversations between preservice teachers and more experienced

teachers 'are central to developing student teachers' cognitions that underlie their professional knowledge and performance' (Timperley, 2001, pp. 111–112). While it is often stated that within the practicum experience much learning 'is accomplished through talk' (Strong & Baron, 2004, p. 49), there are relatively few studies that offer 'detailed accounts of what that work specifically entails' (Harris, Keogh, & Jervis-Tracey, 2013, p. 34). Furthermore, little research has been reported that analyses these professional conversations and the tools and evidence that are used to enable them.

Professional Conversations and Feedback

Research that has been undertaken into the conversations between mentor teachers and preservice teachers has found that while these conversations are valued by participants, the dialogue is variable in both quality and frequency (Soslau, 2015; Timperley, 2001). Mentor teachers may be apprehensive about providing preservice teachers with feedback that demonstrates concern or queries about teaching practice. A study of the simulated oral feedback given by eight mentor teachers to a single preservice teacher on the same video-recorded lesson revealed vast differences in both style and content (Hudson, 2014), with significant 'variability in both [mentor teachers'] positive feedback and constructive criticism, and in some cases contrasting perspectives' (p. 71). These findings suggest that 'universities need to design feedback tools through research so that mentors can provide feedback in more informed and objective ways' (Hudson, 2014, p. 72). When successful, these post-observation discussions between preservice teachers, mentor teachers and university supervisors are 'one of the more robust tools for supporting, reinforcing and reflecting shared ideas and beliefs … [and] a key component of program coherence' (Newell & Connors, 2011, p. 229). They call for the development of structures to guide mentoring conversations. It is important to consider that if we are to develop purposeful practice and strengthen mutual competence by developing a way to guide mentoring conversations, we will also require a shared understanding of how to use tools designed to facilitate these conversations.

We contend that specific structures and tools are required to facilitate valuable professional conversations between mentor teachers and preservice teachers. It is through shared understandings of how to use these resources that quality conversations are enabled (Hakkarainen, Palonen, Paavola, & Lehtinen, 2004; Helgevold, Naesheim-Bjorkvik, & Ostrem, 2015). The development of a descriptive observation model and the descriptive observation tool are examples of resources that can assist in the structuring and implementation of these conversations and are based on the collection and analysis of classroom evidence.

Framing Post-lesson Conversations Using Relational Agency

Relational agency as theorised by Edwards (2010) is the 'capacity to align one's thoughts and actions with those of others in order to interpret problems of practice and to respond to those interpretations' (p. 169). The theory, as initially developed, was a way to describe how strong forms of agency might arise for and in collaborations that involve working across boundaries between practices. However, in our research we are using it as a conceptual framework to inform our understandings of the relationships between people who are positioned differently in the same practices, i.e. the preservice teachers, their mentors and other teacher educators.

Relational agency involves the ability to work with others to achieve common outcomes and is a two-stage process which consists of:

1. Working with others to expand the 'object of activity' or task being worked on [for instance, a lesson or pedagogical problem] by recognising the motives and the resources that others bring to bear as they, too, interpret it
2. Aligning one's own responses to the newly enhanced interpretations with the responses being made by the other professionals while acting on the expanded object (Edwards, 2010, p. 14)

In this research project, a descriptive observation tool (named the Teaching Tracker Tool, or T3, and outlined in the following section) functions as a tangible object that enables mentor teachers, preservice teachers and university supervisors to participate jointly in the discussion of a pedagogic episode, in order to expand their interpretation of that episode. This is achieved as participants bring their own conceptual tools and subjectivities to the post-lesson discussion that is based on the evidence presented in the Teaching Tracker Tool. We investigate how relational agency was afforded by the utilisation of a descriptive observation tool that provided clinical evidence of the object of activity (i.e. teaching practice) and the basis with which to offer feedback and opportunities for reflection.

An Overview of the Teaching Tracker Tool Innovation

The Teaching Tracker Tool (T3) is a descriptive observation tool that has been developed by the research team to enable the collection of evidence during classroom observations. It has its antecedent in the instructional rounds approach advocated by City, Elmore, Fiarman and Teitel (2009).

This classroom observation tool is used to make records during a period of classroom observation and is designed to deepen the talk between preservice teachers and observers after a lesson. This tool comprises five elements from which the observer selects their focus in consultation with the preservice teacher being observed. The observer can write accounts of what the teacher is saying, doing, making and writing and what the students are saying, doing, making and writing

(Griffin, 2014). There is also a checklist of classroom activities that can be completed, and the movement of the teacher in the classroom can be shown using a proximity chart. Classroom dialogue can also be recorded using a verbal flow diagram in which the observer graphically represents the flow of oral language interactions. The Teaching Tracker Tool is designed as an enabled PDF to be used electronically on an iPad, tablet, laptop or phone. Images from the lesson (e.g. student work samples), audio and film of the lesson can be recorded and embedded in the electronic tool, establishing a comprehensive record of a teaching and learning episode. The T3 can also be printed and completed in paper form, although the richness of the data is best captured electronically. The charts and diagrams in the tool are adapted from those published by Pitton (2006) who, like us, advocates that these tools are used within a dialogic approach to mentoring.

Using the tool, the observer can apply a descriptive approach, richly capturing important aspects of the lesson without judging. For example, rather than recording that 'positive classroom dynamics were established and maintained during this lesson', a descriptive observation using the tool might be "as students enter room, they respond to informal conversation by the teacher who asks 'How was the band at lunchtime?'". Through merely recording what, when and how the classroom practice plays out, the observers suspend judgement (apart from the choice they make to focus on different aspects of the classroom practice).

Users are guided in their post-lesson conversation through the inclusion of a discussion section embedded in the tool that comprises six post-observation questions. This section is designed to support participants to examine the evidence collected during the lesson and to posit judgements based on their interpretations of this evidence (Cochran-Smith & the Boston College Evidence Team, 2009). The tool encourages and guides the collection of rich and descriptive lesson artefacts so that they can be examined in post-lesson conversations to ground the discussion in evidence that can be seen, listened to and analysed in concrete ways. What the teacher is saying, doing, making and writing (Griffin, 2014) are captured and can be discussed as authentic experience.

However, the actors in the dialogue (the preservice teachers and their mentors, clinical specialists and teaching fellows) are positioned differently. Caughlan and Jiang (2014) remind us that observation instruments differ in the extent to which they grant agency to participants. This caution was important during the implementation of the Teaching Tracker Tool, as it was our intention that it would be a way to provide agency for both the preservice teacher and the observers during the post-lesson conversation.

Methodology

In order to investigate the value of the Teaching Tracker Tool in fostering evidence-based professional dialogue, a 2-year research project was undertaken by a metropolitan university in Victoria, Australia, in partnership with eight schools.

The project is based on an interpretivist case study approach in which 'researchers do not seek to find universals in their case studies. They seek, instead, a full, rich understanding (verstehen) of the context they are studying' (Willis, 2007, p. 240). The case study approach enables the boundaries of the research to be demarcated, and case studies are a means of developing richness and detail – in short, depth (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). This research builds from three key features of case study research:

1. It enables researchers to gather in-depth data in authentic sites.
2. It is a holistic approach that is aligned to the belief that social practices are best understood in their specific context
3. Research can be framed inductively, that is, by building findings rather than by deciding hypotheses in advance (Willis, 2007).

Employing a case study approach enables us to focus on the impact of the T3 on the learning culture, the beliefs and the attitudes of the participants involved in the school placement experience (preservice teacher, mentor teacher, clinical specialist and teaching fellow). Using rich data enables us to build new theories around guiding and supporting preservice teachers during their professional placement.

Data Collection Methods

Our research used a multiple-method approach of data collection. Fossey, Harvey, McDermott and Davidson (2002) argue that the use of multiple methods of data collection adds strength to the quality of the research, as it is consequently informed with a greater breadth of knowledge and depth of understandings. Two methods of data collection were used to draw on the perspectives of participants. These were surveys completed by mentor teachers and preservice teachers and interviews with a focus group comprising teaching fellows and clinical specialists.

Prior to the collection of data, participating mentor teachers, clinical specialists, teaching fellows and preservice teachers attended a professional development session to learn how to use the Teaching Tracker Tool during school placement. Eighty-nine teacher educators (mentor teachers, clinical specialists, teaching fellows) and 45 preservice teachers attended. Subsequently in schools, the mentor teachers, clinical specialists, teaching fellows and researchers observed lessons taught by the preservice teachers using the T3 to record observations. After using the tool during placement, mentor teachers and preservice teachers were surveyed to gather their perceptions of its usefulness through open-ended questions. The survey also asked the participants' views on whether the T3 provided a way to foster collaborative discussion and learning around a pedagogical problem or issue. In total, 34 mentor teachers and 21 preservice teachers responded to the survey. Preservice teachers and mentor teachers were surveyed at the conclusion of the 30-day placement period in semester 2, 2015, and semesters 1 and 2, 2016.

    To garner further in-depth responses, a focus group was convened, which comprised eight participants who had used the Teaching Tracker Tool to observe lessons and to inform their post-lesson conversations with preservice teachers (four teaching fellows and four clinical specialists). The focus group participated in a semi-structured interview that was audio-recorded, transcribed and analysed thematically. Participants were asked to respond to questions related to the extent to which they used components of the T3 and the effect this use had on them.

Analysis and Discussion

In this section, to advance our argument that the Teaching Tracker Tool is a valuable addition to teacher education, we draw on selected excerpts from the semi-structured focus group with teaching fellows and clinical specialists and from the open responses to the surveys completed by mentor teachers and preservice teachers. The excerpts are chosen because they are representative of the accounts that were made by others in each group. Through thematic analysis, three key findings that emerged from the data were:

1. That descriptive observation is important to collect evidence, but suspending judgement can be difficult
2. That the descriptive approach embedded in the T3 fosters an inquiring and collaborative stance when reviewing the lesson
3. That the processes of gathering evidence, and the opportunity for professional dialogue that focuses on evidence, provide the preservice teacher with opportunities to enhance their capacity to reflect on their teaching. We discuss each theme in sequence and then synthesise them to demonstrate how relational agency was changed through using the Teaching Tracker Tool and what this means for fostering learning through observation and dialogic cycles.

Descriptive Observation Is Important to Collect Evidence, but Suspending Judgement Can Be Difficult

Overall, focus group participants had a positive view of the descriptive observation process. They articulated how the collection and analysis of evidence from the lessons that they observed enabled them to give feedback to preservice teachers that was specific and less judgemental. Participants could also see the links between this evidence-based approach to mentoring and the clinical approach to teaching that is based on the collection and analysis of evidence to inform teaching. One of the school-based teacher educators, Andre, describes the importance of this clinical approach by attending to data to provide realistic and useful feedback. Andre also

recalls his frustration in receiving generalised feedback that his lesson was 'good' or 'bad' when he was a preservice teacher:

> [What using the T3] does, which is really powerful, is that we walk the walk and talk the talk, we talk about the clinical approach to teaching, and we're asking them [preservice teachers] to look at data, and that's exactly what we should be doing and modelling. If we don't do it, if we say it's a good lesson, as a student teacher myself, it used to drive me up the wall when I was told, yeah it was a good lesson, well, what does that mean?… or a bad lesson? (Andre, Teaching Fellow)

Numerous participants recognised the importance of gathering evidence during the lesson and collaborating with the preservice teacher to analyse the observation records, discussing the evidence together while suspending judgement. Gabriel found that the approach can drive a less emotionally charged response to a teaching episode:

> I really like it I have to say, but I have to keep reminding myself of the difference between a judgemental value-laden observation and one that is just evidence, and I like it because I can go back in the debriefing session with the student teacher and it allows me to distance myself, and what I feel about what was going on, by putting the data in front of the student, and we can then discuss it dispassionately and take emotion out of it, and I find that really useful. It is not easy, and I need to keep reminding myself of what it is I'm doing and why I'm doing it and what's my personal opinion. (Gabriel, Teaching Fellow)

The majority of school-based and university-based teacher educators agreed with Gabriel. They reported that initially they found it difficult to move to a descriptive observation approach because it is demanding to record detailed observations and that it could therefore be easier to revert to making judgements. Two illustrative comments were:

> Because you're trying to watch them [the preservice teacher] and you're trying to write, and you're trying to write this non-judgemental stuff …, so it's just a lot to do. (Kai, Teaching Fellow)
>
> I find it difficult to keep up with the pace [of recording] and then I revert to some of the old judgemental stuff. (Bree, Clinical Specialist)

Echoing Bree, several teacher educators voiced the challenge in recording or capturing what they 'see' in a classroom, while others questioned whether an observer has the capacity to suspend judgement. Estelle explained:

> I think people exercise prejudice and judgement in every perception, in every observation they make. What they see in the first instance, what their attention is turned to, is prejudiced by all sorts of things. I don't think you can observe without judging. (Estelle, Teaching Fellow)

This was a common reservation, as Frances explains:

> I'm actually quite conscious of the fact that I only observe what I choose to pay attention to. That's something I often point out to the preservice teacher too, that they notice what they pay attention to in the classroom. So it's always partial and it's always incomplete, and so there is…. You are making some sort of judgement there. It's very hard to be neutral. (Frances, Clinical Specialist)

These comments are discerning as they acknowledge the impossibility of objective observation. No one expects the observer to be able to 'see' and 'observe' everything in complex, dynamic and busy classrooms. The observers' perspectives, interests and positions in the room will all impact on what they 'see' and what their attention is drawn to. Yet the process calls for the suspension of judgement and necessarily asks the observer to try to take a step back from, or suspend, their own preconceptions and biases.

Despite the practical difficulties of suspending judgement, several participants reported that when they provide descriptive observations, there are times when the preservice teacher seeks judgements:

> … if you're talking in terms of that descriptive observation, [after] ten minutes, they will often say something like, oh, so did you think it was good? And ask a question that… invites a judgement. (Bree, Clinical Specialist)

By using this moment to draw the discussion back to the evidence that has been gathered, conversation remains open. Bree also recognised the importance of preservice teachers themselves being adept in the descriptive observation approach. She later reported significant success in enabling the preservice teachers to use the approach when observing each other.

The Descriptive Approach Embedded in the Teaching Tracker Tool Fosters an Inquiring and Collaborative Stance When Reviewing the Lesson

Focus group participants noted that focusing on evidence shifted the object of discussion from preconceived notions of what constitutes good teaching and directed attention towards the kinds of learning taking place in the lessons:

> It made the feedback focus on only what was observed rather than on preconceived notions of how a class should be run. (Rachel, Mentor Teacher)

Participants reported that evidence that was collected was a useful platform to begin discussion. The variety of options within the T3 enabled observers to choose the means of recording observations that best suited the lesson:

> Great to have a visual on proximity and flow [diagram]. Good to start the conversation. (Zach, Mentor Teacher)

Andre affirms the importance of the descriptive observation process in developing an open dialogue with the preservice teacher:

> I think it's really important to what I do with my relationship with the student teacher – by focusing very much on what I saw, as opposed to what I think about it, it gives me the instrument then to be able to talk about why the activities may not have been appropriate at that stage in the lesson, or why more time should be spent or more preparation time for the student on a particular thing could have been spent to improve the outcome in relationship, to what it is that the teacher wanted to achieve. So I'm able to take myself out of that discussion. (Andre, Teaching Fellow)

In his statement, Andre notices that reorienting the discussion to become learning focused had changed the relationship between the preservice teacher and more experienced observers. This change of focus opened up spaces to probe reasoning that underlies judgements that are commonly quickly made. When preservice teachers are told their teaching is either proficient or lacking in some way, this can serve to curtail interrogation of evidence of teaching and learning, and consequently their opportunity to reflect is diminished. Instead, in this project, preservice teacher and observer refer to the data together and ask 'why do you think that happened, and what were your options?' (Hugo, Clinical Specialist). The effect of descriptive observation was aptly described as assisting preservice teachers who use the evidence and 'dig deep [into the evidence] and make the judgement' (Julia, Clinical Specialist). This comment illuminates that 'mining' evidence, to continue Julia's metaphor, is crucial to further preservice teacher understanding of teaching and their own development of practice.

Ideally, this process hones the preservice teacher's capacity to draw conclusions based on their own analysis of the observation records and evidence. An instance of this occurring was described by Stephanie:

> The discussion I had with my teaching fellow after using the Teaching Tracker was very insightful. We had a brainstorming discussion about how I could improve the class, without giving me their opinions. I was encouraged to come to the conclusion by myself, with some limited input from my teaching fellow. (Stephanie, Preservice Teacher)

Using the T3 when reviewing the lesson can foster a more inquiring and collaborative stance. The relational agency granted to the preservice teachers scaffolds their transition to independent teaching. These collaborative dialogues or conversations help build preservice teachers' fledgling careers by promoting a stance in which they continue to seek evidence of how their actions are resulting in learning when there is no recourse to another teacher in the room. This builds the conditions for reflective practice.

The Processes of Gathering Evidence, and the Opportunity for Professional Dialogue that Focuses on Evidence, Provides the Preservice Teacher with Opportunities to Enhance Their Capacity to Reflect on Their Teaching

Evidence provided by mentor teachers, clinical specialists and teaching fellows on teaching practice is non-judgemental by design to encourage preservice teachers to become reflective practitioners. Similar to Stephanie's comment in the previous quotation, Frances describes how descriptive observation makes space for substantive dialogue and provides opportunities for preservice teachers to reflect on their practice:

> I think by just observing and just making comments, it leaves lots of room for deep discussion with the preservice teacher after the observation. So by leaving out judgements, it allows room for questions and for them to really reflect on what they've done and why, as well. (Frances, Clinical Specialist)

Substantive dialogue using evidence of practice evokes reflection, and as Frances explains, the preservice teacher considers what they have taught and importantly why they made those decisions. She recognised the effects of bringing forth the often hidden thoughts of why the preservice teacher planned and taught in the way that they did through suspending judgement to open up spaces for discussion.

