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Chapter 9**Teacher education beyond TEMAG requirements: Re-making history**

In October 2020, Victorian State Minister for Education James Merlino celebrated World Teachers Day with the slogan, 'Teachers: leading in crisis, reimagining the future' (Victoria Education and Training, 2020). With Melbourne well into its five-month lockdown, with schools closed and parents struggling to home-school their children, the public applauded teachers for their commitment to education through the coronavirus pandemic, earlier bushfires and other natural disasters. But in March 2021, the Federal Minister for Education and Youth, Alan Tudge, gave a speech, titled 'Returning Australia to the top group of education nations' (Tudge, 2021). This speech re-set the agenda for Australian education but without mentioning the events or effects of 2020. Instead, it called for reform of teacher education and set a 2030 target to redress teacher quality and schools standards.

In this chapter, we focus on continuity and change in teacher education by asking: How do professionals build knowledge that informs practice and with what effects on initial teacher education? We begin by troubling the knowledge work of policy-regulatory professionals that contextualises initial teacher education in this 2021 present. Then we analyse professional knowledge building using the concept of 'space-times of learning' and introducing 'Gloria', a teacher educator in a case study integrated partnership, suggesting how 'being situated' in a space-time enables professional learning and work. We track Gloria's developmental arc through her reflections on particular artefacts, generated during 2019 TEMAG-normal teacher education, from three vantage points in March, August and December 2020. This longitudinal analysis shows how Gloria's point of view is progressively recontextualised by events during 2020, and how she re-reads the past to re-write the future of initial teacher education. Finally, building on Gloria's first-hand assessment of teacher education, we

suggest the resources to support high quality initial teacher education exist, but only if the limitations of managerial prerogative are recognised.

Continuity and change in education

Real change often takes place in deep crisis, and this moment holds the possibility that we won't return to the status quo when things return to 'normal'. While this crisis has deeply disruptive implications for education, it does not have predetermined implications. (Schleicher, 2020, p. 5)

We approach policy professionals' knowledge building with a quote from Andreas Schleicher, the Director of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Directorate of Education and Skills, in 2020. A German statistician, Schleicher initiated the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and continues to oversee that and other statistical instruments that underpin the global policy platform which contextualises education. We use his words to suggest global policy frameworks offer more open-minded approaches to continuity and change in education than policy professionals in Australian education. To be fair, Minister Merlino was not seeking change on World Teacher's Day; he was celebrating teachers rather than rocking the boat. But Alan Tudge wants change. Appointed Commonwealth Minister in December 2020, he seeks to assert his authority over the education portfolio. But his agenda looks back to Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG)-normal teacher education as if 2020 never happened.

Yet all the chapters that make up this book agree that 2020 has changed understandings of school-university partnerships. Among education professionals, there is widespread support for partnerships in teacher education, but 'integrated partnerships' inaugurated through 2014 TEMAG reforms are fundamentally fragile. As the placement crisis showed in 2020, partnerships in initial teacher education are only held together by the best efforts of school- and university-based professionals, despite the inflexible accountability regime and government's lick and promise approach to resources.

Beyond managerial prerogative

In his March 2021 speech, Minister Tudge thunders about declining test scores and limited implementation of TEMAG reforms, especially by universities that organise initial teacher education. But his loose space-time parameters look past the events of 2020, while

positioning teachers as objects ‘out there’, things to be managed. Then, gesturing towards comparisons with 2006 data and anecdotal comments by school principals and graduates, he claims Australia is still graduating teachers with insufficient preparation. The reason, conveniently within the federal government’s jurisdiction, is because, initial teacher education has ‘too much focus on theory at the expense of practice, or because evidence-based teaching methods are not taught’ (Tudge, 2021, p. 6).

By contrast, Schleicher bases the opening quote on OECD research and the work of HundrED. This global education nonprofit was established in 2015 to document and circulate innovations in education. Its founders, Saku Tuominen and Lasse Leponiemi, emphasise that before and during the global pandemic, there was no shortage of good solutions in education. The challenge was implementation: realising ‘genuine improvement through a codevelopment process with everyone involved’ (Tuominen & Leponiemi, 2020, p. 7). On this basis, Schleicher (2020, p. 4) suggests prepandemic school systems, invented in the industrial age and premised on ‘standardisation and compliance’, have shown themselves vulnerable in a ‘fast-moving world’.

By re-narrating the past, Schleicher recontextualises the present and also re-imagines the future as a learning regime that builds

... on the expertise of our teachers and school leaders and enlist them in the design of superior policies and practices.... This requires a carefully crafted enabling environment that can unleash teachers’ and schools’ ingenuity and capacity to build for change. It requires innovators who challenge institutional structures that too often are built around the interests and habits of educators and administrators rather than the learners, innovators who are sincere about social change, imaginative in policy making and capable of using the trust they earn to deliver effective reforms. (Schleicher, 2020, p. 4)

Seeing the lived-in world

The difference between Schleicher’s and Tudge’s comments lies in the use of language and the way each man tells the story of education. These sayings rest on the way each one sees and knows the lived-in-world and how that perceived and conceived context is experienced, felt and lived through the futures they can imagine. Schleicher’s (2020) commentary is not particularly novel but rests on research. His critique of ‘industrial age schooling’ that educates ‘second-class robots’ (p. 5) has been central to education reform since the 1980s.

His call for cultures that facilitate ‘learning, unlearning and relearning through life’ (p. 5) is familiar from 1990s policy and research around lifelong learning and Education for All (Milana et al., 2018). His orientation to professionals echoes European policy-research trajectories that acknowledge social markets more than Anglophone narratives focused on individuals in markets (Seddon, 2020), whereas Tudge’s commentary is dependent on the policy-research networks that feed governments and the Anglophone individualism that polarises Australian politics, into which Tudge must speak.

