Maintaining quality in teacher education: a contemporary global challenge?

Assegurar a qualidade na formação de professores: um desafio global contemporâneo?

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to scrutinise what the term quality means in the context of teaching and teacher education and to discuss how we maintain those aspects of quality that do appear to be important in the contemporary development of policy and practice in teacher education. The paper draws on some comparative studies in teacher education that have been undertaken in recent years. Initial consideration is given to the macro and meso levels of policy and practice, through looking at state institutions and at the roles of educational institutions. The focus then turns to the micro level, considering the quality of the participants in the provision and experience of teacher education. The paper identifies the anthropological significance of teacher education and the wider social insights that may be gained from such study in the twenty-first century and in conclusion some contemporary global challenges to the maintenance of quality in teacher education are considered.

Keywords: teacher education, quality, policy and practice, comparative study, contemporary global challenges

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Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é o de analisar o que significa o termo "qualidade" no contexto do ensino e da formação de professores, discutindo como se mantêm os aspetos de qualidade que parecem ser importantes no desenvolvimento

contemporâneo de políticas e práticas de formação de professores. O artigo fundamenta-se em diversos estudos comparativos sobre formação de professores desenvolvidos nos últimos anos. A consideração inicial incide sobre os níveis macro e meso das políticas e das práticas, considerando instituições estatais e os papéis das instituições educacionais. O foco volta-se de seguida para o nível micro, considerando a qualidade dos participantes na oferta e na experiência de formação de professores. O artigo identifica o significado antropológico da formação de professores e os contributos sociais mais amplos que podem ser obtidos a partir de tal estudo no século XXI e, em conclusão, são considerados alguns desafios globais contemporâneos para a manutenção da qualidade na formação de professores.

Palavras-chave: formação de professores, qualidade, políticas e prática, estudo comparado, desafios globais contemporâneos

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1. Introduction

> There has been an explosion of interest in "teacher quality" around the globe during the past decades. (Akiba and Le Tendre, 2018, p. 1)

From the 1980s onwards, we have seen significantly heightened political interest in teacher education. The impacts of neoliberalism and of globalisation have been much commented upon and have been noticeably different in diverse settings, albeit with many common elements. But perhaps the most powerful mantra - certainly affecting the western world and many parts of the developing world, has been the dual proposition that the quality of education depends on the quality of teachers and that the quality of teachers depends - at least in significant part - on the quality of their preparation, of their teacher education. While this is a powerful mantra much beloved by populist politicians, there is of course also much to recognise in it from the points of view of those of us who are teachers and teacher educators. The mantra should not be dismissed. Teachers do matter (Day, 2007) and certainly teacher education does matter.

The purpose of this paper is to scrutinise what the term quality may actually mean in the context of teaching and teacher education and to discuss how - once we know what it means - we maintain those aspects of quality that do appear to be important in the contemporary development of policy and practice in teacher education. In order to

undertake this task, after seeking some definition of the term, I will draw on some comparative studies in teacher education that I have been engaged in over recent years, in particular to ascertain what comparative study may bring to this agenda. Initially I consider especially the macro and meso levels of policy and practice, through looking at state institutions and at the roles of educational institutions. But then I turn to questions around the quality of the participants in the provision and experience of teacher education, that is the managers and practitioners of teacher education in schools and universities, but I also consider their students, including their recruitment into teaching.

Following these discussions, I step back again in order to identify what might be described as the anthropological significance of teacher education and the wider social insights that may be gained from the study of teacher education in the twenty-first century. At least in the UK, anthropology is a discipline which has all too rarely been deployed in the study of education, both within schools and colleges and within teacher education.

In all of these deliberations, in seeking to draw out how the maintenance of quality is indeed a considerable challenge, I identify a number of aspects that reveal just how very severe some of the global challenges are. The exemplars I take relate to health, conflict and climate change. We cannot discuss teacher education today without acknowledging the impact and influence of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Nor can we ignore the terror and destruction caused by violent conflict such as that being witnessed (at the time of writing) in Ukraine. Neither can we expect - even without pandemics and conflict - that the future of teacher education is safe, stable or secure while the climate is warming and physical resources are declining at an unprecedented rate.

So the central problem to be addressed in this paper is how can we develop teacher education positively in times of rapid change and uncertain futures?