Akin to the comments from teaching fellows and clinical specialists, mentor teachers acknowledged that particular aspects of the Teaching Tracker Tool increased the preservice teacher's reflective capacity. For Mikaela, elements of the tool including the 'proximity and verbal flow data was an excellent way to give objective feedback so student teachers reflect on their own without you having to say a criticism as such' (Mikaela, Mentor Teacher). As Mikaela suggests, the role of the mentor teacher is no longer that of critic – instead space is opened up for reflection. William, a preservice teacher, pronounced the post-lesson discussion using the tool as 'very useful. It allowed me to reflect'. This was echoed by preservice teacher Kim who explained that '[I]t made it easier to reflect on my own teaching practice [and as well, we were] able to give feedback to other preservice teachers easier'. Similarly, Milo explained that the T3:

> helped me to reflect on my lesson and work out for myself which things I should improve. It gave me some immediate feedback straight after class, but I could also look at it at a later time. It wasn't just things like 'you did this really well', because I usually know what I've done well. It was more than that. (Milo, Preservice Teacher)

In his senior mathematics classes, Jay identified data from the T3 that indicated that students in the back of the class were not following class instruction, and this generated a process of reflection leading to change:

> The T3 was great for pinpointing particular aspects of my practice where, in this case, it highlighted the difficulties students were having with regard to their seating location, which affected the audible and visible components of the lesson. Without the aid of an observing teacher and the T3, this issue may have been left unattended. Having a debriefing afterwards also proved helpful in brainstorming ways to improve practice in specific areas. (Jay, Preservice Teacher)

Jay decided to podcast key mathematics concepts as it:

> Allowed students to view teacher instruction regardless of location and pace. It also benefitted me… in rehearsing how the content could be delivered in-class. (Jay, Preservice Teacher)

In this data, the relationship between the preservice teachers and their teacher educators has shifted as the participants now focus on making sense of evidence together. The provision of descriptive observation evidence provided greater agency to the preservice teachers and allowed for deeper reflective dialogue. This led to conversations during placement that tended to be a more collaborative sharing of ideas and was altogether more collegial. By coming together around the task, the object of activity was expanded, and this led to improvements in the quality of teaching practice for the preservice teacher. Participants also incidentally reported that this approach led to growth for the observers.

Conclusion

This project designed an interactive tool that aimed to collate descriptive observation evidence that can create space for participants to collaboratively engage in dialogue about pedagogical practice. The intensive focus on evidence-informed dialogue with preservice teachers during teaching placements is innovative through the amount and type of records provided as well as the way that evidence is used in order to improve field experience and teaching practices. Evidence of teaching practice in this model comes from a range of people, all having different relationships with the preservice teacher. The preservice teachers engage in discussions not only with their in-school mentor but also a clinical specialist who is a university lecturer, a teaching fellow (an expert school teacher who oversees preservice teachers in a partnership group) and, increasingly, their peers. Evidence of practice collected focuses on both teaching and learning, what the teacher is saying, doing, making and writing and what the students in the class are saying, doing, making and writing. This evidence is highly beneficial to the development of these beginning teachers as it asks them to focus on processes of teaching and equally on student learning. Preservice teachers learn to routinely turn their attention to a range of evidence to gauge the effectiveness of their teaching practices. During school placement experiences when collection of evidence is used to inform future practice, the instructional impact is strengthened. Importantly, these professional conversations using evidence have strengthened preservice teachers' reflective practice.

Unquestionably initial teacher education aims to develop teachers who use evidence to inform their teaching and who think critically about their practice (Earl & Timperley, 2009; Kriewaldt et al., 2017). Drilling into the power of description, this observation tool guides the descriptive work which then requires the preservice teacher to engage in conversations in which they have agency to suggest improvements rather than accept – or resist – advice. Description builds the foundation of a conversation that is based on fine-grained evidence that can be gathered in a lesson observation. By making sense of teaching through these processes, preservice teachers are schooled to continue to interrogate their practice and to feedforward their learning to refine their teaching as a result of dialogues with observers.

Using the concept of relational agency as an analytical aid to think again about mentoring practices led us to understand that teacher educators and preservice teachers coming together on this task and working with evidence on the problem of improving student learning expanded the object of activity. This advanced the preservice teachers' growth in improving their teaching practice by developing their capacity to reflect using classroom evidence. The concept of relational agency has led us to reframe our thinking about mentoring practice and to more highly value working in concert during post-lesson conversations to expand our mutual understanding of student learning.

Key to this reframing of the post-lesson conversation has been the focus on evidence-based reflection, enabled by the reification of the teaching episode using the descriptive observation tool. The T3 has reified the teaching episode as an object

of activity, through the production of tangible evidence, and so has provided a focus for mutual sense-making between preservice and experienced teachers. In several cases, this mutual sense-making led to mutual learning as each party engaged in evidence-informed collaborative reflection during post-lesson conversations. We suggest that this benefits the development of quality teaching practice for the preservice teacher through growth in reflective practice.

Implications

This chapter has described how evidence-informed dialogues were especially productive for preservice teachers and signal an innovation for initial teacher education. Our findings suggest that we should build on the non-judgemental innovation we have designed to implement further enrichment of preservice teachers' reflective practice using three-way observations and dialogues. This will allow the preservice teacher to probe evidence from a range of perspectives.

Ethics In accordance with the University of Melbourne's guidelines for human ethics, all participants were informed that their participation in the research was voluntary and that they could withdraw without penalty at any time. Participants were also assured that their private data would be guarded securely and that their identity would remain anonymous. Participants were made aware of the research aims through plain language statements and gave their signed consent to have their data contribute to the study.

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Part IV
Reframing Professional Practice

Chapter 11
Professional Experience and Project-Based Learning as Service Learning

Bill Eckersley, Kellie Tobin, and Sally Windsor

Abstract Professional experience is an essential component of initial teacher education. It provides preservice teachers with opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in learning and teaching in school and early childhood settings. It engages preservice teachers in real situations that facilitate authentic learning typically supported by mentor teachers. These situated learning experiences enable undergraduate and postgraduate preservice teachers to develop skills and practices that meet national standards. In addition to more traditional professional experiences, some universities have developed school-university partnerships that engage their preservice teachers in professional experiences based on project-based learning. Three university partnership collaborations with schools (mostly located in low socio-economic status (SES) communities) are discussed in this paper in which curriculum-based 'learning by doing' (Dewey, 1897) projects are a priority. Projects typically identified by school partners and linked to school strategic plans and priorities involve preservice teachers forming small professional learning teams (that include university and school-based educators and teachers as researchers) who facilitate the planning, management and reporting of a project. These project-based learning tasks are facilitated and aligned to the traditional professional experience and often involves work-integrated learning and development of twenty-first-century project management skills: teamwork, leadership, negotiation, evaluation, collaboration, entrepreneurship and project management and research skills. In the three cases reported here, there is a focus on addressing social and educational inequality through the programs.

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Introduction

In February 2015 the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) reported to the then Australian Education Minister Christopher Pyne that universities and schools are not efficiently working together in initial teacher education programs or in the development of preservice teachers. The TEMAG (2015) report outlines that a series of fundamental principles significant to the reform of teacher education are required which include:

- Effective initial teacher education programs provide preservice teachers with immersion in theory about learning, development and subject matter in contexts where these can be applied and ensure a strong link between theory and practice.
- Initial teacher education providers, teacher employers and schools must share a commitment to improve initial teacher education and work in partnership to achieve strong graduate and student outcomes. All academic components of teacher education should be integrated with practice in schools so that initial teacher education becomes a fused and mutually reinforcing experience of higher education and professional learning.

Professional experience is a fundamental component of initial teacher education as its nature and type has a major influence on the learning of preservice teachers. Professional experience has been variously known as the practicum, field experience and teaching rounds. It is the linking of theory and practice that enables the preservice teachers to develop capacities to be able to act like a teacher and to more deliberatively think like a teacher (Wilson & Demetriou, 2007) and to develop the feeling of being a teacher and identify with the role (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). However, as Fox and Wilson (2015) acknowledge in their recent study on beginning teachers, 'becoming a teacher is not merely to acquire necessary knowledge and skills to teach in classrooms' (p. 94). Initial teacher education programs need to ensure that the professional experience component in particular stimulates preservice teachers' personal responsibilities for leading learning.

Increasingly professional experiences for preservice teachers are taking different forms, especially where school communities are actively seeking input and assistance from teacher education providers to assist them in achieving their strategic goals. Professional experiences outside the traditional professional experience can emerge from school-university partnerships where learning communities/communities of practice are created and fostered and where service learning is emphasized and created with a view to aligning missions and strategic directions. Indeed as Rossner and Commins (2012) identify, genuine school-university partnerships are collaborations of professional conversations, collegial learning and aligned processes.

Teacher educators are responsible for coordinating and negotiating connections between professional knowledge and working knowledge, as well as between the workforces and workspaces of universities and schools. New times challenge our

existing programs of professional learning and curriculum and imply the need for new pedagogies in teacher education where the workspace of the school and the concerns and needs of its various stakeholders (preservice teachers, students, school community and the teaching profession) are actively taken into account.

While the work of supporting an individual to become a teacher has traditionally belonged to both the university and the schools, ownership has been clearly divided. The university has been responsible for the theoretical and pedagogical preparation and the schools responsible for the practice of those methods, strategies and the enactment of theory (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). All learning is situated within boundaries, and the challenge in education is to create constructive collaborations across and between learning sites. As such, it is becoming increasingly evident that preservice teachers are required to develop knowledge and expertise across and often in-between the school and university sites. Preservice teachers in this context are positioned as boundary-crossers who at times find themselves in new learning spaces and unfamiliar territories. Tsui and Law (2007) observe that crossing boundaries forces participants to take a fresh look at their long-standing practices and assumptions and can be a source of deep learning.

The professional experience initiatives discussed in this chapter each situate preservice teachers within a boundary zone (i.e. a classroom, a cohort of students, a curriculum discipline area). Preservice teachers as boundary-crossers are encouraged to engage with members of other communities of practice whereby they encounter tensions, contradictions and rich learning opportunities that often result in a transformed activity system of learning for all participants (Engestrom, 2011). Taylor, Klein, and Abrams (2014) also observe that teacher education must exist across multiple spaces. They argue that the role of teacher education is simply too complex to reside solely in the university, isolated from the realities of schools. In this chapter, we discuss and demonstrate this overlap of systems that seeks to address the often discussed alignment of theory and practice in initial teacher education.

By focusing on a professional experience-related initiative that has been integrated into the initial teacher education programs in three Victorian universities, we highlight the learning potential of engaging preservice teachers in the following site-based projects in schools and communities:

1. Victoria University and the Applied Curriculum Project
2. Deakin University and the Aspire Program
3. University of Melbourne and the Yirrkala Indigenous Schools' Program

Despite exhibiting distinctive features, these innovative projects share important characteristics:

- The projects/programs were preservice teacher led in collaboration with school/community personnel.
- They were all site-based and located in, and focused on, schools/community priorities/strategic improvement initiatives.

- The projects/programs were focused in schools in low socio-economic areas of metropolitan, regional and remote parts of Australia.
- The preservice teachers were 'immersed' in the school/community while undertaking the project/program.
- The projects would lead explicitly to enhanced school student learning.
- The preservice teachers were required to negotiate the specific foci and expected learning outcomes with school/community personnel.
- The preservice teachers were required to make connections between their learning and competence as related to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the graduate level and between practice and theory and relevant national and/or state curriculum.
- There was an expectation that the preservice teachers would document their project activity and outcomes would be made available to the school, community and the university.
- It was expected that the preservice teachers would continue to develop an understanding of what social justice, inclusion, equity, poverty, aspirations, multiculturalism, diversity, access and success mean for these schools, the students and their local communities.
- There was an expectation that preservice teachers would develop a set of 'professional skills' as a result of working in these projects/programs (e.g. project and time management, negotiation, leadership, research, evaluation, teamwork, communication, planning, capacity building and reporting).

These unique initiatives are all supported by the university as a collaborative partnership. There are a range of other similarly targeted projects in the extant literature. Some involve a third-party organization: e.g. the Smith Family, the Western Bulldogs Football Club, Scouts Victoria, Northern Territory Government and Netball Australia. Community partnerships of this type are complex and multidimensional with the partnership values of trust, mutuality and reciprocity underpinning the innovations. A previous study by Kruger, Davies, Eckersley, Newell and Cherednichenko (2009) of effective and sustainable university-school partnerships confirmed that effective and sustainable partnerships are based on:

- Trust: the commitment and expertise that each of the main stakeholders – preservice teachers, teachers, teacher educators – brings to the partnership in the expectation that it will provide them with the benefits each seek.
- Mutuality: the extent to which the stakeholders recognize that working together does lead to the benefits each esteems.
- Reciprocity: each stakeholder recognizes and values what the others bring to the partnership (p. 10).

Practice, Praxis and Practice Architecture

Much of the activity and action within the three projects discussed in this chapter involve 'doings', 'sayings' and 'relatings' which are key components of what Kemmis et al. (2013) refer to as practice.

> A practice is a form of socially established cooperative human activity in which characteristic arrangements of actions and activities (doings) are comprehensible in terms of arrangements of relevant ideas in characteristic discourses (sayings), and the people and objects involved are distributed in characteristic arrangements of relationships (relatings), and when this complex of sayings, doings and relatings 'hangs together' in a distinctive project. (p. 30).

Kemmis et al. (2013) describe how practice impacts upon those involved and posit a theory of practice architecture whereby these doings, sayings and relatings (i.e., the practices) are enabled by and/or constrained by a set of preconditioned arrangements. These can be in the following forms:

- …cultural-discursive arrangements… that are the resources that make possible the language and discourses used in and about this practice…
- Material-economic arrangements (in the medium of activity and work, in the dimension of physical space-time) that are the resources that make possible the activities undertaken in the course of the practice…
- Social-political arrangements (in the medium of power and solidarity and in the dimension of social space) that are the resources that make possible the relationships between people and non-human objects that occur in the practice… (p. 31)

With these arrangements, practices 'come into being' because people collectively bring them into being or rather that 'practices, individual will, individual understanding and individual action are orchestrated in collective social-relational projects' (Kemmis et al., 2013, p. 31). The authors of this chapter argue that the three educational projects are products of these educational practices and practice architectures.

We also argue that these projects embrace the notion of praxis (Kemmis and Smith, 2008), with an inquiry approach to action and learning. The projects draw on the Aristotelian definition of praxis that involves the combination of practice and theory to support change for various groups in society. We then look towards Paulo Friere's (1996) understanding of praxis as the:

> bringing together of social practice and theorising of the world in order to transform the world into something better…This unified concept of praxis as action, reflection, theorising and change in cycles of constant social practice therefore conceptualises knowledge as arising from community necessity in relation to the purposes, viewpoints and constraints of others. (Eckersley et al., 2011, p. 12)

Low Socio-economic Schools and Diverse Communities

Concerns about how best to prepare teachers for working in diverse and low socio-economic communities continue to challenge traditional teacher education programs (Sleeter, 2008). Schools in lower socio-economic status (SES) communities are often under-resourced, are harder to staff and have difficulty retaining high-quality teachers (Aikens & Barbarin, 2008). Muijs, Harris, Chapman, Stoll, and Russ (2009) argue that an emphasis on improving teaching and learning, creating information-rich learning environments and having a focus on learning communities and professional development opportunities contributes to improved quality and student learning outcomes in low SES schools.

Although not all low SES schools are in ethnically and culturally diverse communities (and vice versa – diverse communities do not only contain low SES schools), the descriptive terms diverse and low SES are often used interchangeably when describing the schools we refer to. There are a range of factors that impact these schools and the young people within them, such as high levels of cultural and linguistic diversity, low social and educational capital and higher than average levels of poverty. So building an understanding and appreciation of the cultures of diverse communities is essential learning for preservice teachers. Sleeter (2008) suggested that multiple placements in low SES schools have a 'reasonable track record for disrupting stereotypes, helping [preservice teachers] learn about students' cultural backgrounds and helping them to connect student behaviours and learning with what teachers do' (p. 1993). This research highlighted the critical nature and importance of developing school-university partnerships that provide preservice teachers with access and engagement in schools located in low SES communities. Sleeter indicated that teacher education for equity and democracy rests on three pillars:

- Preparation for everyday realities and complexities of schools and classrooms
- Content knowledge and professional theoretical knowledge that universities can provide
- Dialog[sic] with communities in which schools are situated, a crucial pillar that is often ignored (p. 1948)

Preservice teachers working with diverse students who are culturally different from themselves and/or experiencing poverty, and who are supported and mentored through this experience, are often more likely to go on to teach these students. The three universities in this chapter have embraced research such as this to support the placement of preservice teachers in schools with diverse and low SES student populations. The vignettes later in this chapter provide some important insights into the potential learning that can and do occur for key participants: students, preservice teachers, teachers and university educators.

Communities of Practice and Learning Communities

Communities of practice arise from the work of Lave and Wenger (1998) and Wenger (1998), who conceptualized 'communities of practice' as particular kinds of networks of people who were engaging in situated learning processes. In communities of practice, members depend on each other for learning, mutual help, constructive critiques and collective thinking. Lave and Wenger refer to an individual's transition to becoming a practitioner is related to 'that person's legitimate peripheral participation in a community of practice and is negotiated with members of the community through the person's participation' (p. 122). Thus participating in and contributing to communities of practice as they are described are invaluable learning opportunities for preservice teachers.