These policy professionals differ most starkly in the way they see time. Schleicher (2020) narrates education and 2020 through a diachronic narrative that ties both the times and education’s institutional arrangements to the ‘age of acceleration’ (p. 5). Where his narrative recognises fluidity and things on the move, the Minister is dependent on the staccato synchronic narrative of PISA test scores updated every three years, when the analysed results of the main PISA survey are released. This triennial understanding of the relation between past-present-future makes it seem policy interventions have effects: TEMAG investigated and recommended; a minister received Action Now, the title of the TEMAG report; and instructed implementation. In this change narrative, who cares what happened in 2020? It is not counted in the synchronic test scores, which tells the Minister whether Australian education is a success or not. His question is: What will make Australia internationally competitive in education? By contrast, recognising the fluidity of contexts, Schleicher (2020, p. 5) asks an educational question: ‘What makes us first-class human beings?’ rather than ‘second-class robots’.

These different ways of seeing education have profoundly different implications for the future of initial teacher education. Where the Minister blames the education system, and especially education faculties and teacher educators for declining test scores, Schleicher calls for ‘carefully crafted’ learning environments. While the Minister aspires to a first-class education system defined against prepandemic metrics, Schleicher emphasises the level, degree and pace of change in societies. Acknowledging contexts that change, Schleicher notes the dangers of professionals with fixed identities – ‘the teacher’ and ‘the administrator’ – locked in place by the tight regulations, knowledge practices and status hierarchies the Minister seems to desire. But Schleicher (2020) tells us these rigidities compromise individuals’ and countries’ capacity to navigate uncertainties. While some ‘master the crisis and move forward’, others ‘will not’ (p. 5).

Where to from here?

In acknowledging 2020, Schleicher (2020) suggests societies have ‘vastly outpaced the structural capacity of our current education systems to respond’ (p. 4). But rather than locked in accountabilities and brittle identities, these fluid times call for place-based learners who become knowledge-based innovators. Where the Minister proposes business-as-usual education premised on a prespecified test score design, Schleicher says education systems must navigate crises and social change, which means looking at the situatedness of good practice. This approach to education design is ‘not about copying and pasting solutions from other countries’ (p. 5); rather, it is about looking at place-based effects and understanding how contexts affect learning and its applications in work and action.

Given these different perspectives from policy professionals, we ask: If contextualisation is a critical dimension in knowledge building, how does a teacher educator learn and act in a crisis, and with what implications for 2021?

Beyond situatedness: Liquid learning

Learning is always situated somewhere and ‘some-when’. It is grounded in particular interactions anchored by multilayered and overlapping networks, which congeal and solidify as people and professionals negotiate and build particular ‘communities of practice’. These communities are not ‘entities like a group, team or network but a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice’ (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 98). Being situated references a ‘lived-in-world’ (Wenger, 1998) with which the see’r can only engage from their own particular perceived, conceived and felt place. That place is a spot in the universe, with a certain physicality and ecology (Logan & Widdop Quinton, 2018), which is ‘doubly constructed’: carved out of the physical landscape, and also ‘interpreted, narrated, perceived, felt, understood and imagined’ (Gieryn, 2000, p. 465). A professional’s knowledge building is situated by place, where they are embedded in cultural legacies, live with particular histories and become learner-innovators through their temporalities of past-present-future.

‘Situatdness’ is not a static place, a setting defined by a passive space (Massey, 2005). Situatdness is felt through a space-time where fluidity, acceleration and change are more or less visible. This fluidity arises because matters of fact are always inflected by matters of concern. Objective terms and conditions, the facts of the matter, are constantly re-narrated through gatherings, interpreted with reference to subjective experiences, and translated into actions that fit life projects as well as workplace demands. The lived-in-world is an unfolding node, a meeting place where multiple narratives are resourced by different historical (from ‘once’ to ‘here’) and scalar (global, national, individual) contexts. (Seddon, 2022). Simplifying social context compromises insights into individuals and their learning in fluid circumstances. Neglecting time and temporalities obscures change, which happens as people read and re-read, re-narrate and re-write, navigate and re-negotiate their experiences and circumstances.

We understand learning as a liquid response to contexts and crises. Like other fluids, learning melts seemingly solid arrangements, flowing over and around them (Bauman, 2000). But learning is also an effect of knowledge building that is incubated by contexts with certain knowledge rules, particular space-time boundaries and relational dynamics. Learning is located by places, where space-time horizons affect how a child becomes an adult and how that adult navigates their life cycle. It is resourced by the times and how temporalities are lived as an experience of past-present-future that is smudged and coloured by memory and imagination. As events like 2020 show, learning is lived through a ‘now’: a particular present that is also an uneven space-time that both contextualises social actors and embeds their knowledge building in ways that inflect their agency (McLeod et al., 2018).

That ‘now’ becomes knowable and actionable through its gatherings where multilayered networks overlap, creating nodes with particular networked ontologies. These placed gatherings are where agency becomes a ‘dialogical process’ as actors, ‘immersed in the *durée* of lived experience engage with others in collectively organized action contexts’ that are ‘temporal as well as spatial’ (Emirbayer, 1997, p. 294). Learning is never just an individual’s story; it is always an entanglement, an effect of many discourses that each reference different historical contexts (Barbousas & Seddon, 2018; Seddon, 2017). In these spaces of intersubjective uncertainty, people learn in ways that recall stable topographies from the past but re-read those memories in light of the liquid landscapes they occupy. In that ‘now’, things like teacher education, stretch and crumple, creating novel topologies where the thing’s

spatial character is secured as a form of teacher education, but in ways that re-form, distort and re-make its features (Mitchell & Kallio, 2017).