2. What do we mean by quality in teacher education?

'Quality' is arguably one of the most over-used and poorly defined words in education today, including in teacher education. We may start by looking at dictionary definitions. Even there, we find many different entries, but among those that seem most salient to education are, from *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary*:

- 'the degree of excellence of a thing';
- 'general excellence'.

But can education be seen as a 'thing', surely it is rather a process, albeit with inputs and outputs? And if quality is about excellence, excellence suggests a relative judgement. So if we are aspiring for universal excellence in education, where is that which the successful parts excel? (We had a White Paper in England a few years ago called *Education Excellence Everywhere*!! (DfE, 2016)) These may seem like semantic points but they do remind us that excellence and indeed quality tend to be used as persuasive, judgmental and sometime hyperbolic terms. 'Quality in education' is, in other words, a somewhat slippery or problematic term (see Mockler, forthcoming). As Michelle Schweisfurth puts it:

> As a construct or variable, it ['quality'] tells us little about what to do to improve teaching and learning. It also has implications for the initial and continuous professional development of teachers. As such, it goes beyond a question of language to a question of discourse, with the power to shape perceptions and actions. (Schweisfurth, in press)

When we attempt to judge whether something is of high quality we need some criteria by which to make this judgement. These criteria may be seen as being representative of our values, which leads us to see how definitions of quality may be - and frequently are - contested. If what I value in education is the development of strong subject knowledge and what you value is the development of creativity and independent thought, then how are we to agree on what constitutes quality in education? Indeed, as Raymond Williams pointed out in his brief history of English education in his book *The Long Revolution*, three very different underlying sets of educational values may be identified, what he called the old humanists, the public educators and the industrial trainers (Williams, 1961/2011; Menter, 2022). In my experience this triumvirate of interests may be detected in education systems as well as in teacher education around the world. In many countries today, the industrial trainers are very much in the ascendancy, with the great emphasis globally on the economic impacts of education.

When we are focusing more closely on teacher education *per se*, another approach to questions of quality is to look at how we understand teacher professionalism. In a recent issue of the *European Journal of Teacher Education*, Maria Flores and I suggested that contemporary definitions of teacher professionalism must incorporate a view of teaching as a research-based profession (Menter & Flores, 2021) (that paper also drew

on the BERA-RSA report from 2014; see also Mayer and Menter, 2021). Such a perspective leads towards a very different understanding of quality in teacher education from that of the industrial trainers.

Even if and when we have agreed on our definitions of quality in teacher education, we may then move on to the even trickier question of the links between the particular processes of teacher education and the outcomes designated as being of high quality, that is to a consideration of the causal links between inputs and outputs in teaching. In an analysis of approaches to the professional development of teachers and their respective impacts on quality, Linda Evans has suggested:

> Conceptual clarity and definitional precision are found wanting, and the variability transcending these extends to the professional development process – which, notwithstanding some significant contributions…. – remains under-researched and under-theorised. (Evans, in press)

Much the same could be said for all stages of teacher development including pre-service education.

Notwithstanding the conceptual difficulties of agreeing on what is meant by quality in teacher education, we may also note that most teacher education systems include what might be seen as a sub-system for 'quality assurance'. In England that is largely based on a process of inspection by a special government agency, Ofsted. In some such settings the 'accountability' processes for quality in teacher education seem to have been taken out of the hands of the professionals involved in providing it and rather are imposed from external sources. Cochran-Smith and her colleagues have explored how fundamentally undemocratic such approaches are likely to be (Cochran-Smith et al, 2018; see also Cochran-Smith 2021). In Scotland, on the other hand, there is much more emphasis on self-evaluation (Hulme and Kennedy, 2016), as there is in many other countries, including some of those where teaching appears to be of the highest quality in terms of international assessments (eg Finland) (see Hudson, Zgaga and Astrand, 2010; Harford, Hudson and Niemi, 2012).

I turn next to consider how we may use research approaches in order to judge quality within systems of teacher education, before then considering issues of the quality of the personnel involved. In a report from Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) in England called *Quality in Schools: the Initial Training of Teachers* (and note the use of the technicist term training rather than education), published as long ago as 1987, it was suggested:

> The success of the initial training system must be measured by the quality of the foundation it lays, and by the thoroughness with which it prepares students for their professional responsibilities. (HMI, 1987:2)

Yet again, while we may agree with the essence of such a statement, this assertion raises far more questions than it answers. Let us see what we find when we look at research conducted internationally.