This experience of participation in a community of practice is an important feature of the three projects discussed in this chapter. Preservice teachers are immersed in schools and communities where they work in collaborative teams to address specific needs. Importantly, they are concurrently developing knowledge and understanding about their students and how they learn. Le Cornu and Ewing (2008) refer to reciprocal learning relationships that focus on learning for all participants. There is the additional expectation that these participants will contribute not only to their own learning and well-being but also to those other members of the community. Le Cornu (2015) states that 'a learning community program of professional experience is easier to implement in schools that are themselves operating as professional learning communities' (p. 89). Working in professional learning communities has been found to increase teachers' sense of personal and shared commitment, resilience and feelings of success and investment in the school (Day & Gu, 2010). In a related study, early career teachers were also found to be best supported in school cultures that operated as professional learning communities (Johnson et al., 2015). This finding again supports the focus of the three projects in enculturating the preservice teachers to become valued participants and contributors to the professional learning in their schools and communities.

Service Learning

In exploring the research for this chapter, the authors drew on the concept of service learning and connected this premise with each of the programs. Nitschke-Shaw et al. (1997) argue that there are three essential components of service learning: 'an identified community need, a delineated set of learning outcomes to be mastered and planned opportunity for reflection' (p. 10). In respect to teacher education, they stated that service learning:

> … requires effective collaboration among teacher educators in higher education, preservice teachers, professional educators and community members … Through service learning, partnerships are formed between students, community members and organizations. It is

through these partnerships that community needs are identified and plans for meeting the needs are formulated. Students utilize and expand on knowledge they have gained in the classroom and apply the knowledge to help solve community issues and/or provide service to a community. (Nitschke-Shaw et al., 1997, p. 8)

Service learning combines rigorous academic learning with authentic community service. Jagla, Erickson and Tinkler (2013) suggest that 'service learning takes students [preservice teachers] out of the four walls of the classroom and into the community seeking to understand the world as it is – messy, complicated and real' (p. xv). Pessate-Schubert, Thomas, and Lehman (2006) highlight the relevance of service learning in higher education particularly as a 'means of delivering course content while addressing social justice issues pertinent to today's social and educational climate' (p. 68). Abel (2004) states that service learning is both external and interpersonal and that it 'enhances a student's educational experience, sustains democratic culture, strengthens democratic institutions and advances social justice' (p. 46). In contrast, it has been noted that service learning '… is limited to internal philanthropic justifications that do not seek to transform societal or educational institutions' (Lukenchuk, Jagla, & Price, 2013, p. 56).

Research into service learning for preservice teachers has confirmed that preservice teachers needed to have a clear understanding of the project aim. It is essential that effective communication is maintained between all stakeholders and that clear explicit goals and rationale drive the experience. Collaborative planning based on these clearly defined foci should support project implementation and completion (Bates & Lin, 2015; Jagla et al., 2013; Nitschke-Shaw et al., 1997; Pessate-Schubert et al., 2006). In their research on community action with teacher preparation, Pessate Schubert et al. discussed both the importance of facilitating preservice teachers' involvement in service learning and its impact on schools and their students:

Preservice teachers are paired with students in K-12 settings to provide intensive remediation and enrichment through which both benefit: the preservice teacher learns his/her craft, and the student gains additional support, enhancing his/her academic skills. In addition to providing preservice teachers with a real-world vehicle for learning instructional practice, service learning has also been found to be an effective tool for helping them become aware of and active in social justice issues. (p. 2).

Research also shows numerous personal development impacts of service learning opportunities in teacher preparation courses for preservice teachers. These impacts include increases in self-confidence, self-esteem, leadership skills and personal decision-making skills (Aquila & Dodd, 2003; McMurtrie, Coleman, Ruppert, & Senn, 2014), career benefits and spiritual growth (Eyler & Giles Jr, 2002), and increased feelings of social and civic responsibility and heightened volunteerism (Carrington & Saggers, 2008; Scales, Blyth, Berkas, & Kielsmeier, 2000). Interpersonally, teachers and administrators note an improvement in preservice teachers' abilities to work with others and in particular consider diversity and inclusion in classrooms (Carrington, Mercer, Iyer, & Selva, 2015; Eyler & Giles Jr, 2002). Finally, service learning opportunities such as those described in this chapter provide preservice teachers 'access to expanded arenas of professional discourse

and exchange' (Eilersten, Moksnes Furu, & Rørne, 2011, p. 86), which impacts preservice teachers' achievements favourably.

Examples of Alternative Professional Experiences

As noted earlier, Australian universities are under increased pressure to develop 'classroom ready teachers' (TEMAG, 2015) who can enter any classroom, in any school, and ensure learning for students occurs. To this end, universities are facilitating multiple strategies and initiatives in partnership with schools that aim to engage and immerse preservice teachers in a range of learning experiences that expose preservice teachers to working with students from backgrounds that may be in sharp contrast to their own. Three such learning experiences are outlined below.

Applied Curriculum Projects: Victoria University

As part of their Project Partnership experience, all preservice teachers enrolled at Victoria University participate in a school-identified project known as an Applied Curriculum Project, which involves preservice teachers forming professional learning teams with one or more teachers in a school. These Applied Curriculum Project teams negotiate, design, facilitate and evaluate a student-focused project (e.g. after-school homework clubs, lunchtime sporting activities, literacy support programs, gifted and talented extension groups and garden clubs). Usually school personnel identify the Applied Curriculum Project foci based on their school's strategic plans and priorities.

The intent of the Applied Curriculum Project is to involve all participants more deeply in the curriculum and learning of the school and to establish more authentic relationships between preservice teachers, teachers and school students. Listed below are five Applied Curriculum Projects that were the focus of a large secondary school in the western suburbs of Melbourne:

1. Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) strategies for improvement: Student engagement/motivation, planning for success and striving for excellence.
2. Year 9 City Experience: A comprehensive city experience that scaffolds students through engaging with and working in the city.
3. Junior school pedagogy: How to incorporate 'best practice' in the open learning centre and beyond. This project focuses on individual needs, team teaching, student engagement, well-being and curriculum building.
4. Whole school data collection and analysis: How and what data do we collect? How do we interpret and use this to inform better practice and achieve better student outcomes. What are the gaps in our data? How do we assist staff in understanding and using data on a regular basis?

5. Year 10 (and student's representative council, SRC) environmental investigations: How do we interact with/create/build the environment around us? School-based project and community links. Working with others to create a more sustainable future for all.

Preservice teachers are responsible for developing a planning document in negotiation with the School Partnerships' Coordinator and the Applied Curriculum Project mentor teacher(s).

The Applied Curriculum Project Plan must:

- Identify the key issues giving rise to the project.
- Provide a rationale for focusing on this project.
- Make reference to the relevant educational theory and/or literature or policy.
- List the aims of the project.
- List the expected measurable outcomes.
- Contain an action plan that documents tasks/subtasks, who is responsible for them and the timeline for each task.
- Describe the evaluation method to determine the success, or otherwise, of the outcomes in meeting stated aims.
- List the professional skills that will be incorporated in the Applied Curriculum Project (e.g. planning, negotiating, leadership, time management, evaluation, teamwork, problem solving, entrepreneurship, communicating, researching, project management).

At the completion of the Applied Curriculum Project task, the preservice teacher(s) are required to produce a project report that:

- Provides a brief description of the project and its outcomes
- Provides evidence of how project aims were met or not met and why with reference to relevant educational theory/or literature or policy cited in the plan
- Comments on progress according to their Action Plan and advise of any changes to this plan and the reasons for any changes
- Evaluates the success or otherwise of the outcomes with reference to the evaluation methodology described in the plan
- Describes how each of the five, or more, professional skills nominated in their plan were applied during the Applied Curriculum Project

The School Partnerships' Coordinator and Applied Curriculum Project mentor teacher(s) are invited to provide feedback about the Applied Curriculum Project outcomes and the professional skills displayed by the preservice teacher(s) during the project.

Recent research by Arnold, Edwards, Hooley and Williams (2012) confirmed the following positive learning outcomes of Applied Curriculum Project engagement:

> Support student learning, exploration of connection between the practice and theory of teaching, project evaluation and evolving understanding of social context through the negotiated development of an aspect of curriculum important to the school. The process enables

preserve teachers to work cooperatively with mentor teachers not only on curriculum but on the creation of intellectual and practical space for the professional engagement of ideas, knowledge and comprehension of schooling. (p. 68)

Applied Curriculum Project engagement has also provided opportunities to develop a culture of 'teachers as researchers' (Robinson, 2003) in partner schools. The Victoria University College of Education has a strong reputation for its collaborative practitioner research (CPR) methodology that engages key school teaching and learning stakeholders in research planning and design, data collection and, importantly, data analysis relating to their school practice. In such contexts, university staff and preservice teachers work alongside school teachers in the pursuit of research activity negotiated with the school to address an inquiry of specific and immediate concern to the school and its community.

Over the past 5 years, the Victoria University College of Education has collaborated with clusters of primary and secondary schools as part of School Centres for Teaching Excellence (SCTEs: 2013/2014) and currently Teaching Academies for Professional Practice (TAPP: 2015/2016) that have been funded by the Victorian Department of Education and Training. The placement of significant groups of preservice teachers within these school clusters has enabled sophisticated and more enduring Applied Curriculum Project research projects undertaken by professional learning teams of preservice teachers, teachers and university educators to support school improvement and change. University resources and networks have enhanced schools' research activity allowing for links to be made to other researchers undertaking comparable work and allowing schools to access appropriate venues and forums for dissemination of findings. Interested teachers can gain credit for their research and mentoring activity within a university postgraduate program and can access research methodology units with the option of onsite delivery of such units available for teacher participants.

Not only have the Applied Curriculum Projects demonstrated a strengthening of the communities of practice in each school, but they have also shown these partnerships also raise the educational aspirations of students in schools. This is done by enabling greater, deeper and more sustained contact between school and university students. Many of the Victoria University preservice teachers have been educated in schools located in the western and northern suburbs of Melbourne (i.e. similar areas to the schools they are entering) and thus have the potential to be key role models for the school students. This is a region in which a mixture of factors – low SES, high levels of culturally and linguistically diverse students and low social and educational capital – make the transition from school to work or further study a difficult one for many young people. Victoria University is committed to this socially inclusive approach that offers expertise in working with the particular needs of such communities.

Aspire Program: Deakin University

As discussed earlier, research has highlighted that preservice teacher placements in low socio-economic schools have a more profound effect for disrupting stereotypes, helping preservice teachers learn about students' cultural backgrounds and connecting student behaviour and learning with what teachers do (Sleeter, 2008). Sleeter also found that when preservice teachers are mentored and supported appropriately when working with diverse students who are culturally different from themselves (and/or experiencing poverty), they are often more likely to go on to teach these students. The Deakin University Aspire program partners with low socio-economic schools to facilitate preservice teacher placement in these schools with the aim of supporting local school communities' efforts to raise higher education aspirations.

The Aspire program is now in its fifth year of operation and is funded through the Higher Education Participation Program (HEPP). The program provides additional emphasis on understanding how the school-university partnerships can be used to better prepare primary and secondary teachers. Preservice teachers learn to support this greater diversity in higher education access by using more equitable (applied and experiential) pedagogies that are also sustainable throughout their future careers as primary and secondary teachers. Early research on the Aspire program indicates the applied learning pedagogy of preservice teachers provides authentic learning opportunities for primary and secondary school students, raising student learning outcomes and access and equity in education. Most of the school students who participate in the Aspire program do not have parents/carers who have attended a university and have never previously experienced the sociocultural environment of a university. Aspire enables opportunities for community and parent/carer engagement in the program through immersive on-campus experiences.

Over the first 5 years, the Aspire program has immersed 550 local school students each week on campus at the university, enabling school students from years 6 to 10 to experience 'life' as a university student. Led by preservice teachers, the Aspire program offers hands-on learning experiences for school students across the Deakin University faculties. Preservice teachers work closely with cohorts of school students exploring higher education pathways. The co-developed learning modules are aligned with the Victorian and National Curriculum and support local school improvement agendas with particular focus on literacy and numeracy development. Each Aspire module has an academic expert to support and mentor both the preservice teachers and the local school students.

Through their teaching in the Aspire program, preservice teachers are able to align their developing teaching practice and pedagogy to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the graduate level. Preservice teachers from the Masters of Applied Learning and Teaching, the Bachelor of Education and the Bachelor of Health and Physical Education work with Aspire school student cohorts. For many

of the preservice teachers, this is their initial contact with school students and school settings. Many of the preservice teachers who align with the Aspire program are career change enrolments. This status brings a unique set of skills and experiences that are highly valuable to the program. They come to the program with excitement, life experience and knowledge in fields outside of teaching. The role of preservice teachers as capacity builders was identified by school leadership teams early in the program and disrupted the way many of our schools viewed preservice teachers. Many of the Aspire preservice teachers have subsequently gone on to find employment in partner schools.

This expansive partnership also enables stakeholders to work across traditional school-university boundaries resulting in a paradigm shift for how professional experience is viewed. Through an exploration of the tensions and discontinuities while working across and between institutional boundaries, Aspire stakeholders are enabled to develop a critical and transformative view of initial teacher and school student education. Our research has uncovered a range of practices and outcomes as evidence:

- A more consistent and collaborative approach across university faculties.
- Preservice teachers, university teacher educators and school-based teacher educators co-developing Aspire curriculum has enabled a closer alignment of initial teacher education theory and practice.
- Transformation of preservice teacher learning through an applied pedagogical teaching and learning approach.
- Preservice teachers are positioned as boundary-crossers where they teach and learn across school, university and community sites.
- Preservice teachers work closely with student data and school leaders to align school students with the Aspire program. Preservice teachers recognize low SES school students' high aspirations and expectations as part of the program.
- The Aspire program is aligned with school improvement plans and innovations.
- Authentic 'real-world' learning opportunities.
- A non-hierarchical approach to initial teacher education through the engagement in the partnership. This is particularly evident in the co-development of program curriculum.

The Aspire program aims to raise student aspirations by working collaboratively with schools, universities, students, parents, community and government. The Aspire program embraces an educational approach that no longer considers disadvantage as a barrier. This robust school-university partnership continues to champion higher education equity and access in the community while improving the quality of graduate teachers by working more effectively across their organizational boundaries.

Yirrkala Indigenous Schools' Program: The University of Melbourne

The traditional placement has not always served the needs of the communities in which preservice teachers enter, as was found to be the case in a cluster of remote Northern Territory schools. This section describes a professional experience that takes place as part of an elective subject in the Masters of Teaching at Melbourne University's Graduate School of Education (MGSE). What has developed since 2011 is a partnership that has become known as the Yirrkala Indigenous Schools – MGSE program. The professional experience aspect of this elective subject takes place in two schools in the Yirrkala community, one is the Yirrkala Community School (YCS), and the other is the Yirrkala Homelands School (YHS) which services the Laynhapuy Homelands in the region. Preservice teachers travel over 4000 km from their University campus in Melbourne to Yirrkala and live in the community during their placement.

For many years, the Yirrkala community has hosted preservice teachers from a number of teacher education institutions throughout Australia for more traditional placements. Yolŋu and Balanda (non-Indigenous) teachers in Yirrkala have much experience with preservice teachers coming from afar for a short time, learning about the community, schools and classrooms, having requisite practical teaching hours signed off and reported on and then returning to their homes with little reciprocity with the community. While these more traditional placements are important for preservice teachers to learn about remote communities and gain understanding of Indigenous cultures, it is as important for the communities to participate and ensure learning is 'two-way', and there are further and deeper benefits for the community at large. The MGSE-Yirrkala program embraces the Yolŋu concept: *bala ga lili*. Loosely translated, this term means reciprocity, learning from each other and give and take. Since this partnership, and specifically this preservice teacher professional experience, began in 2011, the importance of a reciprocal relationship with all members of the Yolŋu communities of the area has been emphasized. Teachers and community members have come to understand that hosting these preservice teachers is not a burden on them, rather an experience that benefits everyone.

Once selected, the preservice teachers begin to work closely with each other, their university lecturers and, importantly, members of the Yirrkala community (i.e. the principals and teachers of both schools as well as Elders and other community members) to ensure that their visit contributes something of value to the community. This begins before the preservice teachers arrive in Yirrkala with connections being made and conversations undertaken about the current needs of the schools. Upon arrival in Yirrkala, the preservice teachers participate in cultural induction facilitated by one of the school principals and where they meet some of the teachers and also some of the families from the community. The focus of this induction is to support the preservice teachers' navigation of the local community mores, traditions and customs both respectfully and comfortably. This induction also facilitates the

first face-to-face planning and collaboration for the projects that are to be undertaken by the preservice teachers. Because of the physical distance between Melbourne and Yirrkala, the collaborative planning conversations have until that point been conducted via email, skype or conference calls.

Each year the projects are guided by the needs and priorities of the schools and so have varied considerably. Examples of projects include:

- The Northern Territory (NT) government equipped the schools and classrooms with new technology including interactive whiteboards, computers and iPads. A number of preservice teachers devised and facilitated professional development sessions on the use of this technology in situ.
- Preservice teachers worked in collaboration with school students and a ranger as part of the on-country learning program to build and plant food gardens in some of the homelands.
- In another of the homelands, a group of preservice teachers travelled out with sports equipment and stayed on country for a number of nights. After working with the teachers during the day, in which they devised and taught a number of language and science activities, they were involved in after-hours activities. The preservice teachers led activities that included team games and ball handling activities. In the spirit of *bala ga lili*, the school students and their parents reciprocated by teaching the preservice teachers about their land, taking them to fishing and hunting areas and teaching them about their music and dance.
- Preservice teachers were the audience and 'students' for Yolŋu adult teachers who were completing a Diploma of Education for the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education. The preservice teachers provided feedback to the Yolŋu teachers and worked with them to develop lessons that were taken back to different homeland classrooms.
- Other contributions include involvement in sports carnivals and assisting with the creation of artworks and rehearsals for the annual Garma Festival.