Gloria: A learner-innovator

We introduce ‘Gloria’ at this point to show how a teacher educator mediates situatedness and liquid learning. We present Gloria, not because she is special, but because she is normal.

Gloria is a professional teacher educator whose knowledge work makes a place-based present knowable, actionable and, therefore, learnable.

Gloria is one of Schleicher’s ‘learner-innovators’; one of Minister Alan Tudge’s ‘top graduates from non-teaching faculties’. She decided to teach because she enjoyed knowledge work and interacting with people. She has

... a very clear memory of my dad taking us to the beach instead of church – a requirement on Sundays with my mother – skipping church in itself was noteworthy. Then he drew us pictures in the sand explaining how fish developed legs and started to live on land, explaining evolution to us as young children. We spent much of our leisure time at the family beach house – the long hot summers and the wild windy days of winter that were a safe place to run the gauntlet of the waves and find solace in my moody teen years. It was no wonder I gravitated to the biological and environmental sciences. At the end of my science degree there was a fork in the path – continue a research path or divert into teaching. I didn’t want to be stuck in a lab with little human interaction, so I chose teaching.

As a teacher who became a farmer involved in the local Landcare community, then an educator for a decade with nongovernment organisations such as Greening Australia, and finally a teacher educator, she became fascinated by people-place interactions. Her sense that ‘sustainability’ was an unhelpful abstraction in environmental education motivated her return to study. She combined secondary school teaching with her master and doctoral studies of teenagers and the ‘eco-culture’ of secondary schools.

Her work as a teacher educator draws on all this practical experience and educational knowledge, while situated by the gatherings that anchor her integrated partnership between Southern Cross Primary School and Northern University. This partnership is a place framed by multiple contexts and cultures, discursive spaces and space-time scales. The regulatory requirements in teacher education following the 2014 TEMAG reforms are just one dimension of Gloria’s ‘lived-in-world’ (Cairns, 2011).

Then and now

Gloria characterises her work and learning as problem solving in the ‘now’. It is complex knowledge work that requires her to interpret what she sees, when ‘seeing comes before words’ and ‘establishes our place in the surrounding world’, even though the ‘relation between what we see and what we know is never settled’ (Berger, 2009, p. 1). These observational ambiguities require her to reflect on what she knows, which is never merely what she sees, for every look carries more than information. The look

... begins at a personal level with the look into someone else’s eyes to express friendship, solidarity, or love. That look must be mutual, each inventing the other, or it fails. As such, it is unrepresentable. The right to look claims autonomy, not individualism or voyeurism, but the claim to a political subjectivity and collectivity: ‘the right to look’. (Mirzoeff, 2011, p. 473).

This ‘right to look’ is critical to Gloria’s moment-by-moment knowledge work that informs her judgements, choices and how she acts. She can solve problems because of her sense that she has the right, the authority and expertise to act. Her professional identity as an educator is what secures her subjectivity and her sense of solidarity with other professionals, communities of practice, and the public project of education; it is why she commits her time and creative energy to teaching preservice teachers (PSTs) and, through them, the primary school children.

In this research project, Gloria became part of our research dialogue about the relation between teacher education and teaching workforce development. She offers a window into integrated partnerships as she reveals her professional narrativity of ‘seeing’, how that affects her way of ‘knowing’, which resources how she translates expectations and experiences into ‘action’ that educates and prepares ‘classroom-ready’ teachers (TEMAG, 2014). In this chapter, we use Gloria’s capacity for longitudinal comparison (Thomson & McLeod, 2015) to show how her learning and work creates communities of practice that contextualise and professionalise PSTs, and how her character arc from learner to innovator makes history.

This comparative knowledge work requires Gloria to recognise when the past is past, which became more obvious as 2020 unfolded. Once a situation like 2019 teacher education is fixed

and objectified in ways that sets it apart from 2020's live gatherings where education communities of practice learn and work, Gloria can become analytical. Like a forensic surgeon working on a corpse, she dissects what worked and what was unhealthy in TEMAG-normal teacher education. By objectifying that past, Gloria's seeing is recontextualised in the light of 2020's imperatives and anticipated expectations. With these 'new eyes' that compare past and present, Gloria can discriminate between institutional sickness and health. She identifies what compromised and qualified her professional practice and also contextualised preservice teacher's learning. Investigating these tensions between past expectations and present experiences, she occupies a place where innovation is possible because history writing occurs (Spiegel, 2007).

In this project, we turned Gloria's capacity for reflection towards the 2019 TEMAG-normal past. Moment-by-moment comparisons between past expectations and present imperatives are central to teachers' work because responding and repositioning is central to teachers' work with students. It is this educational expertise that we invite Gloria to use when she reflects on artefacts from 2019. These reflective engagements occurred at specific moments during 2020: images of teaching (March), her case report (August) and her curriculum unit (December). At these points in time, she reflected on her 2019 practice from her 2020 experience, which was contextualised by the space of uncertainty, which stretched through 2020 and was progressively re-contextualised by expectations she had not yet lived:

- In March, when COVID-19, #BlackLivesMatter and the placement crisis became live matters of concern, she offered reflections on her work practice in the integrated partnership.
- In August, during another lockdown and following the research team's July writing workshop, Gloria commented on what becomes visible in partnership work.
- In December, after the lockdown and Trumpist US election, and aware of the *Alice Springs Mparntwe Declaration* (Australian Government, 2019) defining new national goals in Australia, Gloria considered what 2020 meant for her teacher education curriculum in 2021.