3. The quality of the systems: What does comparative study reveal?

My own interest as a researcher in comparative studies, and their power to provide deep insights in teacher education, came when I moved from England to work in Scotland in 2001. Starting with two country comparisons of teachers and teacher education in Scotland and England, I later linked up with colleagues in Northern Ireland, Wales and later again, the Republic of Ireland. It was this work which led to the suggestion that in terms of teacher education, England is an outlier among these five nations, having gone down the neoliberal route to a much greater extent than the other nations (see Childs and Menter, 2013; TEG 2016). England became an outlier partly because of the steady exclusion of educational theory within the pre-service programmes, the emphasis being rather on tightly defined and sometimes ill thought out standards (Furlong, 2013). It also became an outlier through the growing complexity and diversity of entry routes into the profession, including a significant expansion of employment-based routes (Whiting et al, 2018; Sorensen, 2019).

Beyond the UK and Ireland, working with Teresa Tatto, we led a twelve nation study of knowledge, policy and practice in teacher education (Tatto and Menter, 2019), considering matters at the macro/national and meso/institutional level which enabled us to identify patterns of 'vernacular globalisation' – that is processes of both convergence and divergence, reflecting the interaction of global and national influences.

The 12 countries involved in this project were: Australia, Czech Republic, England, Finland, Hong Kong, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Korea and the USA.

The six themes emerging were:

- 'professionalisation' and 'universitisation';
- the relations between research, policy and practice;

- partnership between schools and higher education;

- power and control;

- the rise of 'standards', the impact of performativity and accountability;

- the impact of digitization.

(see Menter, 2019)

Subsequently I added a seventh theme concerned with the continuum of professional learning for teachers, focussing on the links between initial teacher education and continuing professional development. These seven themes, I would suggest, offer useful indicators for assessing some aspects of the quality of teacher education systems.

More recently I have been working with colleagues in Poland, Croatia and Russia, editing a collection of accounts of developments in teacher education in 21 nations across Central and Eastern Europe, all having been under some form of communist influence during a large part of the 20th century, and then going through a process of so-called 'democratisation' late in that century. This is a project supported by the Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) (Kowalczuk-Walędziak, Sablic, Valeeva and Menter, in press). Reviewing the 21 cases, the editorial team identified eight insights, including a number that relate to quality:

- There is sometimes a disjunction between reforms on school education, teacher education and higher education more generally. Additionally, some reforms focus on structures and organisation, others on curricula and learning.

- The influence of European integration processes is very apparent in a number of the cases considered. Teacher education across the region is moving towards Masters level programmes.

- The importance of cultural and ethnic diversity within many of the countries is apparent and perhaps especially significant are questions around languages.

- There is great significance in the standing and status of teachers and of teaching as a profession in these 21 settings and the relationship of these with the supply of teachers.

So these are four of the eight insights gained from our review of the 21 accounts shared by our colleagues. If we put the two sets of indicators together, we have a list of eleven criteria which can help us to assess the quality of teacher education systems.

4. The quality of the participants: what does analysis of the processes reveal?

In a comparative study of teacher education policy and practice in England and the US which adopted an explicitly sociocultural methodology, the question of 'alignment' emerged as a key concept in understanding how outcomes in teacher education may be shaped by values and cultures at institutional and individual level (Tatto, Burn, Menter, Mutton and Thompson, 2018). What happens when the values espoused by different individuals and by different institutions involved in teacher education are or are not aligned? We considered such questions at three interlocking levels - macro, meso and micro and identified both opportunities for change (OfC) and opportunities for development (OfD). This work was influenced by Vygotsky, Hedegaard and Bernstein, among others. We gathered video and interview data in schools and universities in one teacher education programme in each country and developed ways of analysing these enabling us to explore the nature of learning that was occurring. In this account I will focus on the meso and micro level in order to ascertain the extent to which teacher education processes may be experienced and may be related to the culture and commitments of the schools and universities involved, as well as the dispositions, values and 'object motives' of those individuals who are learning and teaching what it is to be a teacher. Katharine Burn and I have written elsewhere in more detail about how a sociocultural approach can link processes encountered at the individual level with much broader global patterns (Burn and Menter, forthcoming), here though the focus is mostly on the actors themselves.