This way of working closely has led directly to the recruitment of new teachers who are informed, engaged and better prepared to teach in the cultural interface (Nakata, 2007). Principals and community Elders report benefits of programs like this as they have the opportunity to observe and work with preservice teachers in more in-depth ways. The preservice teachers' first-hand experience of living in Yolŋu communities and their learning about the Yolŋu history, language and culture better equip them for remote and community school employment. Evidence that many return to the Northern Territory as teachers extends the mutual benefit. The Yirrkala Community School and Yirrkala Homelands School have both employed a number of the preservice teacher graduates who have participated in this program. The provision of quality education programs in remote communities, including those that the Yirrkala homelands schools serve, is a national priority (Close the Gap Local Implementation Plan Yirrkala, 2011).

Conclusion

The three university programs outlined here each began before the release of the 2015 TEMAG report. However, they are each effectively meeting the perceived needs of communities by providing via a service learning model, teacher education professional experiences that are outside the traditional professional experience. Each program provides evidence of Fox and Wilson's (2015) claim that to become a teacher, it is not enough to acquire classroom skills, but to gain knowledge and understanding of the communities in which these schools operate and the lives of the students attending these schools is critical. It was the practice that formed the new understandings (sayings), the new actions (doings) and the new ways people related to each other in schools and broader communities (relatings) that created the new knowledge and that 'practices come into being because people, acting not alone but collectively, bring them into being' (Kemmis et al., 2013, p. 31). The programs each illustrate that professional experience outside of the traditional professional experience is important not only in the development and learning of preservice teachers but also to the schools and communities in which these alternative professional experiences are conducted.

Victoria University's Applied Curriculum Project, Deakin University's Aspire Program and the University of Melbourne's Yirrkala Indigenous Schools' Program are each addressing how best to develop prospective teachers' understandings about social justice and community development. Partnerships schools are collaborating with university-based initial teacher education departments to ensure preservice teachers 'service learning' and contributions align with the schools' priorities. The Applied Curriculum Project and Yirrkala Indigenous Schools' program take place within the partner schools where as Aspire regularly brings school students to the university campus.

In essence, the three programs aim to build strong university and community partnerships and employ different approaches to achieve similar outcomes. These differences are important too. However, the focus on strong partnerships that advance the learning of preservice teachers through professional experience and at the same time offer mutual benefits for the school communities – communities of practice – is a common aspect that unites and demonstrates the strength of these programs.

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Chapter 12
Immersion Programs in Australia: Exploring Four Models for Developing 'Classroom-Ready' Teachers

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Abstract 'Classroom-ready' graduate teachers require a sound understanding of the complex context that constitutes the 'classroom' in which they are expected to teach. The preservice teachers' experiences within schools provide critical insights into these complexities and provide ongoing professional development towards their classroom readiness. It is in the school setting where theory learnt at university can inform and support preservice teachers to make sense of their observations of students' learning, teachers' teaching and their own teaching practice. We contend that within a traditional professional experience, the opportunities to link educational theory to teaching practice are usually incidental rather than purposeful, with preservice teachers often having limited opportunity to observe and experience the multifaceted nature of being a teacher. At both the state and national levels, governments are advocating for the improvement of preservice teachers' school experiences and for universities to ensure the graduation of 'classroom-ready' teachers. This chapter examines how initial teacher education providers are enhancing preservice teachers' teaching and learning experiences through innovative in-school immersion programs with the goal of producing more professionally prepared, 'classroom-ready' graduates. The chapter showcases four different models of school immersion programs from across Australia, outlining the purpose, structure and intended outcomes of each. A critique of these models highlighting tensions and vulnerabilities to implementation of immersion programs results in recommendations for initial teacher education providers who are seeking to support the immersion of preservice teachers as they transition into the teaching profession.

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Introduction

Immersion programs within initial teacher education are learning experiences organised and supported by universities and schools that offer opportunities for a co-teaching/co-learning model to exist (Cook & Friend, 1995). Immersion programs enable the preservice teacher and mentor teacher to negotiate shared responsibility for planning, delivering and evaluating instruction for a group of students. They provide an authentic learning experience for preservice teachers where they are involved and mentored across all aspects of school life. Immersion programs also allow for a 'third space' (Zeichner, 2010) where preservice teachers' practical experiences in schools are reconceptualised to create a learning community in which all participants are actively involved in the development of their professional knowledge and skills. We argue that the immersion context responds to Zeichner's (p. 89) concern about the 'commonly existing disconnection between the campus and school-based parts of teacher education programs'.

Collaborative partnerships between a university and school(s) are essential in immersion programs to ensure preservice teachers have sustained and supported teaching and learning experiences within a school setting. Immersion programs enable school and university personnel to work together to ensure that any possible disconnections between university theoretical learning and in-school experiences are meaningfully integrated through purposeful links between theory and practice. The purpose of immersion programs is to help connect on-campus learning with real school classrooms (see Bahr & Mellor, 2016). Immersion develops an integrated learning environment for preservice teachers so they can develop a comprehensive understanding of schools, classrooms and student learning, as well as confidence in their own teaching capabilities and their readiness to enter the teaching profession. This chapter showcases four school-university immersion programs across diverse locations in Australia. The context, structure and implementation of each immersion program are discussed, implementation tensions and vulnerabilities are highlighted, and recommendations for future immersion programs are proposed. However, caution exists with presenting these as exemplars as Bahr and Mellor (2016) suggest, 'the variability of teaching contexts, learners and teaching areas restricts the generalisability of the findings' (p.49).

Initial Teacher Education Programs

Over the last 100 years, teacher training has moved from the traditional school-based pupil-teacher apprenticeship model to one in which there is structured learning of educational theory in higher education institutions coupled with practical teaching experiences in schools. The role of Australian initial teacher education providers is to teach teachers how to teach, and schools the place where preservice teachers practise teaching (Dyson, 2005). In Australia, the original 2-year teacher

education programs were extended to 3-year diplomas, and since the 1980s, universities have provided 4-year undergraduate Bachelor of Education programs and postgraduate programs of 1 or 2 years.

In more recent years, the role of universities in the development and delivery of teacher education has come under intense scrutiny (Darling-Hammond & Adamson 2013; Mayer, 2014). There has been a movement since the turn of the twenty-first century to shift teacher education from universities back to schools (Broadley, Ledger, & Sharplin, 2013) under the supervision of school-based mentor teachers, with relatively minor input from university-based teacher educators. This is particularly evident in the United Kingdom where there has been a move away from university-based teacher education to a school-based apprenticeship model of training (Robinson, 2006). This model of school-based teacher education has also touched Australia with the re-emergence of teacher internship programs including the Teach for Australia model (Broadley & Ledger, 2012; Dinham, 2014) and 12-month internships. Interestingly, Kamenetz (2014) reported that one in five teachers in initial teacher education in the United States of America was trained in alternative certification programs.

Whilst current education policy and initial teacher education reforms are increasingly directed at strengthening the practice component within initial teacher education with greater emphasis on school experience rather than university-based learning (Mattsson, Eilertsen & Rorrison, 2011; Mayer, 2014), research also highlights the importance of teachers' theoretical and content knowledge to support student learning (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). Empirical studies show effective initial teacher education programs are those that develop preservice teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge, have an academically rigorous core curriculum underpinned by an enquiry approach connecting theory to practice and provide extensive supported teaching practice (Allen, Howells, & Radford, 2013, Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). The challenge for many initial teacher education programs has been to balance pedagogical theory and professional practice (Ure, Gough, & Newton, 2009). The four different models of school immersion programs showcased in this chapter aim to purposely integrate university theory with school experiences to ensure the initial teacher education programs were academically robust and incorporated strong university and school partnerships.

Immersion Programs in Initial Teacher Education

Whilst there is a general agreement for extensive supported experiences in schools that are meaningfully connected to university coursework, how this is actualised has been problematic. The divide between university theory and professional practice (Brady, 2002; Smedley, 2001) has also been observed in other professional programs such as accountancy (Albrecht & Sack, 2000; Stanley, 2010), nursing and medicine (Feng et al., 2013). The above studies found that students who were

mentored and immersed in their professional practice as part of their academic program, graduated with greater understanding of their respective professions.

The idea of an 'immersive experience' to support preservice teachers to be workforce ready (Apsland, 2016) has led to a wide range of extended, practical innovations within initial teacher education. The use of communities of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Le Cornu, 2010; Rossner & Commins, 2012) has been advocated as a means of providing immersive experiences for preservice teachers in schools. However, creating a learning community is often not possible in traditional practicums due to time constraints and other logistical challenges, the focus being on preservice teachers' demonstrating effective teaching practice and supervising teachers' assessing that practice (Allen & Peach, 2007; Furlong & Maynard, 1995; Hastings, 2004, 2010). Hence, there has been a need to reconceptualise school/university partnerships and practicums to ensure that experiences in schools are rigorous and meaningful, that the theory-practice divide is addressed and that opportunities for preservice teachers to work in partnership over a sustained period of time with mentor teachers are created. Kruger, Davies, Eckersley, Newell, and Cherednichenko (2009) conceptualise partnerships between initial teacher educators and schools:

> … as a distinguishing characteristic of those teacher education programs with practices linking school teachers, preservice teachers and teacher educators in more direct and ongoing ways than the conventional teacher practicum. The nature of the partnership is that its impact is in the participation and learning of the individual participants but also that the enhanced university–school relationship needs to be organised at the level of the institutions. (p. 43)

More than a decade ago, Korthagen, Loughran, and Russell (2006) offered a framework of seven principles that guide effective initial teacher education programs. Two of these principles directly speak to the efficacy of immersion programs, that is, learning about teaching requires an emphasis on those learning to teach working closely with teachers as peers in supportive communities of learners, and learning about teaching requires meaningful relationships between schools, universities and preservice teachers.

Practicum as partnership affords preservice teachers an immersive experience within the whole range of activities in the teaching profession, enabling the preservice teacher to experience a greater cross-section of the life of the school, as well as the multifaceted tasks of a teacher. When immersed in practice, preservice teachers have access to department intranets, assessment procedures, resources and day-to-day tasks such as roll keeping, reporting, individual education plans and ongoing interactions with colleagues and parents. These so-called 'hidden' elements of the teaching profession are 'learnt' whilst immersed in practice and can contribute to producing 'classroom-ready' graduates (Broadley et al., 2013). Preservice teachers are more than 'visitors' in the classroom; the benefits of this immersion can be likened to Zeichner's (2010) notion of a transforming 'third space' enabling the preservice teachers 'to inhabit simultaneously their student and teacher identities [through] gently being eased into a sense of belonging to the broader teacher and school communities, at least partly because of the confidence and comfort…' (Forgasz, 2016, p. 110).

Immersion Programs: Australian Context

There have been numerous reviews, agreements and blueprints in Australia that have advocated for stronger collaborative partnerships between initial teacher education and schools to connect theory and practice in order to produce teachers who are 'classroom ready'. The latest Australian report into initial teacher education, the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group's (TEMAG) Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers Report (2015), centred on five main themes that are leading to significant policy reform as follows:

1. Stronger quality assurance of teacher education courses
2. Rigorous selection for entry to teacher education courses
3. Improved and structured practical experience for preservice teachers
4. Robust assessment of graduates to ensure classroom readiness
5. National research and workforce capabilities

Immersion programs can be linked to three of the five themes from the Action Now Report in that preservice teachers are immersed within a school for an extended period of time. Immersion provides opportunities for the preservice teacher to be a teacher in the classroom, thus experiencing the planning, teaching and assessment cycle in an authentic context. Immersion also provides the opportunity for robust assessment of a preservice teacher's practice against the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011). Immersion programs that offer an internship as a component of the extended placement contribute to specific workforce capabilities by providing high-quality graduates that are 'classroom ready' (Broadley & Ledger, 2012).

Surveying how Australian universities structure their professional experience placements, the Studying the Effectiveness of Teacher Education Report (2015) found that only 8% of graduates were involved in placements that lasted between 13 and 15 weeks, with the majority completing internships of 4–6 weeks (63%). There was no evidence of immersion programs, internships or extended placements beyond 15 weeks in the document. The professional experience component of newly graduated teachers around the nation reveals a diverse combination of placement scheduling within their initial teacher education programs. Less than 1% of 3480 respondents had experienced a distributed practicum (1 or 2 days per week) as well as an internship, whilst only 11% had experienced the combination of a block practicum, a distributed practicum and an internship. There was a perception from respondents, including the cohort of principals, that preservice teachers who completed an internship were more prepared than those who did not. The findings from the Longitudinal Teacher Education and Workforce Study Report (2013) also highlighted the importance of extended professional experience in schools, with the Studying the Effectiveness of Teacher Education Report (2015) stating that teacher education graduates typically are underprepared for the teaching profession.

The four immersion programs discussed in this chapter contest these findings, as each includes an extended school placement, opportunities for observations and

teaching experiences in a range of contexts, integration of school experiences with university coursework, mentoring by expert teachers and opportunities for shared learning experiences with other preservice teachers, mentors and teacher educators. The immersion programs discussed reflect many of the characteristics of successful initial teacher education programs summarised in Australia's recent Longitudinal Teacher Education and Workforce Study (LTEWS 2013) and Studying the Effectiveness of Teacher Education Report (2015). The four models below offer examples of Bahr and Mellor's (2016) call for research on teacher education to provide a stronger body of evidence of programs where there is 'mutual benefit designed into collaborative enterprise between school-based and campus-based educators' (p.16).

Model: Victoria (Monash University)

Introduction

The Advanced Placement model at Monash University was developed and first implemented in 2001 at the Gippsland campus and then adopted at the Peninsula campus, where it is still in operation. The aim was to provide final-year Bachelor of Education (Primary) preservice teachers with a new way of experiencing learning to teach in the last phase of their undergraduate degree. The model, which links school life to university life, was conceptualised by Michael Dyson, Lecturer in Education at Monash University Gippsland. This model was based on his earlier work in a school-based program, which was first implemented in the mid-1990s when the compulsory 4-year degree was introduced. Dyson redesigned the school-based program to become the Advanced Practicum, which enabled a:

> worldview of learning [and to] facilitate a synergy between theory and practice…The interns themselves drew the pieces together to form new understandings, took responsibility for their own learning, their relationships, and the formation of their identity as a teacher. (Dyson, 2010, p. 9)

Broadly, the aims of the Advanced Placement program are:

1. To provide a framework in which preservice teachers develop an ongoing and long-term relationship with a school community
2. To provide an opportunity for preservice teachers to respond as adult learners to the demands and experiences of their work and to develop the communication and interpersonal skills expected of a professional
3. To induct preservice teachers into the profession as reflective teachers with a realistic awareness of the nature and scope of contemporary schooling
4. To contribute to establishing a collegial relationship between mentor and mentee in a reciprocal professional learning environment (Monash University Advanced Placement Guide, 2014, p. 3)

Context

The Advanced Placement program is an example of immersion that provides sustained connection to one school and classroom for the whole year. It was designed to give final-year undergraduate preservice teachers an opportunity to be immersed in the daily routines and culture of their placement school and its community from the start of the school year. It enables the preservice teachers to become part of the school community more easily than if they began their placement later in the term. The principles behind the Advanced Placement model are explained to participating schools and preservice teachers at an information session towards the end of the previous year. A unit guide is provided to every participating school and preservice teacher to ensure all participants understand the focus and structure of the program.

Structure and Implementation

Preservice teachers begin their placement on the first day of the school year, which is usually 1 month before the beginning of the university semester. They remain in the same class with the same teacher for the whole school year, so they experience the 'behind-the-scenes' preparation that teachers undertake before children begin the school year. They may be involved in classroom set-up, planning meetings and professional development opportunities. The organisation of their 40 days of professional experience is as follows:

End of the year before: preservice teachers are notified of their school in November and are encouraged to visit the principal and meet with their mentor teacher, if possible.

Semester one: 15 days of immersion (1 or 2 days per week) from day 1 of the school year, until near the end of term one. This also includes additional voluntary days the preservice teacher is able to undertake. This concludes with five consecutive days at the end of term one of the school year.

Semester two: preservice teachers undertake 20 consecutive days culminating in full management of the classroom for at least 3 weeks. Voluntary days are encouraged and negotiated with the mentor teacher throughout the semester.

Whilst the Advanced Placement is intensively based on schools, preservice teachers also attend three seminar days per semester at university. These provide on-campus classes on topics such as classroom management, assessment and curriculum. Guest speakers, usually teachers and/or principals from participating schools, are also invited to talk about topics such as professional organisations, legal liability and duty of care. These seminars provide preservice teachers with opportunities to reflect on their placement experiences with the support of their colleagues and teacher educators. In addition to supporting the learning of the preservice teachers, the work of the university-based teacher educators involved in the program

includes developing and maintaining close professional relationships with schools and mentor teachers. One of the philosophical bases of the program is the importance of relationships in learning to become a teacher. This not only applies to the preservice teachers and mentor teachers but also to the teacher educators themselves. Critical to the success of the program is effective communication between all participants and the direct involvement of teacher educators in the schools as much as possible.