In the next section, we present Gloria's reflective re-readings. Using written reflections (italicised) and interview data, we outline: (a) the tensions she glimpsed between 2019

expectations and 2020 experiences; (b) how she probed TEMAG-normal ‘horizons of expectation’; and (c) how reading these analyses through the recontextualisations that emerged during 2020 allowed her to identify the ‘line behind which a new space of experience will open, but which cannot yet be seen’ (Koselleck, 2004, p. 262).

Place-based learning through partnership

The partnership located at Southern Cross Primary School is organised around a Health and PE unit that is part of Northern University’s Master of Teaching (Primary) program. The partnership grew out of university placement officer Rosa’s local networks. Rosa had taught in local primary schools for 35 years before being seconded to the admin position. Now she uses her networks to support the teacher education program, visiting PSTs ‘twice a year to see how the school-based projects are going’.

Gloria details the partnership work in March 2020 by reflecting on three photographs taken on a grey winter morning at Southern Cross Primary School in 2019. They show how the adults – PSTs, Keith the Grade 5/6 Coordinator and teachers working with Gloria – organise the teaching and learning through small-group sports coaching activities in regular teaching blocks. The children enjoy the change of pace that this sports partnership offers, but all the other organisational work occurs outside the school’s space-time boundaries. Gloria deliberately works around the school’s busy periods and Keith’s calendar, but it means fitting things around school and university expectations and time demands.

TEMAG partnerships offer learners opportunities to build their confidence and classroom readiness in school settings. Unlike the school-university partnerships through City and Collins Universities, this partnership is informal. There is no Memorandum of Understanding, just good relationship building. But the informality of this particular teaching-learning relationship creates uncertainties. Gloria commented that shoehorning the unit into both school and university schedules makes the partnership ‘a bit messy and uncertain, and that leads to a little anxiety, but to great benefits, I think’.

Situated teaching and learning

My PSTs are instructing, demonstrating, observing and recording. They interact with the 5/6 students through the teaching and assessment task as I envisaged and are all actively engaging in this teaching. Relief. Arranging all the moving parts requires

each PST to have their plans and step up to have a go. They're focused on their group of students. Few are hanging back. No-one is looking to me to fill gaps.

Keith, the lead 5/6 teacher is moving around the groups like me. Is that a questioning glance over the nearest group? Is there anything I should be concerned about? I suppose from his perspective, hosting this bunch of PSTs to work in this way with his students is a bit of a gamble, as it is for me too. When so many 'moving parts' come together there are inherent uncertainties. Perhaps he remembers what it was like to be a beginning teacher and needing the security of planning notes, even when doing fairly relaxed PE activities. I notice his brisk walking between groups to check all is OK, but it's slowed as the weeks have progressed. Everyone is becoming more confident navigating the uncertainties of this teaching practice. (Gloria's journal reflection about the moment in time represented in Figure 9.1)



Figure 9.1 Artefact 1: Situated teaching and learning

Gloria designed the Health & PE unit by integrating assessment within learning activities, then applied that design to site-based learning at this primary school. She wanted the PSTs to put time and effort into assessment tasks that would directly inform and improve their teaching practice. In an interview, Gloria explains:

... the organisational stuff is very much on me and ... this is a favour [by the teacher]. You rush around getting all the students' Working With Children [official certification] ... so it's nice and easy, everything's smooth ... to make it as easy as possible ... because there's not a formal structure and you rely on people's goodwill.

The PSTs are mature people returning to study. In this first year of their teaching course, the sports coaching takes them beyond their comfort zone. They discover that teaching is not what they had imagined, but they all have their plans and are stepping up to have a go. They gain confidence as the unit progresses, and have fun through positive action, doing what they

know and observing the results. These students are learning in ways that are different to on-campus classes and their enthusiasm is energising.

Four weeks later the PSTs and their allocated 5/6 students have reorganised the coaching groups into larger groups, playing actual games not just drills. The 5/6 students apply the sport fundamentals they have learned, gaining new understandings and practice. Seeing the PSTs adapting their teaching plan on the spot shows how much their confidence has grown. This is real teaching in action.

Keith still walks around but the classroom teachers are feeling confident. They chat together, rather than patrolling with a careful eye on the PST teaching sessions. It gives the class teachers time to talk together but indicates success of the partnership because PSTs are managing well.

It is a compliment to the PSTs, but they do not notice because they are busy with their students. One man looks like a cricketing enthusiast in full-on coaching mode, demonstrating skills and physically correcting students' positions. Two PSTs (one male and one female) are connecting with the students more than the sport. Another tall PST instinctively bobs down to the student's level to talk with him. Often large men have to be reminded to not tower over school students. The 5/6 students look relaxed. They are having a go, laughing as everyone, including PSTs run to retrieve balls. But this fun has a serious purpose:

My expectations and hopes are for PSTs to empathise and connect with students and colleagues because relationships and wellbeing are the foundation of their teaching. That means they engage in teaching purposefully and ethically, which can 'make a difference' because they're not just place-fillers. It means using their critical lens to enhance their own and their students' knowing, being and doing. (Gloria)

Curating the situation

The 5/6 student are sometimes reluctant to engage with the PSTs small group coaching. Perhaps it is the change in adults teaching them to people they don't yet relate to, or they may have had negative experiences with sport. This reluctance usually disappears as the weeks pass, but there is one boy whose downcast, withdrawn body language has persisted. The classroom teacher is staying close, and I wonder if she is concerned with my PSTs or with her 5/6 students?