Quoting from our book from this project, we defined the OfD and OfC as follows:

> An OfD is characterised by a sense of 'crisis' or critical period caused by alack of alignment between the views and practices of an individual and one or more of the institutions from which they are learning, or from contradictions between the object motives and practices of the institutions themselves. These critical periods may also be caused by tensions or contradictions that originate from within the learner as they respond to a particularly complex social situation of development. An OfC

may be evident in response to a critical period or sense of crisis, but does not necessarily depend on evident contradictions, but rather on individuals' recognition of their own limitations or the limitations of the situation they are in and on their abilities to imagine and enact a different role for themselves as teachers. These abilities rely in turn on the mediational tools made available to them by the higher education institution (HEI) partner or by the school or brought into the situation by the student teacher as a result of their previous experiences and prior learning. (Tatto et al., 2018, p. 228)

Having analysed all of the cases covered in the study we were able to suggest five categories that encapsulated most of the different kinds of experience that we encountered amongst the 26 beginning teachers who took part in the study:

a) Vertical and horizontal alignment with few apparent tensions or contradictions/tensions.

b) Vertical alignment across institutions with a high level of tension or contradiction evident at the individual level that was successfully resolved through effective mentoring.

c) Unacknowledged contradictions between the two institutions (the school and HEI), which resulted in low levels of support for the individual.

d) Vertical alignment between the individual and the school culture and practices, but not with the HEI.

e) Vertical alignment between the individual and the HEI, but not with the school. (Ibid., p. 150)

By vertical alignment we refer to the relationships between macro, meso and micro; by horizontal alignment we refer to relationships between actors at one of these levels. What the study shows overall, in terms of 'quality in teacher education', is that key contributions to the processes are made by the values, dispositions, orientations and culture of the individuals and the institutions that are taking part.

This may then raise questions about recruitment, not only questions about who is recruited to become a beginning teacher, but also who is recruited and deployed to support the processes of teacher education, whether in schools or in universities.

Beliefs, values, previous knowledge, dispositions of recruits are all highly salient, as is the question of who defines what is desirable and how these judgements are made. There is not space to discuss this in full here, but nevertheless this reminds us of the importance of these recruitment processes and their relationship to questions of teacher supply (Menter, Hutchings and Ross, 2002; Menter, 2011).

5. Teacher education and the nation state: an anthropological perspective

Having discussed issues of quality in teacher education at the level of systems, institutions and individuals I now want to step back and explore the relationship between teacher education and the nation state, developing a case for adopting an anthropological perspective on teacher education.

It is worth noting at the outset that teacher education is mostly organised at the level of the state, sometimes the nation state and sometimes a state in a federation of states. This no doubt reflects the fact that schooling systems are mostly organised at that level as well and it is usually assumed that teachers should be educated for the particular system within which they are intending to work. At a time of increasing globalisation in our economy, it is deeply fascinating that education and teacher education continue to be mainly organised at national and /or state level – although that of course is not to deny the significant influence of global forces within these national systems (Menter, 2016; 2019).

So, through reviewing and analysing a nation's teacher education system we are appraising what it is that teachers should know, what they should be able to do and how they should be disposed, in order to help in the formation of the future adult citizens of the society, in perhaps ten to twenty years time. Teacher education may be taken to be highly symbolic of how a society sees its future and is therefore highly indicative of its underlying values. Perhaps it is a realisation of this that has turned teacher education into such a centre of political interest in the past twenty to thirty years in many countries.

A key question that emerges in the West as we witness these rapid changes and increased instability of historic forms of education is the role of the state in education and particularly in teacher education[1]. Traditionally, education systems were controlled by the state because, in great part, education was seen as indispensable for the development of healthy democracies. An important argument that supported the key role of education in the U.S. came from Dewey (1916), who argued for the need to provide access to quality education for all citizens (universal public education) to support the advancement of the individual and society. (This is in line with Williams'

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[1] The next three paragraphs draw heavily on a forthcoming chapter by Menter & Tatto (in press).

'public educator' viewpoint, mentioned above). Dewey's ideas, as well as those of other philosophers and sociologists of education, were disseminated widely and influenced the underlying philosophy of education for many years not only in the U.S. but globally, and provided the rationale for the state to take most of the responsibility for such an important task.