Model: Western Australia (Murdoch University)

Introduction

In 2011, Murdoch University in collaboration with Curtin University and the University of Western Australia successfully tendered for funding from the Australian Government's National Partnership Quality Teacher reform. The Western Australian Combined Universities Training School (WACUTS) program offered a select-entry 12-month internship to high-calibre preservice teachers spanning kindergarten-year 12 in rural and metropolitan school contexts. The program graduated 50 interns per annum for 3 years (2011–2013) with a 92% employment rate (Hall, 2013). When national partnership funding ceased in 2013, the WACUTS internship model and structure was adopted by Murdoch University and used as a blueprint for internships across all accredited initial teacher education programs. The Murdoch Internship and Immersion Models (MIMs) continue to cater for K-12 initial teacher education options spanning rural and metropolitan schools. The 12-month MIMs' program, currently graduates up to 40 interns each year with an employment rate of over 90% (Foxall, 2014; Hall, 2013). It offers a combination of immersion and internship features within its program structure.

Background

In 2010, the Tertiary Educators Rural, Regional and Remote Network (TERRR Network) was formed in Western Australia, a region that spans over 2.6 million km^2. The collaborative goal of the group was to improve the quality of graduates working in rural Western Australia. The TERRR Network developed a research project to improve the capacity of universities to prepare teachers for employment in rural and remote locations (Trinidad, Sharplin, Ledger, & Broadley, 2014). The Western Australian Combined Universities Training School (WACUTS) internship emerged as a program initiative from the TERRR Network targeting both rural and metropolitan school needs and contexts. The aim of the Western Australian Combined Universities Training School Program (WACUTS) and the subsequent Murdoch

Internship and Immersion Models' (MIMs') program was to strengthen the nexus between theory and practice and in so doing reconnect schools and universities (Sclanders, Saggers, & Stuart, 2014).

Structure and Implementation

Research conducted nationally by Ure et al. (2009) classified teacher education programs under four professional learning models: 'partnership and collaborative learning, reflective learning, clinically applied and pedagogical content knowledge focused' (p. 13). Although the Murdoch Internship and Immersion Models (MIMs) are primarily a clinically applied extended practicum, they capture components of Ure and colleagues' four identified models within their essential elements, stakeholders and processes. Although the process of closely combining university pedagogical theory and school experience can be linked to past apprenticeship models (Broadley, Ledger, & Sharplin, 2013), the Murdoch Internship and Immersion Models also incorporate twenty-first-century demands and technologies to address recognised weaknesses of new graduates. The following essential elements, stakeholders and processes are involved in the MIMs' 12-month internship and immersion program.

Essential Stakeholders

Internships rely on the interconnectivity and contribution of key stakeholders from universities, schools and education sectors. Each contributes in different ways to an ongoing and evolving integrated community of practice. The following stakeholders and the relationships between each are considered essential for the success of the program, however each relationship also presents inbuilt points of contestation.

Intern/Associate A select-entry preservice teacher is chosen through a rigorous selection process of academic screening as well as individual and group interviews.

Mentor An experienced mentor selected by principals and university staff is responsible for guiding the assigned intern through a gradual release of responsibility model (Fisher & Frey, 2008; Gallagher & Pearson, 1989).

School Coordinator A designated school-based coordinator is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day logistics of supporting interns and mentors. Typically, school coordinators hold positions of leadership within the school as it has been found that leadership support increases effectiveness of program implementation.

University Coordinator A university academic or designated coordinator of interns has the responsibility for monitoring, managing and communicating with all

key stakeholders. This role encompasses conceptualising, modifying and reviewing each element of the program.

Department Coordinator In Western Australia, the workforce and planning directorates provided invaluable support for universities. Funding opportunities that align with their areas of priority and shortage have benefitted the entire range of internship programs including Western Australian Combined Universities Training School (2012–2014), Edith Cowan's Residency Program (2011–2014), Teach for Australia (2013) and Murdoch Internship Models including Pilbara Cities Internship Program (2014–2017).

Essential Processes

The process for selection, induction, professional learning, monitoring and reflection is typically conducted over 18 months. The selection is completed 6 months prior to the beginning of the program. An effective communication channel for all participants is a priority for operationalising internships (Broadley et al., 2013; Foxall, 2014; Sclanders, et al., 2014). The MIMs' program provides instructions around roles, responsibilities, milestones, professional learning opportunities, assessment timelines and operational milestones. In addition, MIMs utilised an electronic platform to support an online community of practice. This was considered an invaluable learning tool for the internship (Broadley & Ledger, 2012) and provided a 'third space' for reflecting on their practice. Although the MIMs differ slightly within each of the school contexts, the essential components remain the same as outlined below.

Essential Components

1. A full calendar year program where interns are based in partnership schools whilst enrolled externally in their initial teacher education program.
2. A selective entry program based on high academic performance and identified positive disposition to teach.
3. A range of professional learning opportunities throughout the year is offered for interns and mentors including inductions both collectively and in situ, ongoing site-based professional learning and university workshops each term.
4. Mentors complete the national online supervising preservice teachers' modules as a baseline requirement. Additional mentoring professional learning is provided including Hudson and Bird's (2015) Mentoring for Effective Teaching program.
5. A combination of two block placements (10 days +50 days) and 50 distributed immersion days across the year (100 total days).

6. The Gradual Release of Responsibility and Co-Teaching Model (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) operates in all aspects of the internship.
7. Interns contribute to a range of day-to-day demands of the profession including report writing, intranet use, attendance and parent communication.
8. All participants contribute to the online community of practice.
9. A range of interschool and interclass exchanges and initiatives is encouraged to add variety to the program and alleviate pressure points.
10. Interns meet face to face weekly with the school coordinator/mentor and online with university teacher education academics to reflect on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011) and critical learning incidents.

The MIMs' 12-month combined internship and immersion program is a select-entry program. Students apply knowing the commitment necessary to meet the requirements. Logistically, interns enrol in their final-year units externally; however, they can enrol internally in semester one and use the non-contact school days to attend university if preferred. This blended mode of delivery provides the flexibility needed to juggle the demands of university whilst at the same time meeting the demands of school. The program relies on strong partnerships between university, schools, teacher registration board and the Department of Education. However, these strengths are also its points of vulnerability as success relies on the ongoing relationship and commitment by individuals within the program.

Model: New South Wales (University of Wollongong)

Introduction

In New South Wales, from 2015, the Board of Studies, Teaching and Educational Standards (BOSTES) mandated a 2-year Master of Teaching degrees to replace 1-year Graduate Diplomas of Education. This policy change led initial teacher education providers to review and reconceptualise their postgraduate teacher education programs. The change from a 1-year to a 2-year program provided an opportunity to strengthen the practical component of teacher education programs, an important imperative as discussed in the introduction to this chapter. This section provides a discussion of an initiative by a New South Wales university to enhance preservice teachers' experiential learning through a Professional Immersion Program (PIP).

Context

The purpose of the Professional Immersion Program (PIP) was to immerse preservice teachers into the culture of a school and provide opportunities for preservice teachers to observe teachers' teaching and students' learning during the first semester of a Master of Teaching program. The Professional Immersion Program (PIP) was developed from a small-scale immersion program offered within the previous Graduate Diploma of Education. This program provided a select number of secondary preservice teachers, who had shown strong academic results and demonstrated professionalism and commitment on their first professional experience, the opportunity to be immersed into a secondary school setting under the guidance of a mentor. The Graduate Diploma of Teaching immersion program ran for 3 years from 2012 to 2014 and was researched using a case study framework to identify what would be required for an up-scaled immersion program within a Master of Teaching program.

Based on the Graduate Diploma of Teaching immersion program and a series of meetings with local schoolteachers, school leaders and university teacher educators, the Professional Immersion Program (PIP) was developed. The primary goal of the PIP was to facilitate preservice teachers to make important connections between practical school experiences and university-based studies during the first semester of the Master of Teaching program. To achieve this, the Professional Immersion Program included organised school experiences (e.g. undertaking professional learning with peers and mentor teachers, conducting a lesson study with a mentor teacher), targeted classroom observations across a range of contexts, reflective tasks as well as professional conversations with school leaders and school mentors and university teacher educators. All activities were aligned to a specific university subject so explicit links could be made between the subjects' educational theory and practical school and classroom experiences. To further support the links between university theory and preservice experiences at school, mentor teachers and school leaders taught in the Master of Teaching first-year subjects. Additionally, professional conversation workshops were held at the immersion school where preservice teachers discussed and reflected on their understandings of a specified topic (e.g. differentiation or behaviour management) with other preservice teachers, colleagues, school teachers/mentors and university-based teacher educators. These conversations were carefully scaffolded by both school teacher/mentors and university-based teacher educators to support preservice teachers' understanding of how theory informs practice.

Evidence of the success of immersion experiences enhancing preservice teachers' ability to connect theories learnt at university with classroom observation was demonstrated in the small-scale Graduate Diploma of Education immersion program and supported by previous research (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Conkling, 2008). An unanticipated benefit of the professional conversation workshops was enhanced understandings between school teacher/mentors and university-based teacher educators of each other's context and the differing needs of individual preservice

teachers. This resulted in greater collaboration between the university and immersion schools, leading to the Professional Immersion Program (PIP) appearing to be more cohesive. The problematic nature of building collaborative relationships between schools and universities has been discussed earlier in the chapter (e.g. Zeichner, 2010), and professional conversation workshops to some extent bridged this divide.

Structure and Implementation

The Professional Immersion Program (PIP) was a 16-day immersion experience for preservice teachers enrolled in the Master of Teaching Primary or Master of Teaching Secondary program. The PIP commenced in the second week of the Master of Teaching program; preservice teachers had 4 days in a designated immersion school with specific daily tasks. Tasks included accessing the school's different policies (e.g. welfare, literacy, numeracy, etc.), observing teachers teaching different year levels, observing a range of subjects being taught and collecting information regarding school resources (computers, iPads, library, internet, sports equipment, etc.). Preservice teachers were paired so as to support the preservice teachers' immersion experience, to reduce anxiety, to facilitate shared conversations on their observations and to provide opportunities for preservice teachers to undertake team teaching. Preservice teachers returned for 1 day at university to discuss and reflect on their tasks, observations and experiences during the 4-day intensive immersion. The 4-day intensive immersion experience was designed to demonstrate to preservice teachers the reality of the complex nature of schools and teaching to inform and confirm their choice of teaching as their profession. After the first week, preservice teachers had 1 day a week for 12 weeks immersed within the school, followed by a 3-week placement at the end of the first semester and a 3-week placement at the end of the second semester, totalling a 46-day integrated immersion/practicum program.

To support the implementation of the Professional Immersion Program (PIP), a number of initiatives were employed based on the previous Graduate Diploma of Teaching immersion program:

- Immersion schools, in-school coordinators and school leaders were invited to a 2-h workshop summarising the purpose and structure of the PIP.
- Workshops and all correspondence with schools, school leaders and mentor teachers placed an emphasis on the importance of teachers' professional and practical knowledge being complementary to university theoretical knowledge.
- Preservice teachers were organised in pairs and matched to a selected mentor classroom teacher.
- Paired preservice teachers were expected to observe a wide range of classrooms, year levels, subjects and school activities including bus duty, yard duty, school sport, faculty/staff and professional learning and welfare meetings.

- School leaders had a role within the PIP by engaging in a scheduled professional conversation with preservice teachers discussing school structure, philosophy, school plan and professional expectations.
- A well-structured program was communicated to all participants through workshops, emails and meetings. Each week of the PIP had a specific focus of targeted school experiences, classroom observations and reflective tasks.

The Professional Immersion Program was evaluated after the first year. Changes were implemented in response to feedback from focus groups and school leaders, which included a reduction of the number of activities and flexibility in what tasks were completed based on the school context. Greater in-servicing of mentor teachers and an online platform were established to share and communicate information to all participants.

Model: Queensland (Central Queensland University)

Introduction

At the beginning of the new millennium, Central Queensland University launched the Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM), an undergraduate teaching degree that was developed in consultation with Queensland schools located in its regional footprint. The goal of the BLM was to produce workplace-ready and future-orientated graduates who would be the future agents of change within a twenty-first-century education circumstance (Smith & Lynch, 2010). In order to achieve such goals, the professional experience component of the BLM was explicitly linked to the coursework undertaken on campus (Ingvarson, Beavis, Danielson, Ellis & Elliot, 2005). As such, the preservice teachers applied theory to practice through 'portal tasks' that were completed during the professional experience. A portal task can be described as a structured experience that demonstrates and applies understanding of important teaching knowledge (Smith & Lynch, 2010). The professional experience component of the BLM thus became integral, and due to this, it included over 130 days of professional practice. The final year of the BLM program placed preservice teachers into a school for 87 days, creating a context of workplace immersion for the demonstration and application of teaching knowledge.

Context

The Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM) program is delivered on five regional Queensland sites (Bundaberg, Gladstone, Mackay, Noosa and Rockhampton) with a sixth regional site added in 2012 at the Geraldton University Centre in Western Australia. Students in the Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM) are enrolled

internally and are located within the university campus footprint. Partnership arrangements with schools are a vital component of the success of the program, and each campus footprint has a number of schools that mentor preservice teachers; these schools are referred to as 'teaching schools'. The success of the final-year immersion program relies on teaching schools that will mentor and embrace the preservice teachers into the school community. The preservice teacher is seen as a school staff member and is treated as a teacher rather than a preservice teacher. In this respect mentor teachers and school staff receive specific professional development that provides them with a clear understanding of the intentions of the program as well as the expected outcomes and learning of the preservice teachers. Like other immersion programs, a number of roles are key to the success of the preservice teachers. Each teaching school has a nominated site coordinator who is paid as a university tutor and delivers school-based professional development sessions to preservice teachers. Teaching schools also have an allocated university coordinator who supports, troubleshoots and works in collaboration with the site coordinators, preservice teachers and mentor teachers.

Structure and Implementation

The final year of the Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM) program consists of three professional experiences known as Embedded Professional Learning 3, 4 and 5 that occur over the course of three school terms. The structure of these culminating courses is shown in Table 12.1.

Preservice teachers are allocated to a school in the previous year so that they can meet their mentor teacher and be inducted into the school prior to the beginning of their placement. This process is designed to build the foundations of mentoring whereby the preservice teachers and mentor teachers form a professional relationship and begin to discuss expectations and goals for the year.

Key to the success of the professional experience in the final-year program is the combination of work experience days and assessable days. The positioning of the work experience days in embedded professional learning 3 (EPL3) at the beginning

Table 12.1 Final-year professional experience structure

Embedded professional learning 3	Undertaken in school term 1 and school term 2
Two student-free days (work experience) followed by ten consecutive days (work experience)	
Ten single day visits (five work experience and five assessable) followed by 15 consecutive assessable days	
Embedded professional learning 4	Undertaken in school term 3
Twenty consecutive assessable days	
Embedded professional learning 5 (internship)	Undertaken in school term 3
Thirty consecutive assessable days	

of the school year intends to set up the preservice teacher for success. The preservice teachers attend the first 12 days (two student-free days and ten consecutive days) of the new school year and experience firsthand how the school year begins. Preservice teachers attend professional learning sessions with their mentor teacher, assist their mentor in physically setting up the classroom and observe how the classroom environment is developed and how relationships with learners are built. They also observe their mentor teaching and assessing, and have the opportunity to participate in developing student profiles. This initial component of EPL3 provides the preservice teacher with the opportunity to become an integral part of the classroom and teaching team.

After the initial 12 days in EPL3, preservice teachers continue to attend their placement classroom 1 day each week for 10 weeks and have specified tasks allocated to perform that include profiling, planning, teaching and assessing. During this time however, the preservice teachers are also attending university classes whereby they are completing their final theoretical, curriculum and pedagogy courses. EPL3 is one of their final courses and has a weekly tutorial that supports the preservice teacher during their placement with preparatory and reflective tasks. Once the preservice teachers have completed all university coursework and assessment, they begin a 3-week continuous block placement that requires them to engage in the full range of roles and duties of a teacher.

Following on directly from EPL3 is embedded professional learning 4 (EPL4). Although the mid-year holidays separate the EPL3 and EPL4, the momentum gained in EPL3 can be further developed as the preservice teachers are required to immerse themselves in the role of the teacher by teaching continuously for 4 weeks. In this respect, the preservice teacher continues to cultivate the teaching knowledge, skills and behaviours expected of a workplace, 'classroom-ready' graduate. The identified planned outcome of EPL4 is that the preservice teachers demonstrate all 37 descriptors of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) at graduate level. Thus, at the conclusion of EPL4, preservice teachers are assessed against the graduate standards and, if they are successful, continue onto an internship. Embedded professional learning 5 (EPL5) consists of a compulsory unpaid internship that provides an opportunity for the application and consolidation of the APST at the graduate level. During the internship period, preservice teachers are granted 'authorisation' to teach' by the Queensland College of Teachers (the state regulatory authority) and are able to assume 50% of their mentor's workload. Preservice teachers, in many instances, team-teach with their mentor and are viewed by their school as a beginning classroom teacher.

The 13 weeks of continuous placement that the preservice teachers experience (along with the associated work experience days) in the final year of the BLM provides them with explicit opportunities to develop into 'classroom-ready' graduates who have the 'know-how', 'know-what', 'know-why' and 'know-when' (Ambrosetti, 2010, p. 39). Feedback from preservice teachers confirms that the final-year immersion and internship program are considered the most valuable part of their degree and indicate that they experience growth in their confidence of becoming and being a teacher (Ambrosetti, 2015). However, some barriers are faced by the preservice

teachers during the final-year professional experience program. These include a limited ability for earning an income during the continuous placement and a heavy workload for which they were not paid.

Discussion: Comparison of the Four Models

Although the four models have been presented as examples of immersion within initial teacher education, we drew on case study methodology to analyse and compare the programs. According to George and Bennett (2005, p. 67), comparison of case studies in educational research is dependent on having 'a clearly defined and common focus'. The four models highlighted commonalities and divergences as well as tensions and vulnerabilities. The models are all unique in regard to their context, design and implementation, however, there are important distinguishable elements shared across each of the programs.