As I move closer, everything from the PE teaching perspective appears fine, but the disengaged boy is not doing so well. Despite encouragement, he hangs back, not even

making eye contact. I think the classroom teacher's staying close to support the child, who seems to have social skill issues, and the PSTs. Later the PSTs tell me the classroom teacher explained the boy is on the autism spectrum and she was generous in sharing her advice about how to adjust their teaching for his needs. (Gloria's journal reflections about the moment in time represented in Figure 9.2)

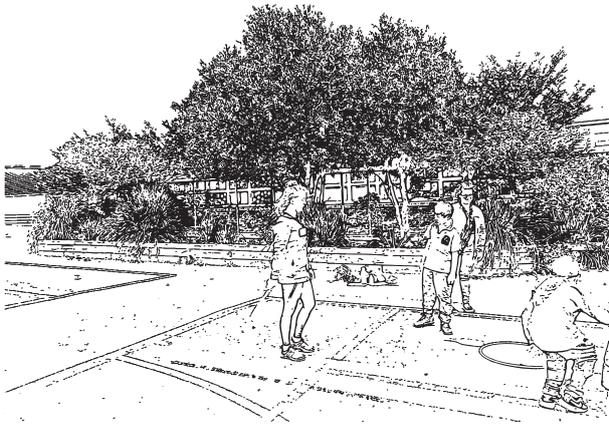


Figure 9.2 Artefact 2: Curating the situation.

Gloria sees a TEMAG partnership as an intercultural workplace for learning layered on top of an interprofessional workspace. She works with the teachers and Rosa the placement officer to curate the professional space of stories that support PSTs. The partnership is a gathering where each member uses different knowledge frameworks, which collide and entangle each other. TEMAG emphasizes ‘classroom-readiness’, but partnership work is more than relationship building with the children. PSTs must attend to the children’s needs, but also learn to navigate the professional workspace.

In teaching, professionals have to listen carefully through the relational noise of adult-child interactions, to selectively grasp and strategically act on their cultural understandings of the workplace. For example, they must hear the different child and adult discourses when working with an autistic child. They must also learn they are equal partners with teachers and administrators, expected to voice their own special expertise. Being shy or too protective of their personal insights is unhelpful in a professional event. They must trust their professional point of view and contribute the authority of their voice to problem solving, while also acknowledging status hierarchies.

But learning to trust this professional embedding is complicated in partnerships where institutional discourses collide. The professional discourse of schools, community groups,

universities and systems are different. They centre on different concerns and are subject to different expectations and space-time horizons. For example, Gloria uses her teaching experience and relational skills to tailor discussions with the school and university. She guessed that offering 50 to 80 PSTs to coach the 110 Year 5/6 students for the regional sports competition would interest the school. Nina, a teacher, confirmed it was a win-win proposal ‘because the numbers really worked for us and it targeted the sport, which students were going to be doing’.

The schoolteachers focused on their own classes as if Southern Cross Primary defined their professional horizons. Nina described this attachment: ‘Seeing the students in your class every day for five hours is a lot of time.’ Hearing about students she had taught in other years, she wonders, ‘How are they going? Are they okay?’ But she finds it helpful having other adults around when she deals with 27 children in her classroom. There is ‘that other set of eyes, other set of heads, other set of brains, which help you say, “Okay, I’m not going crazy”.’ But time is always short. In teaching, you want it to ‘be the best you can be, and you’re always time poor’; ‘There’s never enough time to check in with each student.’

Rosa, the placement officer, networked extensively across local councils, community centres, sporting groups and state and national peak organisations. Knowing people meant she could call schools, teachers and principals for personal favours, help with placements and partnerships. But ‘the work in the partnership office had quadrupled’. There was system change but little time to learn. ‘The purse strings’ are tight, the work ‘complicated’. ‘There used to be peaks and troughs, but not any more. Now it’s peaks all the time.’ Yet time pressures motivated Rosa’s partnership work. She wanted PSTs to ‘experience the fundamental motor skills of young children ... see they’re difficult skills for young children to learn. And see that learning takes time.’

Doing intercultural professional work

The PSTs offer strong, positive role-modelling for the 5/6 students. Many identifiably Muslim PSTs actively lead the PE sessions. They play basketball and demonstrate movement skills, leading group activities by really having a go, leading by example, not just directing activities. I’m sure their presence as very active teachers provide a model for all 5/6 students but particularly for young Muslim girls. It broadens perceptions and, hopefully, challenges some stereotypes.

There is a mix of cultures at the school, but the teachers (myself included) are predominantly Caucasian. The diversity of the PST group takes learning beyond the intended curriculum plans for PE sessions for the 5/6 students and the adult observers! (Gloria's journal reflections about the moment in time represented in Figure 9.3)



Figure 9.3 Artefact 3: Doing intercultural professional work.

Gloria's reflections on cultural diversity in the school and university, and between children and adults, brings expectations into view. TEMAG partnerships are designed to realise AITSL graduate teaching standards, which link graduate outcomes to the national goals specified in the 2008 Melbourne Declaration. But policy makers' expectations do not always align with school and university expectations, which become visible through historic curriculum habits and leadership practices.

The principal at Southern Cross Primary School defined expectations in terms of school students' 'instructional time'. This objectification tied teachers' time instructing a student to Victorian curriculum goals in specific learning areas and capabilities – critical and creative thinking, ethical, intercultural, and personal and social. She encouraged teachers to engage in professional networks but discouraged external networks that did not support 'strategic partnerships or opportunities that strengthen what we do'. She declined causes that 'distract us from what we already do'.