However, towards the end of the twentieth century, the introduction of market models and the related global influences on education gave rise to decentralization and privatization where intentionally - but paradoxically - the state devolved its responsibility for education to the regional departments of education or the private sector. Andy Green (1997: 2-5) refers to this trend as the 'post-national' era and wonders 'how far can national states control education systems, in a world of global markets, supranational political organization [and] pressures for international convergence?' The case of teacher education in England, operating under market models, illustrates how the actions of an authoritarian state is managing to destroy years of progress in the education sector using misleading arguments (Childs and Menter, 2013).

At this point, it is valuable to once again turn to a comparative exploration in order to analyse developments in the East Asian countries and Central and Eastern Europe and their process of democratisation where, as Green argues, the state tends to continue to see education as playing a central role in constructing a sense of national identity, language and culture. It may well be that in the West and after the COVID pandemic, education will be seen as a renewed priority and that the education and proper remuneration of teachers will be seen as essential in the development of modern citizens who, in Green's words 'would have a broader understanding of the interdependence of nations, the diversity of societies, and the global nature of solutions to the world's problems' (Ibid.).'

So following from insights such as these, the historical and cultural view we take may well develop into an anthropological perspective. As set out above, the analysis of teacher education policy in any state system is deeply revealing of the currently dominant values within that society. Through defining how and where teachers should be prepared for their work and sometimes through prescribing exactly what it is they should know and be able to do, we see how those in power in society are seeking to shape the world for future citizens. However, these values and commitments are not necessarily simply enacted within the society. There may well be considerable resistances, adaptations and 'accommodations' that are made as policy processes are played out. My further contention is that these contestations themselves are highly significant sociologically and are frequently indicative of deep underlying conflicts within the society. It is for reasons such as this that the study of teacher education

policy is of enormous interest not only to educationalists but also to sociologists and political scientists, and I would now want to add - anthropologists! The discipline of anthropology sets out to explore the transmission of culture within a society and education - perhaps as much as, or more than, any other social process - is centrally and explicitly concerned with cultural transmission.

Such an anthropological perspective may assist us in making sense of what I see as three major global challenges to maintaining quality in teacher education in the twenty-first century: health, conflict and climate change.

Health

The rapid spread of the COVID-19 virus around the world in 2020 had very direct impacts upon teacher education. Nearly every country around the world undertook various forms of 'lockdown' in attempts to reduce the spread of the disease and to minimise the number of premature deaths (Reimers, 2022; Breslin, 2021). These lockdowns included the temporary closure of both schools and universities, the two key institutions involved in the provision of teacher education. Two aspects that arose are of particular significance in teacher education, the challenges to the 'practicum' and the suspension of face to face teaching.

The practicum is universally seen as a core element of initial teacher education. Every initial teacher education programme in the world includes some element of school experience for the beginning teacher. Typically, the beginning teacher spends periods of time in school classrooms, taking increasing responsibility for teaching children, usually with the support both of teachers in school and of visiting staff from the university providing the programme. The particular details and structures of the practicum vary enormously both between different national and state settings and even within these settings. However, it is a reasonable generalisation to suggest that the beginning teacher's performance in the school setting is assessed against a set of teaching standards or competences. That assessment is seen as a key indicator of that person's preparedness to enter the profession as a qualified teacher. The challenge of completing a teacher education programme when schools are closed was therefore considerable and led to some imaginative responses. In some settings even when schools reopened after a period of lockdown, there was great caution about allowing any 'non-essential' personnel into the setting in the light of concerns about increasing the risk of the virus spreading.

The second key element of the effects of the pandemic was in relation to the mode of pedagogy deployed in teacher education. Students were not only unable to attend the practicum setting - the school experience - they were also unable to attend

classes in their home university, as these institutions were also closed for lengthy periods. This led to a surge in the use of electronic, virtual means of communication. Various virtual learning environments (VLEs) were deployed, including Blackboard, Canvas, Webex and Minerva Collaborate. Other platforms were used for meetings and tutorials including Zoom, TEAMS and Skype. Such systems had been in use in many contexts before the pandemic struck, but the rapid expansion of their use during 2020 was quite phenomenal. The nature of the pedagogical relationships between teachers and learners was dramatically altered through the use of screens and the affective dimensions of interaction were shifted substantially with the reduced possibilities of effective non-verbal communication, usually a key element in learning, especially in one-to-one teaching situations.