Firstly, each has a focus on knowledge transfer of preservice teachers from university theory to practical learning and teaching in schools. As Dyson (2010) argued, preservice teachers need to be provided with opportunities within initial teacher education programs to progress 'both personally and professionally as educators' (p. 8). The opportunity for preservice teachers to take responsibility for their own learning, negotiate their role in the school and develop greater understanding of themselves as an educator, the school context and their teaching colleagues is also a characteristic of each of these programs. Secondly, each immersion program strengthened tripartite relationship between schools, universities and teacher education by providing an extended opportunity for preservice teachers to be immersed within a school as well as support structures to ensure high-quality communication between all parties. Research has shown that extended placements may lead to partnerships that contribute to improved and strengthened tripartite relationships between schools, universities and education sectors (Broadley & Ledger, 2012; Foxall, 2014: Trinidad et al., 2014).

In addition to the similar distinguishable elements of the four immersion models, there were shared commonalities in relation to personnel, processes and practices. For example, preservice teachers, mentors and university colleagues worked collaboratively in all four programs. Although the nomenclature differed for key participants within each program, the roles and responsibilities remained similar. Also, one of the four programs had selected entry of high-calibre students who were paired with experienced mentor teachers. All four cases identified the importance of providing professional learning for mentors. They also highlighted the fundamental importance of leadership backing from both school and university personnel for the ongoing sustainability and success of the models. Finally, a range of common practices were revealed across the immersion programs including early start dates; clearly defined, scaffolded program based on gradual release of responsibility model (Fisher & Frey, 2008; Gallagher & Pearson, 1989); and a combination of placement timing ranging from distributed days to block placements over an

extended period of time. It must be noted that there are two critical differences between the immersion programs showcased in this chapter and traditional internships.

Firstly, internships are usually in the final year of a teacher education program and are 5 days a week for an extended period of time with the expectation that the preservice teacher undertakes the full range of responsibilities expected of a teacher with a reduced workload (Longitudinal Teacher Education and Workforce Study, 2013). The four immersion cases discussed structured school experiences so preservice teachers had a gradual immersion within a school context prior to any extended teaching practice. Secondly, during an internship, making connections between theory and practice is often ad hoc or incidental. The immersion cases were deliberately organised to explicitly address the theory/practice nexus. Within the immersion cases, preservice teachers were supported to make important connections between theory and practice by mentors (school or university teacher educators).

Comparing the Australian immersion models revealed a range of benefits but equally similar points of tension or vulnerabilities embedded in the immersion programs. The main benefits of the immersion program relate to opportunities provided for the professional and personal growth of the preservice teachers, as they had sustained connection to their students and mentor teachers and the wider school community. This enabled the preservice teachers to be seen as, and to perceive themselves as, a genuine part of the school community rather than short-term visitors with limited personal or professional connections. Another benefit of the immersion programs was the strengthening of the tripartite relationship between schools, universities and education sectors, where the idea of learning from professional experience was expanded to include all participants. This collaborative approach to professional experience included the strengthening of preservice teachers' understanding of how educational theory informs effective practice and the opening up of possibilities for mentor teacher/teacher educator interactions and professional learning about mentoring.

In terms of shared points of tension or vulnerabilities, the four models all reported that to ensure that the immersion program was successful for all involved, there is a need for ongoing collaboration between university-based teacher educators and school-based mentors. Whilst this occurred in all the cases, it takes time and commitment to ensure that such collaboration is maintained and is seen to be of benefit to the school mentors and to the teacher educators. This ongoing collaboration requires commitment of time and effort at the school level and university and often relies on the goodwill of key players. The 'hidden costs' of collaboration such as ongoing generosity of those working beyond their remit or scope of work are highlighted as concerning and worthy of further research.

Professional learning about mentoring is also essential for the success of any immersion program, as argued by Dyson (2010). The challenge for participants in these four immersion programs was to provide timely and effective professional learning about mentoring and to share how different mentoring styles and processes can be improved to support the learning of preservice teachers. This raises the issue of whose knowledge is valued in professional experience and how different

perspectives of what it means to learn to teach can be incorporated to support pre-service teachers. Analysis of the cases presented here suggested that there is a strong need for immersion programs to be continually monitored and modified to meet the contextual (or different) demands of the school, university and students.

One point of difference between the models was the length of time and tasks employed by the programs. Some programs combined immersion with block placements, whilst others were purely immersion experiences. The immersion programs ranged from 16 to 100 days; each had clearly defined goals and structure, but it could be argued that 16 days across a calendar year provides limited exposure to all components of the classroom and yearly demands, such as significant school events including reports, assessment, carnivals, field trips, parent nights and planning sessions. However, it must be noted that the 16 days of immersion was followed by two 3-week professional experience in the same school; in this case, the immersion provided the foundation for the following assessed 30 days of teaching.

Another point of difference between the models was the issue of selection of preservice teachers for participation in the immersion program. In the Western Australian program, preservice teachers were selected on the basis of academic results, whilst the programs in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland involved all preservice teachers in a particular year level or course. A select-entry program based on merit could be argued and seen as comparable to a typical honour's program. This raises the issue of equity and access and whether or not the benefits of such programs should be open to all students. We have argued in this chapter that immersion in the life of a school and classroom for an extended period of time has many benefits for the professional learning of all those who participate in some type of immersion program as part of their professional experience. The provision of a range of immersion programs would cater for the perceived inequity issue and diversity of student argument, as well as addressing the 'access' and 'opportunity to learn' issues. Many factors impact students' ability to apply or commit to 12-month or 87-day internships, and it is for this reason that many initial teacher education programs provide options for their preservice teachers.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Immersion Programs

The description, comparison and analysis of the four immersion programs provided a number of insights and recommendations for consideration in other such programs in the future. Whilst universities have to make decisions based on their own contexts, priorities and expertise, we believe that this chapter has illuminated some important guiding principles that should be considered for the development or enhancement of future immersion programs.

First, the development of any immersion program is dependent upon close collaboration between universities and schools. The staff need to have a shared

commitment and understanding of the purpose and structure of the immersion program and open and respectful communication to ensure that preservice teachers are supported in the best ways possible. This includes the collaborative development and use of a range of artefacts such as handbooks, information workshops/forums, presentations at staff meetings and an online platform for mentor teachers, preservice teachers and university staff, thereby ensuring communication between all immersion participants and encouraging a sense of joint ownership of the program.

Second, we believe that immersion programs should be based on an action research model, in which data is collected and reviewed and ongoing improvements can be made. Immersion programs may also be important for workforce planning, in particular for staffing rural and remote schools. Immersing preservice teachers in difficult to staff schools that have high turnover of teachers may support preparedness for diverse school contexts.

Finally, we believe that immersion programs offer a unique opportunity to build a true 'community of practice' in which the professional learning of preservice teachers, mentor teachers and teacher educators work together to share 'problems of practice'. These problems are collaboratively explored, and a culture of co-learning and co-teaching is therefore fostered. Professional experience as immersion in schools provides enhanced opportunities for preservice teachers to not only develop their knowledge and skills as 'classroom-ready' graduates but to construct their professional identity as a valued member of the teaching profession.

The immersion programs described above provide empirical data missing from the Australian professional experience literature. The discussions align with many of the characteristics of successful initial teacher education programs summarised in Australia's recent Longitudinal Teacher Education and Workforce Study (LTEWS 2013), The Key Components of Effective Professional Experience (Le Cornu, 2015) and Bahr & Mellor's (2016) Australian Education Review: Building Quality in Teaching and Teacher Education. The findings also highlight points of vulnerability and the hidden costs of collaborations. Commonalities across of models were revealed. However, the immersion programs differed in regard to form, funding and effectiveness, and because of this, a further call for research in the area is required. Additional, longitudinal studies would be beneficial to the field.

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Chapter 13
Paired Placements in Intensified School and University Environments: Advantages and Barriers

Catherine Lang and Hoa Thi Mai Nguyen

Abstract The intensified school and university environments currently in Australia require universities and schools to develop new models of professional experience practice that meet political and economic drivers. In this chapter, we will present two examples where a paired placement professional experience model was implemented in partnership with local schools. Each of the paired placement models were informed by sociocultural theories to move beyond the master-apprentice model of preservice teacher education to a more innovative and collaborative practice that we consider advantageous to the profession. The authors each led the implementation of the model in their respective universities and collected empirical data from preservice teachers, supervising teachers, principals and university lecturers. We will also discuss some of the complexities we encountered when implementing the models. The models presented were different in delivery and format, yet there were similarities in the barriers encountered when we tried to expand them to encompass a wider cohort of schools and preservice teachers. We believe it is important to provide this account of our experiences with paired placement models to broaden the discussion by acknowledging concerns related to expanding successful localised models for wider implementation. We work in a complex education environment and believe that a single model of professional experience, paired placement or otherwise, will never accommodate the political and economic needs of schools, preservice teachers and universities.

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Introduction

Professional experience is a core component of initial teacher education courses, yet how we analyse practice is the topic of much discussion in academic circles (Grossman, 2016). In this chapter, we present two paired placement models that were implemented to better prepare preservice teachers for the classroom. Internationally, discussion remains focused on what is the best way to organise the core practice of professional experience in the curriculum and pedagogy of teacher education (Grossman, 2016). In Australia, professional experience in initial teacher education also continues to be a challenging aspect of teacher education courses in universities (Bloomfield, 2010; Le Cornu, 2010). There is constant political pressure and demand for a higher level of accountability especially in the professional experience component of initial teacher education (Ewing, Lowrie, & Higgs, 2010; Sim, 2006; White, Bloomfield, & Le Cornu, 2010). Most recently the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG, 2014) review into initial teacher education (ITE) in Australia resulted in a series of recommendations, most of which have been adopted by the Federal Government (Department of Education and Training, 2015), several of which concern the professional experience component of initial teacher education.

It is now mandated through the national leadership body, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), that teacher educators provide improved and structured professional experience that meets quality assurance standards (AITSL, 2015a). In the ideal situation, partnerships between universities and schools can provide collaborative, reflective and authentic high-quality experiences for preservice teachers. The tension lies in the minimal level of control universities have over what occurs within the school gates. Responding to these circumstances, we as teacher educators have implemented two different paired placement models to enhance preservice teachers' professional learning during professional experience. The theory underpinning each model indicates that paired placement enhances dialogue and promotes reflective practice. In this respect preservice teachers embrace collaborative learning using peers as an additional source of learning and support. There is also evidence that paired placements complement the professional experience of the supervising teachers through a triadic approach to teaching, learning and reflective practice. This will be elaborated further in this chapter when we present our individual models.

The model of teacher education in Australia has predominantly been one where preservice teachers are provided with theoretical courses at university and then classroom experience in a 'master-apprentice' model (Mattsson, Eilertsen, & Rorrison, 2011, pp. 8–9). Professional experiences in these programs rely on the guidance of supervising teachers and/or supervisors from the university who may or may not perform a mentoring role. For this reason, we will use the term supervising teacher throughout this chapter and university mentor where appropriate. There are many issues documented related to this model such as variability in mentoring quality from the supervising teachers (Smagorinsky, Cook, Moore, Jackson, & Fry,

2004), a hierarchical relationship between the supervising teachers and preservice teachers (Kopp & Hinkle, 2006; Stanulis & Russell, 2000) and ineffective university and school partnerships (Ledoux & McHenry, 2008; McLaughlin & Black-Hawkins, 2007). It is apparent that the quality of relationships between supervising teachers and preservice teachers is closely related to the quality of the learning experience and is often out of the control of the teacher educators. Cohen, Hoz, and Kaplan (2013) also argue that 'entrusting preservice teachers in the hands of mentor teachers is not the answer to proper preparation in the practicum' (p. 374). The quality of practicum also depends much on the role of others including school professional staff, parents, principals and professional experience coordinators who are critically important to create a supportive learning culture for the preservice teachers. Consequently, some universities have adopted a more collaborative or collegial relationship with schools and have increased a focus on professional experience conversations and preservice teacher reflection during and after their teaching practice (Le Cornu, 2007). Professional experiences are now being seen as 'opportunities for preservice teachers to not only identify what they think…but also how they came to develop those views and perspectives' (Le Cornu, 2016, p. 87).

Paired Placements in Professional Experience

Some recent models of professional experience have identified peers as a source of complementary learning and support for preservice teachers with paired placements trialled internationally (Dang, 2013; Gutierrez, 2016; Nguyen, 2017; Sorensen, 2014). The use of peers as another source of learning has been reported to show promise as an approach to improve the quality of preservice teacher education as well as reciprocal in-service teacher learning for over a decade (Bullough et al., 2003; Nokes, Bullough, Egan, Birrell & Merrell Hansen, 2008). The formal use of peers as an additional source of support is not new, and the literature since the late 1980s shows increasing interest with the concept being examined from a range of perspectives. There are many researchers who have focused on the effects of paired placement models (Bullough et al., 2003; Dang, 2013; Gardiner & Robinson, 2009; Lang, Neal, Karvouni & Chandler, 2015; Nokes et al., 2008; Smith, 2002; Walsh, Elmslie, & Tayler, 2002), Some have explored the concept of peer mentoring (Le Cornu, 2005; Nguyen, 2013), whereas others have used peers solely for observation (Anderson, Barksdale, & Hite, 2005). There is also a body of literature focused on peer tutoring and peer coaching (Benedetti, 1999; Vacilotto & Cummings, 2007). The term paired placement seems to be a popular descriptor that refers to the peer-based arrangement during the professional experience where two preservice teachers are assigned to work with one supervising teacher, as well as each other, in their school placements.

Within this growing interest in paired placements, researchers have reported positive effects of paired placement that have resulted in increased professional dialogues between supervising teachers and preservice teachers (Gardiner, 2010;

Nokes et al., 2008); support and improved learning for preservice teachers (Dang, 2013; Farrell, 2008; Hsu, 2005; McCarthy & Youens, 2005) and identity development (Gutierrez, 2016). Gemmell (2003) argued that 'what they [the preservice teachers] learned from peers was different but complementary from what they learned from their mentor teachers and resource staff' (p. 1). For example, when preservice teachers were placed in pairs on placement, they developed skills in compromising, collaboration and problem-solving as well as reporting that they felt more supported by their peer with whom they shared ideas, problems and successes (King, 2006). Similarly, another study reported that a large majority of preservice teachers in paired placements 'found that working in pairs helped them gain confidence and... [enabled them] to see themselves as a teacher' (Harlow & Cobb, 2014, p. 79). Gardiner (2010) reported that teachers who supervised paired placements 'valued the additional perspectives and help in the classroom derived from triadic collaboration' (p. 244).

While there are benefits of paired placements, other researchers have noted that there are also challenges (Le Cornu, 2005; Nguyen & Hudson, 2012). For example, research into peer-based models has revealed some less positive effects such as peer conflicts and uneven distribution of the workload and/or assessment processes (Baeten & Simons, 2014; Dang, 2013; Wilson, Godinho, Parr & Longaretti, 2002). There are also tensions related to the intensified work environments in schools that, in some cases, have resulted in difficulty placing preservice teachers in any model, let alone a paired model, because of the extra workload it may bring for supervising teachers. In Australia, the supervision of preservice teachers is not core business in schools and, generally, it is not built into teachers' workloads until they reach the highly accomplished level of the Australian Teacher Professional Standards (see APST 6.2, AITSL, 2015b). Everyday demands of teaching, administration and general planning make supervision of preservice teachers an unattractive proposition for many teachers. While many researchers previously cited have expounded the advantages of paired placements, there is a clear need for a deeper understanding of barriers related to paired placements in the Australian context.

In this chapter, consistent with the purpose of this volume to highlight innovations and practice in Australia, we provide two models from different universities in two Australian states. Each has implemented a paired placement model into their initial teacher education courses, though the models operate differently. In both universities, meaningful advantages have been reported by all involved in the paired placement model; however, significant barriers have emerged in the management of each of the models since the university tried to expand the localised model to a wider cohort of students and schools. The following section presents a discussion of the literature that informed the implementation of the two models. This is followed by an explanation of each model that includes a discussion of the challenges that act as barriers to implementing each model over a whole degree program or a whole cohort of students.

Pedagogical and Political Drivers of Paired Placement Models

The underpinning theory of both models drew upon Vygotskian concepts of joint activity and the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky posited that the majority of learning does not occur individually but rather through the interaction that takes place through problem-solving, negotiation, communication and collaboration with other people in social contexts. The paired placement professional experience models presented in this chapter foster preservice teachers' learning through participation in joint activities with peers, sharing ideas, giving and receiving feedback and supporting each other. We argue that during professional experience, this learning takes place within the zone of proximal development, where preservice teachers learn collaboratively and vicariously with a peer (Vygotsky, 1978). Others also have argued that during the peer-based activities, such as peer conversation, co-planning and team teaching, preservice teachers can increase their level of performance (Baeten & Simons, 2014; Walsh & Elmslie, 2005).

Concurrently the implementation of paired placements is one response to the current political climate of teacher education in Australia. As discussed earlier, reviews of teacher education conducted over recent decades have been highly critical of what is perceived to be a gap between the reality of the school classroom and the curriculum and the practice of teacher education. The Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report into teacher education titled 'Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers Report' (Department of Education and Training, 2015) has as a key focus on a greater integration of theory and practice in the delivery of teacher education courses. The report delivered 38 recommendations, several of which are directly related to professional experience:

> **Recommendation 19**: Higher education providers deliver integrated and structured professional experience throughout initial teacher education programs through formalised partnership agreements with schools.
>
> **Recommendation 24**: School leaders actively lead the integration of preservice teachers in the activities and culture of their school (Department of Education and Training, 2015, p. xiv).