University leaders were focused on expectations of higher education regulatory agencies more than the Department of Education. The Associate Dean Teaching (ADT) explained that the university had a wide range of professional staff and disciplined-based academic staff, which created

... different pockets of partnerships ... we've got youth work, criminal justice, community development. We've got an arts program, a screen media program, we've got a music program. ... and everybody's hand was out, saying 'Well, you need to do this for me.'

Universities have powerful knowledge-based hierarchies, while schools have bureaucratic rule-governed histories. But since 1990s market reforms, principals have acted more like CEOs in small businesses, while university leaders have had to budget through multiple networks that entangle the university, internally and externally.

The principal saw herself 'curating' the school, with partner agencies 'buffering and protecting' through school council. Her aim was to 'be really clear about not asking too much of our students, our teachers and our parents'. She did not want 'children missing out on their core instructional time and ... not getting their outcomes or the impact that we'd like to see in their learning growth and achievement'.

By contrast, the ADT described how the School of Education lived between the rock of pedagogy and the hard place of fixed budgets. They had to be 'solution-focused because that's the only way you're going to survive'. Universities 'are under pressure, needing to find students and make a [budgetary] surplus', but also subject to the university's centralised decisions, which addressed budgets, and cross-cutting government and professional regulations and accountabilities. Innovations in university systems had changed core work practices and ways of organising curriculum, which upset staff. Robert reflected ruefully:

I do understand the angry mob. Absolutely. But in accreditation ... the mob keeps telling me the problem, and I understand the problem. I understand it. But I'm looking for a solution that still allows us to be accredited. Because the federal minister is the one that wanted more literacy in the degrees.

But when teaching units did not work, students' feedback could be savage. 'You understand it, but it's always hard.' Teaching is designed to support students, but bad feedback affects staff, especially younger staff who do more teaching. They try hard but need good student satisfaction scores for promotion.

These colliding institutional expectations affect every partner interaction, but partners have little understanding of the constraints their partner professionals are navigating. In this sense, partnerships are like a permanent crisis; they are spaces of uncertainty and places of doubt, which only become productive through particular kinds of professional knowledge work.

Building the partnership program

In August 2020, Gloria reflected on the case report describing the development of the partnership, which she had prepared in 2019. At that point in 2020, Melbourne was in its second lockdown. On 23 May, Rio Tinto had destroyed the 460 century Juukan Gorge Caves, destroying evidence of human habitation through the Ice Age, for iron ore valued at \$138 million. On 25 May, George Floyd was killed in Minneapolis, prompting a global movement against inequality and race.

In early July, the research team's writing retreat reflected on 2020 crises. The quote focusing our discussion began: 'It's getting dark' and then acknowledged the

... fire season; and then COVID, isolation, quarantine, the tumultuous end of the neoliberal dispensation. Society turns out to exist, says Boris [Johnson], it has emerged from a coma in an abandoned soviet bunker, and slouches towards Bethlehem to be born. (Araluen & Dunk, 2020, p. 2)

Sensitised to cultural politics, which in education presumes the superiority of metrics over professional judgement, Gloria talked about partnerships as 'not normal work'. She recognised that horizons of expectation in education were spelt out in Australia's national goals, but knew local expectations pressed harder on people's ways of working in the school and university, for students and staff. On top of this, what's 'normal' is different for everyone. Building a partnership throws all those institutionally normal habits in the air and requires professionals to build a new 'normal' through shared partnership work. A partnership demands a learner-innovator identity who is able to problem solve.

Integrating school and university work

Gloria's early work with Southern Cross Primary School organised the partnership but it took time with 'lots of conversations with humour and appreciation'. The schoolteachers were

initially wary of Gloria as an older woman and university educator, but things worked once they recognised Gloria's experience in teaching and collaboration. Her challenge was knowing how to interface with the school's culture and slot her work of co-creating the teacher education program into school and university professionals' busy lives, while also sustaining goodwill. Gloria described it as 'herding cats' with 'a smile firmly fixed.'

The school was a good neighbour to the university, regularly hosting PSTs, while Year 5/6 teachers were grateful for support coaching students for regional sports. But Gloria's relationship building meant 'lots of smoothing and smiling to navigate inherent uncertainties' as she soothed anxious PSTs, built solidarity with teachers and smoothed administrative arrangements to protect school staff from extra work. She had to negotiate the partnership timetable with the university, while managing her own uncertainties and doubts when time-lags complicated communication because everyone was busy. But the teachers could see their schoolchildren gain confidence and skills, enjoying the novelty of new teaching, individualised attention and small group activities.

Yet things do go wrong. A PST acting unprofessionally caused grief and meant Gloria had to shift from the smiling persona to risk management and damage control. The PST was a mature male returning to study after a long break who struggled with the academic demands of coursework. Gloria negotiated a strategy with Keith, the Year 5/6 Coordinator. She would team teach with the student to model and moderate appropriate behaviour, but this would affect her oversight of all the other PSTs. She discussed the incident with the PST and her teacher educator colleagues. On the day, they all waited for him to show, anxiety increasing, then waited more.

When he did not show up, Plan B clicked in. Gloria maintained oversight of all the teaching. The co-teaching PSTs managed the children seamlessly into larger groups and life went on. The benefits were obvious. One PST co-teacher stepped up into leadership, taking responsibility and planning the solution. A less confident PST co-teacher discovered she could be flexible and 'wing it', which increased her confidence. The no-show PST decided to withdraw from the program but was supported by the placement officer and the university. His issues were identified and addressed more quickly than if he had been in an on-campus unit. And the school remained supportive. The school students were unaffected, and the teachers knew that Gloria had things under control.