Some of these issues arising from the pandemic are explored in more detail by teacher educators in special issues of two journals - (see Flores & Swennen, 2020; O'Meara & Hordatt Gentles, 2020; also Menter & Flores, 2021; Maguire et al, in press).

Conflict

I mentioned earlier our work on teacher education in 21 Central and Eastern European countries. These 21 nations include several where there has been violent fighting in the quite recent past (for example in the former Yugoslav Republic) but also in Ukraine where we can only speculate how teacher education may or may not be surviving, let alone maintaining quality following the Russian invasion in February 2022. Here is a brief extract from the conclusion of the chapter on Ukraine to be published in that collection. This was of course written in the months before the war broke out:

•A report *The Key Competence Lighthouse. Key-competence-driven reforms in Ukraine and Georgia* by the European Training Foundation (2021, p. 24) highlights the key achievements of the extensive, far-reaching reforms currently taking place in Ukraine under the New Ukrainian School (NUS) initiative:

•It is undertaking the most wide-reaching education reforms of recent times, building on international experiences and innovation among Ukrainian teachers and teacher educators. The latter have been pioneering new approaches to shape an education system that is focused on the needs of the individual learner rather than on delivering uniform knowledge-based lessons.

•These reforms should be continued and their positive results supported in order to build a modern system of teacher education, which will have a significant impact on the quality of education of pupils - future citizens of Ukraine. (Shyyan and Shyyan, in press)

The optimism reflected in this statement must have been shattered by the Russian onslaught on Ukraine. Regrettably, there are all too many other parts of the world where violent conflict has disrupted education systems, including teacher education.

Climate change

The process of global warming has been linked to an increasing number of major environmental disasters, including floods, storms and fires. In many instances these have directly affected schools and other educational establishments. What are the implications for teacher education and for the teaching profession? Much of the political action that has been undertaken in response to climate change has been led by young people in many parts of the world and the school strike actions, notably led by Greta Thunberg, have challenged schools, teachers and teacher educators in several countries. If children are absenting themselves from school to protest at the failure of their seniors to act on climate change, should teachers, student teachers and teacher educators offer their support? If school attendance is mandatory, then offering such support could be construed as an illegal act on the part of those adults (as well as the children). These are very real moral dilemmas for many professional educators. The threats to the planet associated with global warming threaten all species, including humans. What is the role of teacher education in reversing these catastrophic processes?

6. Conclusion: a contemporary global challenge

In this paper I have demonstrated how the concept of quality in teacher education in a complex one. It has many dimensions that can be considered at various levels, including the system, the institutional and the individual. I have outlined a number of criteria which may be deployed in making an assessment of the quality of a teacher education system. Furthermore, I have sought to explore how major global issues may create new forms of challenge to the maintenance of quality, including health, conflict and climate change. We certainly live in turbulent times and looking from an anthropological perspective we may continue to suggest that teacher education is a key signifier of the state of health of the world, the nation and indeed of the spaces and places where we live and work. As Tom Are Trippestad and colleagues put it so eloquently:

> The identification of the importance of teacher education, together with the contradictory and often idealized visions and goals from a wide array of stakeholders, produces continuing struggles for teacher education, affecting teacher education in a profound way.... In the intensified struggle for teacher education nationally and internationally at present, the voice of teacher educators is often missed or marginalised. (Trippestad, Swennen and Werler, 2017, p. 1)

In a fascinating study looking at ITE provision in five different global locations, but sharing the common criteria of operating at a large scale, Clare Brooks has identified five 'quality conundrums', relating respectively to practice, research, knowledge, the teacher educator and governance. All of these I have also at least touched on in this paper but I do find that I agree wholeheartedly with Brooks' conclusion. She writes:

> An understanding of quality in teacher education around the concept of transformation (rather than standards) and an appreciation of the spatial context in which teacher education take place is central to the work of "high quality" university-based teacher educators. (Brooks, 2021:211)

The maintenance of quality in teacher education is certainly a contemporary challenge but I would add that one of the key elements in maintaining quality in the policy and practice of teacher education will be the continuing maintenance of quality research. We need (as I have argued before, Menter, 2017) research *in, on* and *about* teacher education. We need to continue to research policy and practice but also to deploy a wide range of disciplinary methods, not only the usual approaches of educational research (action research, evaluation, sociology, psychology, etc.) but also comparative study, political economy, historical and cultural analyses, geographical and anthropological perspectives.

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