In developing our models, these political and pedagogical drivers influenced both design and operation. The next section of the chapter provides more detail about each of the paired placement models.

Model A: Collaborative Paired Placement Model

The collaborative paired placement model was implemented on the first professional experience for a Master of Teaching (secondary) program in a large university in a metropolitan city in New South Wales. The model was implemented in schools that had already signed a partnership agreement with the university. In that agreement the schools had agreed that they would accept a cohort of students for the

paired placement. In this agreement the university also made a commitment to improve the quality of the professional experience by providing an academic mentor to work with the school and preservice teachers to develop a tailored curriculum for the professional experience. In this model, supervising teachers were offered the opportunity to supervise two preservice teachers at the same time. If teachers did not want to supervise two preservice teachers, then preservice teachers were still placed in pairs, but with different supervisors in the same school for the purpose of peer collaboration and observation. However, as a result, most preservice teachers were placed in pairs with one supervising teacher, as well as in groups of four to eight in a school. They were supported to make focused critical observations of their supervising teachers and their pair using an observation protocol that utilised the descriptors from the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers at the Graduate level. The university provided an academic as a mentor who met the school-based group of preservice teachers each week over the 4-week placement. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss the focused observations of the preservice teachers and to scaffold their development of collaborative teaching and learning practices. At some schools the university academic mentor invited supervising teachers to these meetings. While this was considered the ideal practice, it did not always occur due to supervising teachers being unable to commit to this extra duty. Other schools allocated time for the supervising teachers to participate in the paired placement discussions, indicating a stronger level of commitment to the success of this model of professional experience.

Model B: The Teaching School Embedded Paired Placement Model

The teaching school model for professional experience was implemented in a multicampus university in Victoria and focused on placing preservice teachers in pairs, in schools for 2 days a week over a whole year or a whole semester. An important aspect of this model that was attractive to partner schools was that preservice teachers had to meet minimum grade requirements to apply for this paired placement and to present at the school for interview prior to being accepted (Lang et al., 2015). This model was available to final-year preservice teachers in Master's or Bachelor's courses in primary or secondary contexts. In the first pilot of this model, the partner schools were co-located or in close proximity to the university campus. This enabled the preservice teachers to travel between school and campus readily. While the university committed to providing schools with their final-year students, the schools also committed to ensure that supervising teachers in the teaching school model were their most experienced teachers. In larger schools, as many as 28 preservice teachers were placed in pairs in a single school; while in smaller primary schools, there may only have been one or two pairs of preservice teachers placed. All primary preservice teachers were paired with one supervising teacher;

however, sometimes secondary preservice teachers could only be paired in one of their discipline specialisations.

The intention of the model for the university and the teaching schools was to improve the professional agency of preservice teachers while also supporting the professional development of the supervising teachers. The 2 days a week embedded placement allowed preservice teachers to have a more authentic teaching experience during all stages of the school year as opposed to an episodic 15- or 20-day placement. Their experience was similar to that of a part-time teacher who is at the school for the same days each week of the whole year or semester and could experience the ebb and flow of school life including staff meetings, professional development, reporting to parents, school sports and fetes, for example. There were high expectations between the university and the schools of a shared information flow, as well as preservice teachers and supervisor experiences that expanded beyond the boundaries of the traditional master-apprentice model. The intention was to run tutorials at the school as well as beam in lectures for the students that teachers could also attend if they did not have classroom duties.

The teaching school model is now in its fifth year of operation and has been expanded to a third regional campus. The university is actively promoting the model to an increasing number of schools because it satisfies the AITSL recommendations for authentic experiences and partnerships in initial teacher education. To support the participating schools in the paired placement model and preservice teachers for such an extended period, the university committed to providing academic advisors to conduct relationship visits to the school each semester as well as free professional development opportunities. There was also a guaranteed rapid response process if any issues arose between preservice teachers and supervising teachers. The latter was common to all participating schools.

Enablers and Barriers Encountered in These Paired Placement Models

This chapter builds on our earlier and separate publications that report on the advantages of the paired placement model (Lang et al., 2015; Nguyen, 2013). In summary, these publications present the evidence of a stronger community of learning between preservice teachers and supervising teachers who participated in the paired placement models. There is evidence of both models enabling an effective zone of proximal development allowing preservice teachers to work together to evolve their teacher identity. In this project we use comparative analysis of our previous empirical data from our pilot studies and identified three enabling factors that develop the quality of paired placement programs. Firstly, there must be commitment from all stakeholders; secondly, trust and respect between the paired preservice teachers are essential; and finally there must be strong lines of communication between all

stakeholders. In the following section, we will address the enabling factors observed in both of the models and the barriers encountered.

Model A

University A implements the model of paired placement within the partnership school for the first block of professional experience in the initial teacher education program. Implementing the model in other placement blocks has been very challenging, especially in secondary schools where there has been a reluctance to host a large cohort of preservice teachers at one time, and also where the supervising teachers have hesitated to take two preservice teachers simultaneously. Thus the commitment from schools was reported to be a critical factor in implementing this model.

A high level of commitment from the preservice teachers enhanced the quality of their learning in Model A. The preservice teachers reported that if it were not a compulsory requirement to work in pairs during their professional experience, their peer interaction would not have happened the way it did. The model required a commitment of extra time and additional work from the preservice teachers themselves, as they had to observe each other, share lesson plans, give feedback, and team teach if required. They were unable to realise the benefits of this arrangement until they were committed to the process and experienced it personally. For example, one of the preservice teachers said:

> I saw this process as very interesting because if we were not assigned to work together, we wouldn't have been interested in each other. It had to be a necessity, and we only realised later that it was interesting and beneficial. (Lena)

They reported that their peer interactions grew more active as the placement continued. Their comments indicated that at the beginning, the interaction was reluctant and only to fulfil the requirements of the program. Later on, they reported that they had come to enjoy working with their peer. The following quote typifies comments made from preservice teachers:

> At first, I did not like it because I had to work with someone I did not know... Later when we talked with each other, I found it easy to share with my peer. I thought to myself that I was so lucky that I was with Lena because we got along really well, but we also got along in a professional way. It wasn't just like 'Hey buddy, let's go partying on the weekend'. We both have very similar ideas and we were keen to use what we've learnt at university.

The preservice teachers also acknowledged the importance of support from their supervising teacher and the university mentor assigned to them during the professional experience who created an environment in which the preservice teachers were encouraged to work together. Most of the supervising teachers in the primary partnership schools were willing to take two preservice teachers at the same time as they had a high opinion of this model, as the following quotes reveal:

They learn from each other as well as me, so that's just an extra person to learn from. And I'm here, I know everyone at the school, but if you come by yourself it's a bit scary and a bit daunting but if you have someone with you that's in your position then you don't feel as scared anymore and you're able to get on with what you're here for, so I think it's a very good idea.

Coming in pairs it definitely really helpful for them, because I think back to my pracs and how I was by myself on class. I think it's much better for them to come together when they can because they support each other and it's not as intimidating for them.

It's a real positive having two extra adults in your room, let alone pre-service teachers, who are supportive, it means that you're team-teaching pretty much all the time even though they're not necessarily teaching lessons, they're still in that room supporting me and supporting the students, so it's been really beneficial, definitely.

The university mentors commented that the model helped preservice teachers realise that teaching is not an isolated profession and that teachers are often collegial in practice. The university mentors were required to convene a meeting of all the preservice teachers weekly. In these meetings the preservice teachers were encouraged to reflect on their teaching and relate this to the professional standards in their handbook. Discussion focused on the experiences of peers working together, which reinforced the advantages of working in pairs through a variety of other activities including peer observation, peer feedback, co-teaching, co-planning and sharing workload. This reinforcement of the benefits of the model encouraged the preservice teachers' commitment to learning together and supporting each other.

Trust between the pairs, and between the supervising teacher and the preservice teacher, is seen as a critical factor in implementing Model A. Trust between two preservice teachers created a favourable atmosphere for peers to work together freely and effectively and connect with each other. Some pairs in Model A knew each other and had worked with each other in their program before. They found it very comfortable to work together during their paired placement. Even some pairs who worked with each other for the first time still considered their pair as a sounding board. Some of the following quotes indicate how they trusted each other and valued each other's ideas:

It's been really good because I feel like every time we observe each other we learn from each other.

[What] we did was bounce ideas for lessons off each other, and that was good.

We discuss ideas together, and I guess I shouldn't underestimate that. I just think that when I prepare my lessons I prepare them on my computer by myself, but no, we do discuss ideas for the lessons together.

University mentors were allocated to the same school for the professional experience each year in order to support the development of a trusting relationship between university and school staff. Some of the university mentors conducted mentoring training and professional learning workshops for teachers. This model helped to develop a trusting relationship between the university mentors and supervising teachers because they were going to the same site every year. The familiarity of the same person supporting the preservice teachers each year helped build a strong and

trusting relationship to allow the supervising teachers to contribute and enhance the quality of mentoring in the model. Breaking down the barriers between university and schools allowed staff at both institutions to work together to provide the preservice teachers with authentic professional experience.

There were communication challenges in implementing Model A between the university and schools. The success of the model relied on a clear set of guidelines for students and a guidebook for supervising teachers. Given that supervising teachers are mostly focused on their daily teaching responsibilities and necessary administration duties, they often do not have time to read complex documents and instructions. There are also schools that accept preservice teachers from several universities, each having different placement arrangements, so clear and concise communication is critically important in sustaining the quality learning of preservice teachers. Data from interviews with supervising teachers and preservice teachers indicated there were inconsistencies in implementing this model across schools causing some misunderstanding from the supervising teachers' perspective. One of the teachers said:

> All I would say is, I know Rachel (academic mentor) was sending out emails each week with what elements they were focusing on and I read through those emails but I did find that, with everything else that's going on, what with it being the end of term 3, I don't think I was really on top of what element they were focusing on, so I guess if we were going to do that properly we would all need to be involved in that in a meeting from the outset and talk about that trajectory right from the beginning, because I just left that to Rosie and Maggie to manage in their own self-reflection.

Similarly, there were several comments expressing the confusion in terms of the work allocation between pairs, as one of them said:

> In the future I would just make sure that there were concrete guidelines for sections in shared lessons, so that each person knew what they were responsible for teaching and what they were not.

Model B

As the teaching school model was expanded, barriers began to emerge. Some barriers were internal to the university and some came from schools. Model B was modified to accommodate local conditions of a variety of schools. There were challenges related to timetable changes both at the university and the different schools. For example, in 2016, the teaching school model of embedded paired placement for a semester or a year was only adopted in six partner schools. A larger number of partners (30) accepted paired placements of students in 3- or 4-week blocks; however, the majority of placement schools continued with the traditional 1:1 model. It was clear that there is a greater acceptance of paired placements in primary schools than secondary schools. Secondary schools were more reluctant to take preservice teachers in paired placements. In some cases, this is related to the difficulty of pairing students according to discipline areas.

Comments such as the following from a secondary school are indicative of the feedback received from schools that declined the paired placements:

> The purpose of the mentor is to provide quality feedback on a lesson, to do this with 2 students would be very difficult. I think the work load for a staff member with 2 preservice teachers is expecting too much. I also query the effect on morale of the student sharing with another student, some students are more forthwright (sic) than others. I question the benefit to their confidence.

> Our number one priority is our students and the quality of the teaching as part of the teaching and learning cycle. On speaking to many of the staff here they are not in favour of supervising two preservice teachers. I know it is not for the money however two students is too much.

This was not always the case in the secondary classroom. When supervising teachers are committed to the model, there was evidence that they saw the advantages of it. One history teacher commented on the benefit of the paired placement not only for the ability to do small group work in the class but also for his own learning. He expressed delight in having a more recent graduate of the senior secondary school subject that he was teaching. He commented via email that he asked the pair of preservice teachers to plan the revision for the upcoming exam and was impressed at the novel and interactive approach they took. Another commented in the focus group:

> Students could be involved in the planning, could volunteer to teach sections with me, we really built the team approach. They felt they could help and chip in and explain. It built their confidence too. One would even Google a topic to help me explain a concept and find a clip to demonstrate it during the lesson. They were not passive observers.

One primary school principal expounded its benefit to improving student outcomes. Her suburban school catered for many students from different countries, and the advantages of having the equivalent of three teachers in a class were seen as highly beneficial:

> We have about 43 different cultures with a range of oral language experiences and abilities. We find having two extra adults in all the classes in the junior years is a great benefit to the students and teachers, and the parents love it too. They see the ratio drop from to 1 adult to 24 children to 1 to 8. The three become one teacher for that class, with three sets of eyes to plan, three sets of eyes to implement, and three sets of eyes to reflect what was happening in the classroom and how things might be changed the next time they teach.

In all placements, the role of the supervising teacher is critically important for the model to be successful. As indicated in the above quotes, when the supervising teachers assign preservice teachers shared tasks, implement team teaching and have regular meetings with preservice teachers for planning and reflection, the outcomes are beneficial to all.

As Model B expanded, there were isolated situations where preservice teachers were not as compatible as would have been desirable. One of the primary supervising teachers commented that the paired placement model took more time when the

skills and abilities varied between the two preservice teachers. She felt the need to conduct separate meetings to ensure that each preservice teacher's privacy was maintained:

> I needed more time to give feedback, time for individuals. In my class I had the experience that one was weaker.

In contrast to this another supervising teacher commented: 'they were able to observe each other, we worked in a three way situation …', however I gave individual feedback for personal privacy.

While preservice teachers who apply and are successful in gaining a paired placement often extol its advantages, the time commitment is also a barrier in Model B. Preservice teachers needed to commit to 2 days a week for a whole semester, not just for a 4-week block in the semester. This program is highly promoted on the university website as well as the internal learning management system. It is not mandatory, however, and at most only 10–15% of preservice teachers nominated to be part of it.

We have found when we promote Model B that some principals are reluctant to accept paired placements of preservice teachers. We present the following comment to illustrate the tension that universities encounter when changing a traditional pattern of preservice teacher supervision. For example, a principal said:

> I know the university want it so that they [the preservice teachers] can reflect with each other, but they kind of reflect with each other and build up their relationship without building up a strong relationship with the teacher because they don't need the teacher so much.

Another principal questioned how crowded a classroom would get with three adults in it.

Trust between the supervising teacher and the preservice teachers, and likewise between the pair of preservice teachers, is key in Model B. One preservice teacher commented on how she felt fully trusted by her supervising teacher:

> There is more room for collaboration and team work. Unlike being on prac for a couple of weeks, preservice teachers in the teaching school program are able to get up at any point, during any lesson, or on any day, without disrupting the class environment/flow.

While this relates partly to the 2 days a week nature of the model, it also emphasises how the preservice teacher's professional agency is enhanced in this model and how the supervising teachers develop a trust in the abilities of the preservice teachers in their classrooms. The trust that develops between the pairs in the classroom is evident in their feedback, for example:

> I think I was lucky that I had a partner that I'd never worked with before but we had similar interests and we got along really well so I felt like I could go to him no matter what. I would ask anything anytime and he would be the same, even if we were doing team teaching we'd both be standing out the front bouncing off each other teaching and then meanwhile we'd be whispering things to each other like 'let's do this' or 'should we do this?', we'd be reassuring each other the whole time. So that was awesome.

When communication factors are in deficit, we have found that they act as barriers to successful implementation of paired placement models. There is a greater need of relationship management between schools that deliver the program and the university, particularly as the implementation of the model expands. A strategy in response to this need for stronger relationships was the implementation of regular school visits, managed by an Academic Liaison Team of adjunct academics to build up a relationship with the school over the year.

The implementation of Model B has become more complex as the paired placement model expands across year levels and cohorts. The opportunity was opened to third year students in their final semester in 2015. We found that some supervising teachers needed to be reminded that third year students have different requirements from fourth year or master's level students. It is a challenge to pair students in the same year level because Model B is opt in, not mandatory. While the university has ensured that they communicated this with the supervising teachers, the feedback has been that this is not an ideal situation. Despite the opportunity for our third year students to be mentored informally by fourth year or master's level students, the university has discontinued this practice.

Discussion

In this chapter we have presented two models of paired placement implemented to accommodate the economic and political drivers of initial teacher education in Australia. These paired placement models cannot eliminate all tensions related to professional experience, however. In practice, developing innovative school partnerships takes time and resources. The models of paired placement in professional experience that we have presented in this chapter are usually advantageous to those who participate (Lang et al., 2015; Nguyen, 2013) and satisfy some of the political drivers by providing an authentic transition into the profession. However, in our experience, there are a series of operational barriers and challenges. Neither model would be successful without professional and academic staff setting up contracts, accommodating local curricula and maintaining strong communication between universities and schools.

We each have experienced greater success using these models with one cohort of preservice teachers from one degree program. Complexities arose with Model B when a variety of cohorts had the option of undertaking the model, which introduced difficulties in timetabling in two campus locations. The different structure of the annual calendar in schools and semesters in university presents challenges in timetabling that require extra planning and administrative overload. We have also each noted the importance of the school and university commitment required to enable the program to succeed. Supervising teachers need time to meet and discuss with preservice teachers and university academic mentors. University academic mentors must be allocated time to visit schools. These meetings must be part of teachers' and academics' workload, and when this occurs, the model works best.

Furthermore the economic constraints posed when students have part-time jobs, and full-time university courses limit their opportunities to be flexible in schools for 2 days a week for a whole semester. This is a constant tension for the implementation of Model B. The university staff involved in implementing both models are considering informing preservice teachers of their pairs prior to the start of the professional experience and provide stronger support for working in pairs within the subject in which the professional experience is embedded.