Value adding expectations

But when partners change their mind, partnership arrangements became vulnerable. When the university executive decided to introduce a more structured university-wide timetable, a small initiative like the Southern Cross Primary School partnership becomes collateral damage. That university decision occurred after Gloria had completed the organisational work for 2019, with sporting fixtures booked and school-university calendars coordinated. Then the university declared the partnership classes unviable due to lack of numbers. Gloria found other students who would benefit from the on-site teaching experience, but the class was scheduled on a day that did not work for the school.

These circumstances disenchanted Gloria. She felt angry with the university, which was not valuing PSTs' authentic learning despite its rhetorical commitment to the 'student experience'. She felt discouraged about putting in extra effort for PST students, although she knew her partnership work supported their journey as beginning teachers. She battled the university's timetabling logic to defend her educational goals, but became disillusioned and, acknowledging defeat, arranged to meet with Keith at the school, a goodbye and thank you bottle of wine in hand.

She arrived to find the full Year 5/6 teaching team gathered to work on a solution to the problem. Past staff members explained to new members of the school team what the shared activities had been and the benefits of having the PSTs work with the 5/6s. Gloria felt

... a bit bashful about the glowing descriptions and realised that it was more than just an easy way for them to do the sport sessions – they really do value what the PSTs bring and recognise benefits from the interactions with their 5/6 students. They had noticed an improvement in their kids' skills and confidence.

Gloria could see the teachers felt part of the partnership. Their sense of shared effort lifted her out of doubt about the partnership, her anger at being boxed in by administrative thinking, and her feeling of being solely responsible for holding everything together.

Here was evidence of 'what works' in integrated partnerships. All those conversations, the bonhomie and careful attention to school expectations and teacher work pressures had

produced shared understandings, despite the different school and university discourses. Agreements had formed, creating a kind of treaty that connected schoolteachers and university staff in shared expectations and experiences of partnership work.

Working together built a context and culture of education that offered PSTs benefits beyond the expectations of either school or university. The co-creative relationship building and problem solving between Gloria and Keith had strengthened the partnership and enabled flexibilities in teaching PSTs and PSTs' learning. Their work differed from the institutionally centred corporate logics of the university that made unilateral decisions regardless of consequences. It also revealed the limitations of governmental logics that could only see test scores as evidence of success in education and used carrot-and-stick methods to whip professionals into some kind of compliance.

Gloria could see that a 'classroom-ready' teacher had to do more than meet official expectations defined in AITSL standards, because those standards were blind to the actual work that had sustained teaching through 2020 crises. Her notes said:

There are some deeply entrenched ideals in teaching that are not always reflected in teacher standards and other metrics. These become visible when I look back and look forwards from this volatile time of COVID-19 pandemic. Looking back, the photograph of the partnership in action now seems a lost territory where a multitude of kids and adults could interact in close proximity. They could enjoy being close with no restrictions, lean into each other to communicate and play together. No-one was at all concerned by this way of being together on the school grounds. But it makes me wonder about resuming schooling as a place-based activity.

Re-making teacher education

In December 2020, Gloria reviewed the partnership and teaching unit with Southern Cross Primary School as part of her preparation for 2021 teaching. Melbourne's lockdown was over, but the US election intensified uncertainties. She was also better informed about the new national goals, with the symbolic bilingual title, *Alice Springs Mparntwe Declaration*.

In September 2020, the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) released a discussion paper about the cultural competence that teachers would need to implement the goals. It stated bluntly:

Australian education systems were never designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students ... The legacy of colonisation has undermined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' access to their cultures, identities, histories, and languages. As a result, they have largely not had access to a complete, relevant, and responsive education. Australia's education system must respectfully embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural identities and provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with safe learning environments. (AITSL, 2020).

But Gloria had also read Kevin Nakata (2017), Professor of Australian Indigenous Education. His critique of cultural competency training highlighted the dangers of compulsory training, where compliance replaced serious cultural engagement. She knows from her partnership work, simple information and skills do not address challenging cultural interfaces. However, learning and working together can bridge contested space if relationship-building between people also tackles the knowledge-based order of things, which creates 'ways we can and cannot understand each other' (Nakata, 2011, p. 2).

The place-based partnership offered opportunities to develop this kind of interculturally-sensitive and interprofessionally effective classroom-ready teacher: a teacher who attends to and interacts with the entangled layers of the partnership, through explicitly ethical ways of knowing, being and doing in this shared space (Widdop Quinton et al., 2020). With December 2020 hindsight, Gloria translated her concerns about 2019 TEMAG-normal teacher education into three key questions and recorded her ideas about 'classroom-readiness' for beginning teachers in notes (shown in italics) and discussion.

What is place-based education?

The 2020 pandemic forced change in teacher education, isolating families, closing schools and requiring teachers to support remote learning. Gloria wondered how long *the fear of being physically close to those who are not your family* would last. The rapid shift to school closures meant *PSTs were left in the dust*. Those trying to finish their degrees *are left in limbo*. But, *the truly amazing work of teachers worldwide to radically re-engineer their teaching and learning will have lasting impacts*.

The principal at Southern Cross Primary School was focused on 'core instructional time', but *what is now judged essential and what has been abandoned in the shift to remote learning?* Teacher education partnerships are *obviously not considered core business for schools*, even

though most young people entering teaching could have been of benefit to schools navigating the shift to digital teaching. Yet the upwelling of appreciation for teachers' professionalism, dedication and innovation has dramatically spotlighted a different set of teacher strengths to those usually visible through teaching standards. Changes like the digital teaching landscape are now being considered for PSTs by our teacher registration organisations.