Australian teacher education providers are in a period of change brought about by TEMAG (Department of Education and Training, 2015) and other economic requirements. In the design and delivery of initial teacher education degrees, we believe that a paired placement model should be a mandatory requirement for preservice teachers for at least one placement in their degree program. The advantages of paired placement are evident in the ability to create a powerful space in educating classroom-ready teachers. However, universities and schools need to commit resources to sustain the partnerships like those described in this chapter. In both models the support of dedicated professional and administration staff cannot be underestimated. Each model requires substantial resourcing to coordinate interviews, pair preservice teachers and provide suitable instructions to schools. This must be factored into the workload of academic staff as well as supervising teachers.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The paired placement model provides preservice teachers with a rich experience in terms of what they are able to achieve and learn with each other. We emphasise the need for the option of paired placement models like the two described in this chapter. The peer interaction that occurs in the paired placement models nurtures preservice teachers and minimises the power imbalance that can be present in other models. The paired placement models encourage professional learning for supervising teachers as well as preservice teachers. Grounded in partnership and focused on practice, the paired placement models should be dialogical and collaborative, thus fostering a more equal balance of power between participants. We believe that our research into this model of delivery provides detail that can inform innovative design of the professional experience component of ITE programs. This information may enable risk management strategies to be put in place to ensure a successful introduction of the paired placement model. Cohen et al. (2013) suggested that 'the implications will suggest a broader view of the professional experience, designing a new teacher education program embedded in school organizational culture' (p. 345). We also advocate the need to adapt models to suit local cultures, organisational structures and partnership agreements between schools and universities.

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Chapter 14
Educating Future Teachers: Insights, Conclusions and Challenges

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Introduction

— **Innovative** (*adjective*): having new ideas about how something can be done —

When we speak of being innovative, we refer to changing processes, products and ideas or creating better ones. Taking the notion of innovation seriously, this volume provides research findings of new practices in professional experience in Australian initial teacher education programs and offers alternative ways of conceiving and enacting professional experience.

This volume's genesis lies in the questions that we posed when we began this project:

1. What are the promising innovations in thinking about, rethinking and enacting professional experience to better prepare prospective teachers to effectively enter the workforce?

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2. What can new research contribute in strengthening teacher preparation in schools and early learning centres?
3. What might these promising innovations mean for the range of stakeholders responsible for designing and implementing teacher education including teacher educators, supervising teachers, policymakers, employers and regulatory authorities?

The area of professional experience was chosen as the focus of this volume as it is broadly acknowledged as a critical component of learning to teach (Darling-Hammond, 2010; White, Bloomfield, & Le Cornu, 2010). Yet university knowledge is often privileged over practice-based learning. Concerns abound that there is a disconnection between what preservice teachers learn in university-based settings and what they learn and enact in school-based settings, which has led to a call for a 'practicum turn' in initial teacher education. This important turn is marked by new and 'different arrangements, approaches and concepts for practice that draw special attention to practicum learning' (Mattsson, Eilertsen, & Rorrison, 2011, p. 2). It is by forging meaningful connections between university-based and school-based teacher educators, and particularly by designating experienced people in dedicated roles to work across both sites that the preparation of teachers can be genuinely strengthened (Rorrison, 2011).

Jennifer Gore (2001) rightly claims that 'more field experience in and of itself is not necessarily better for preservice teachers' (p. 126). Rather, it is the quality and range of professional experience that matters, the ways that relationships are managed and nurtured that make a difference, and how coursework and assessment are authentically connected to professional experience that is important. Taking into account practical considerations from the number of days spent at school sites to learning to understand how teacher education can better work as a holistic system supported by all partners, it is necessary to recast the problem of preparing teachers. The call to a practicum turn then is a call to build a communicative space to effectively interlace practice and theory within specific education contexts.

As highlighted in many of the chapters, the changing landscape of initial teacher education policy in Australia has created opportunities to reimagine the structure, the relationships and the tools of the professional experience component. In this respect, the recommendations from the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG) report, *Action Now*: *Classroom Ready Teachers* (2015), provides challenges and opportunities that enable us to rethink teacher preparation. Although current initial teacher education accreditation processes and accountabilities have changed rapidly, leaving many teacher educators feeling that there is little flexibility for difference and innovation, the documented accounts in this volume provide strong examples of the types of innovations that can occur within this evolving landscape.

The goal of initial teacher education is to produce 'classroom-ready' graduate teachers. Yet this is a contested term. Some educationalists describe classroom readiness as the point at which the graduate standards, as set by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, has been achieved. Others state that

classroom readiness encapsulates more than what is described in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Gore, 2015). We maintain that the professional experience component of initial teacher education programs is essential in supporting preservice teachers to reach this level and to develop more extensively.

The conceptual frameworks and the empirical studies explored in the chapters in this volume offer new insights to teacher educators. Drawing together some of the insights, conclusions and challenges that have surfaced as a result of the innovations documented in this volume, we present three key themes:

- That successful partnerships are characterised and defined by variability and contextual knowledge
- That nontraditional experiences in professional placements can be points of significant learning
- That classroom readiness is enabled and enhanced through collaborative spaces.

Successful Partnerships Are Characterised and Defined by Variability and Contextual Knowledge

School-university partnerships are an integral element of educating future teachers. These partnerships respond to the requirement that teachers need to be sufficiently developed if they are to begin their career well prepared and ready to fulfil the challenges of their complex professional role. In this sense they are more than classroom ready. These partnerships between schools and universities must be effective, authentic and sustainable (Zeichner, 2010). Several chapters in this volume provide insights into the elements that enable such successful partnerships to flourish. Findings from Chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 12 are now discussed.

The authors of Chap. 2 report on two important aspects of successful partnerships as a result of their policy review and examination of four partnership projects. Firstly, they argue that partnerships must cater to the individual needs and requirements of the partnership participants. They describe, in relation to their research, how partnership agreements were structurally implemented to reach the goals of their initial teacher education programs. The projects included partnerships that focused on specific preservice teacher learning, mentor teacher professional learning, mutual learning among participants and the implementation of an internship program. Secondly, and just as importantly, the authors identified that it was more essential to focus on the outcomes and successes of the partnership than the specific type of partnership that was developed. Although funding and resourcing were crucial factors in enabling the success of the partnerships explored in this chapter, the authors emphasise that flexibility within official policy to address the specific needs and contextual factors were the real drivers of success.

Chapter 12 discusses the analysis of four different immersion programs. A key finding from the comparison of the models examined highlights related findings about partnerships. While there were similarities in each immersion program, each

was unique in structure and organisation and responded to specific contextual needs of accreditation processes and/or local workforce requirements. The success of each immersion model was a result of ongoing collaboration and joint ownership between the schools and universities involved. As such, the authors report that these factors strengthened established partnerships as they actively valued, encouraged and supported close working relationships between preservice teachers and mentor teachers, and between school-based and university-based teacher educators. Taking a different theoretical perspective, the authors of Chap. 5 present their examination of partnerships and experiences of professional practice using cultural-historical activity theory. The authors identified boundary objects and brokers that brought the different activity systems together to create a space in which partnerships could become more collaborative and achieve strong learning for their preservice teachers.

Innovative examples of how 'the third space' or 'hybrid spaces' have been used to forge stronger partnerships between universities and schools are theorised in Chap. 3. Flexible and contextually grounded knowledge within school-university partnerships have enabled the creation of new spaces for learning. By interrogating the ways that third space is variously conceptualised in respect to partnerships and professional experience, the creation of new ways of doing and thinking has emerged that draw upon multiple sources of knowledge, collaboration and shared responsibilities. Similarly, Chap. 4 discusses how cogenerativity as a theoretical construct can be utilised to endorse the importance of collaboration and shared work for creating new understandings between interested parties. The authors of Chap. 4 have provided three examples of how cogenerativity develops and strengthens partnerships between schools and universities. Collectively these examples demonstrate how cogenerativity provides opportunities to transform learning for all participants.

Nontraditional Experiences in Professional Placements as Points of Significant Learning

Several chapters in this volume shine a spotlight on the structure and composition of professional experience through immersion programs, paired placements and service learning placements. Each innovation identifies that time, commitment, trust and strong partnerships are required to ensure success. These examples of innovative, nontraditional professional experiences are promising accounts that signal ways that professional experience can present preservice teachers with contextually unique opportunities to develop their professional knowledge. Nontraditional placements are not easy to implement as the authors of Chap. 13 report. Across the world, paired placements are growing in popularity and are often established to achieve specific goals. However, along with those positive aspects that facilitate successful outcomes for the preservice teachers, there are barriers and complexities.

The authors argue that all stakeholders (schools, supervising teachers and university supervisors) need to be committed to the goals of professional experience and supporting pairs of preservice teachers during their placements. The authors also argue that open communication between all stakeholders is important as well as the need for strong levels of trust and respect between preservice teachers. Thus, strong, open partnerships are foundational requirements when implementing an alternative model. Tinkering at the edges however can be fraught.

Service learning can and arguably should be an integral part of initial teacher education programs, yet it is not usually considered a traditional professional experience. The authors of Chap. 11 remind us that developing prospective teachers should not be limited to professional experiences in classrooms, and they report that nontraditional placements are promising sites for personal growth for participants. Drawing on three examples of service learning placements, the authors show how each example positions the preservice teachers as boundary crossers. This can be seen in the way that preservice teachers undertake specific projects that are community partnerships and collaborations that contribute to growth in their teaching competence. Likewise, the immersion programs presented in Chap. 12 are nontraditional placements that aim to develop and/or consolidate real-world professional knowledge and skills. These long-term placements can better enable preservice teachers to take on the role of the teacher and embrace a wider range of the complex elements of teachers' work rather than what may be possible over a shorter period. The authors report that these immersive approaches enable preservice teachers to become part of the school community and better able to make connections between theory and practice.

Classroom Readiness Is Enabled and Enhanced Through Collaborative Spaces

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 focus on the practices of mentoring within professional experience to show how these practices support preservice teachers to learn to be and to become. Communication is key to transforming practice and to enabling self-formation, and the authors of these chapters identify that mentoring as praxis provides a space for this to occur. Using examples of mentoring in action, the authors highlight that when a mentoring relationship is a collaborative rather than a hierarchical expert/novice approach, a space for preservice teachers to learn *to be* occurs. Chapter 8 provides an example of mentoring in action through an online space that demonstrates how sharing practice with peers and experts can support preservice teachers to interrogate their practice beyond the confines of the school setting.

In Chaps. 9 and 10, research on how dialogues about practice can be enhanced during the professional experience is reported. The use of a developmental assessment rubric tool in Chap. 9 promotes professional conversations between mentors and preservice teachers, and specifically encourages preservice teachers to reflect

on their learning and their students' learning. Preservice teachers have commented that their participation and engagement in the communicative spaces enabled by the assessment rubric encouraged them to be proactive in their own learning and development. The use of a teaching tracker tool described in Chap. 10 provides the opportunity for mentors to give descriptive feedback to preservice teachers about their teaching, building their capacity to make professional judgements. In this respect the tool enables communicative spaces for dialogue about practice. The examples, however, report that the tools work only when participants involved in the experience contribute to the communicative space and engage in collaborative discussions about practice. These processes show promise in building prospective teachers' capacities to make professional judgements, forming 'a key and critical element of professional practice' (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009, p. 8).

Policy Directions

Many of the chapters in this volume have identified that the introduction of a set of nationally agreed professional standards for teaching has been a significant driver of the recent quality teaching agenda in Australia. The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), endorsed by all Federal, State and Territory Ministers for Education in December 2010, have been implemented across all jurisdictions since 2012. The form and focus of the standards have had powerful effects in shaping how initial teacher education is understood in Australia and in identifying what can reasonably be expected of a graduate teacher in terms of being 'classroom ready' (TEMAG, 2015). Paradoxically, teacher professional standards may deprofessionalise teaching by diminishing how the scope and purposes of teaching are articulated (Kriewaldt, 2015).

The notion of teacher knowledge as a complex and continuously changing amalgam is strongly evidenced in the literature over the last 15 years (Fenwick & Weir, 2010; McCormack & Thomas, 2005; Santoro, Reid, Mayer, & Singh, 2012). The seven professional standards articulate the professional knowledge, practice and engagement required of teachers across four career stages (graduate, proficient, highly accomplished and lead teacher) and reflect the continuum of teachers' developing professional expertise of what they know and are able to do (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), 2011). The graduate level of the APST outlines the expected performance at graduation from an initial teacher education program, and in these statements, it highlights that graduate teachers are still evolving their professional skills and identity. This continuum of learning and developing is important to keep in mind in terms of focussing on what should be a shared responsibility for quality teaching preparation and outcomes.

Consequently, as well as this intense national focus on the role initial teacher education plays in the preparation of effective teachers, there is also another matter of concern. This refers to the impact that certain factors have on beginning teachers' knowledge development once teachers have graduated from their initial teacher

preparation. These factors include employment type (full time, part time, casual), diversity of school context and induction support received (Mayer et al., 2014). Higher education institutions, in partnership with systems, employers, schools and regulatory authorities, are collectively responsible for continuous improvement and raising public confidence in the teaching profession, not just teacher education providers.

In this volume, we have presented innovative approaches for finding productive solutions and ways forward in third or hybrid spaces within the professional experience component of initial teacher education. These are approaches that could also be extended to differently imagined partnerships between systems, schools, universities and regulatory authorities. It is important to note that a number of recommendations from the TEMAG report (2015) also focus on supporting beginning teachers and workforce planning challenges. Like all successful partnerships, these recommendations take time to establish and evolve. This invariably creates a mismatch between the time needed for the deep engagement necessary for successful and sustainable outcomes and the limited timeframes imposed by governments for evidencing reform. We argue that innovative and insightful practice helps fill this gap.

Government policy is right to focus on strengthening the ways in which higher education institutions approach the development of effective and well-prepared graduate teachers. However, it is important that accountability and regulatory mechanisms lead to improvements, and not have the counter-effect of reducing the quality of some programs by constraining providers from developing the types of innovative approaches that feature in this volume.

Teaching is one of the single largest professions in Australia. In a climate of reform that is also focused on the effectiveness of teachers' practice, there is a growing expectation that teachers will enable better learning outcomes for all students. This has implications for the range of skills needed by teachers, especially when dealing with twenty-first century skills (Asia Society, 2014), and necessitates a better understanding of developments and trends that will both shape the teacher workforce of the future as well and allow teachers the best possible opportunities to be effective practitioners (Weldon, 2015).

As we write, the new requirement for a final-year teacher performance assessment is being developed for implementation across all Australian teacher education programs from 2018. This requirement stipulates that prior to graduation, preservice teachers must present evidence of their impact on student learning after the completion of a cycle of planning, teaching, assessing and reflecting. Australia is poised to follow in the path of some states in the United States of America who use the edTPA, which, in turn, has built on the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) model (Reagan, Schram, McCurdy, Chang, & Evans, 2016). In the edTPA, the performance assessment task assesses planning, instruction and assessment domains of teaching using a structured portfolio approach.

The means by which preservice teachers are required to account for their practices using a performance assessment can powerfully shape their understandings of what matters (Allard, Mayer, & Moss, 2014; Soslau, Kotch-Jester, & Jorlin, 11 December 2015). Teacher performance assessments may have positive formative

effects *or* they may diminish opportunities for reflection if the tasks are not well-designed (Greenblatt & O'Hara, 2015). What form the Australian TPA tool will take, and what impact this will have on program and graduate quality, remains to be seen. No doubt this will generate a new level of interest and scrutiny within the professional experience component of initial teacher education. How this knowledge and practice can be demonstrated, evidenced and assessed within initial teacher education programs, particularly in terms of impact on student learning, raises the important question of how best to make consistent judgements or assessments of what graduate teachers know and can do to demonstrate classroom readiness (Buchanan & Schuck, 2016; Mayer, 2015). This volume provides evidence that many teacher educators and initial teacher education providers are well positioned to generate new programs and in what we see "as a natural evolution….[where] those responsible for professional learning are creating their own arrangements to meet the needs or constraints of their context" (Rorrison, Hennissen, Bonanno & Männikkö Barbutiu, 2016, p. 125).

Conclusion

This volume extends the growing literature in this area by offering insights into professional experience and by providing a point of departure for constructing alternative conceptions. Along with perspectives offered by scholars from a range of institutions, these approaches provide opportunities to explore the value of integrating field-based learning and academic-based learning. The findings in *Educating Future Teachers* provide teacher educators and policymakers with insights of what is possible in the context of a strongly regulated, accountability-driven teacher education landscape. We conclude with a call to reimagine 'the prac' and to challenge university-based teacher educators and school-based teacher educators to work together to strategically create a system to ensure that all preservice teachers receive quality opportunities to learn in and through their placements in the field, interlaced with their coursework studies. We see a greater need for people who work across sites. We also see a greater need for codesigned curriculum and joint assessment and a shift away from mindsets such as 'us and them' and 'here and there'.

Together we have engaged critically in reconsidering what might be stronger or more productive ways of thinking about professional experience. We have sought to provide a flexible and supportive space for scholarship. We have achieved this by working collectively and collaboratively with a range of teacher educators open to new ways of preparing prospective teachers and who were optimistically innovating in their research. Our focus shifted from considering aspects of professional experience as a stand-alone component of teacher education to considering, in their local contexts, the joint work between schools and universities and between teacher educators and teachers (Ure, 2010; Zeichner, 2010).

Joint work matters. By enacting this in professional experience, and in teacher education more widely, we prepare future teachers who understand that they have

entered a collaborative profession and that education is a public enterprise for the common good of all participants.

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