But that way of thinking about 'place' is very ahistorical. It does not recognise that the school occupies traditional Country, an ecology that once sustained great grasslands, spreading north and west from the Birrarung-Yarra, the river flowing through Naarm-Melbourne. Those grasslands belonged to the Woiworung, Wathaurong, Gulidjan, Djabwarung and Gunditjmarra peoples who had permanent settlements and farmed eels across the volcanic plains. The Koories of Victoria still live there despite sea level rises and the Ice Age; but they became harder to see after British settlement. Now we talk about a partnership that occupies the school's green oval, surrounded by little red-brick houses, but without referencing the great western plains, where grasslands have become an endangered habitat.

Priorities in knowledge building

Through 2020, the more intangible bedrock strengths of teachers, especially their soft skills have been recognised as important. These skills are woven through my informal school-university partnership work. Sustaining the partnership meant modelling strong caring relationships, being creative and adaptable to solve problems, collaborating across professional divides and sustaining my vocation to contribute. Yet these skills are little recognised in teacher standards and initial teacher education, even though those teacher qualities are obviously foundational for teaching and came to the fore when the COVID-19 emergency required us to focus on essentials.

The new post-pandemic normal should recognise how *teachers and students are co-creating this new way of teaching and learning, which depends on trial and error, and in-the-moment judgements as each teacher deals with the multitude of variables, including children's mental health, impacting young people's learning. Problem solving through fluid situations has enabled shifts; the success of those shifts becomes visible through praise for teachers on social media.*

Initial teacher education is not *just mechanistic development of a teaching workforce, it's 'becoming teacher', a complex human learning through multiple experiences*. But the way we narrate schools, knowledge and teaching have effects. In this partnership, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are rarely discussed separately from Australia's 300 other ancestries. Australia has built cultural understandings related to multiculturalism, but this settler society still struggles to recognise First Nations, despite their 600-century cultures, sovereignties that were never ceded, and invitation through the Uluru Statement from the Heart (2017) to walk with all citizens towards a more inclusive Australia.

Imagining the space for teacher learning

Looking forward to 2021 means *managing COVID rules and supporting PSTs past their comfort zone and habits developed for the 'old normal' 2019 partnership*. It will mean *finding out everyone's situation and expectations before getting down to logistics*. But the *partnership is not a disconnected sporting bubble imported into the school*. The partnership is an opportunity to *really connect the PSTs with the vibrant context of the school – and its cultural diversity and rich history of place*. *We've imported a predominantly Anglo-Euro-centric male sports context for the coaching to prepare children for regional sports, but it ignores cross-cultural learning opportunities, including First Nations games*.

Taking this partnership learning forward means *checking in with the teachers to find out what they can reactivate in 2021*. Their experiences and war stories will help me see *their hard decisions about what to include and abandon in 2021*. But *I want to lean into their professional knowledge more next year*. *Their practice stories, like the woman explaining the autistic child, enlightens us about different facets*. *It helps PSTs connect and updates my knowledge*. *I'm hoping they'll agree to more conversation sessions with PSTs to tune them into valuable approaches they use in teaching*. These conversations that *foreground culturally responsive teaching and how teachers manage this with their culturally diverse students* will be good opportunities to discuss the new national goals and open up wider conversation about *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, histories and cultures*.

All these negotiations are *more than logistics* given the 2020 *shifts in education*. *But the time spent in those connecting conversations helps the partnership and informs my 'market research' into how teachers are making sense and responding to 2020 changes*. The

partnership depends on its framework of agreements, even if it is not formalised as a memorandum of understanding. *Previously these negotiations have been with Keith and he got the principal's agreement. But with the uncertain and potentially delicate partnership situation in 2021, I will make direct contact with the principal for initial consultations. These extra discussions add a layer to the negotiation but will ensure support at all levels within the school, rather than overburdening the school community. It will also clarify the difference between the partnership and the backlog of PSTs needing to finish their placements so they can graduate from their degrees. Being more visible to the principal and eliciting her support should smooth the way forward. And then there is the tricky university logistics. Timetabling almost derailed the partnership before but the 5/6 teaching team designed a solution. I'm hoping to do that again. I'll take the logistical problem to them so we can work out a 2021 solution.*

Beyond TEMAG's corpse

We argue that this present, 2021, differs from 2019 because it bears the scars, innovations and unexpected uncertainties and doubts that accompanied 2020 crises. Teacher education now faces a new world, beyond the corpse of TEMAG reforms. Through 2020, education professionals demonstrated how their evidence-based practice builds knowledge and practice to support students and beginning teachers. They learned through their situation and re-crafted their work moment by moment but in ways that are invisible to the triennial PISA survey and, hence, Minister Tudge. However, as OECD Director Schleicher suggests, their professional knowledge work can be recruited to address concerns that emerged among education professionals, global policy makers and the public through the 2020 crises.

In this moment, the fluidity of the postpandemic world is a resource that, in Australia, comes with considerable goodwill towards teachers and governments. Crises incubate change and demand action, but diachronic time rhythms and knowledge building do not align with synchronic testing and accountability regimes. The Federal Minister's 2030 education target suggests he wants more 'iron glove', but our evidence shows that managerial prerogative has practical limits and the mismatch between policy and professional logics can have negative consequences. A more open-minded, co-productive relation between regulators and educators would benefit students, communities and beginning professionals, and enlist schools, universities and teacher educators more effectively in teaching workforce development.

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