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## CHAPTER 5

### TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

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#### **Introduction**

Quality teachers matter for quality teaching in schools and classrooms, and quality teachers depend, to a great extent, on the quality of teacher education programmes. However, it is possible to identify different ways of understanding teacher quality and teacher education quality in diverse contexts (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012a; Hilton, Flores, & Niklasson, 2013). For instance, in Europe, quality teachers have been described as those “equipped with the ability to integrate knowledge, handle complexity, and adapt to the needs of individual learners as well as groups” (EC, 2013, p. 7) and quality Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is associated with “teachers’ knowledge, skills and commitment” (EU, 2013, p. 8).

A cross-national study of teacher education in nine countries, namely Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, Finland, USA, Poland, Singapore and New Zealand suggested that ITE quality had become a major issue (Conway, Murphy, Rath, & Hall, 2009) in those countries. The report identified a number of principles underpinning quality teacher education, particularly the quality of knowledge integration, opportunities for observation, thoughtful feedback and critical reflection on classroom and school situations, and professional values and identity. If there is consensus on the importance of quality ITE for improving teaching and learning, there is less agreement on how to define and assess quality. Cultural differences, traditions and historical and social factors have to be taken into account in order to understand how teacher education has evolved over the years in different contexts.

By and large, teacher education has been seen paradoxically as the panacea to improve education, and teaching and learning in schools, and at the same time it has been subjected to criticisms which call into question its effectiveness in preparing high quality teachers for the 21st century. A look at the international literature reveals that teacher education has gone through various restructuring processes aimed at enhancing its quality. However, although teacher education is seen as a key element in efforts to improve teaching and student learning and achievement, diversity in its content and form, including different modes of government intervention, has been identified in Europe and elsewhere as an area for more serious consideration (Flores, 2011; Flores, Vieira, & Ferreira, 2014; Imig, Wiseman, & Neel, 2014; Goodwin, 2012; Hammerness, van Tartwijk, & Snoek, 2012; Mayer, Pecheone, & Merino, 2012; Darling-Hammond, 2012; Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012b; Ellis & McNicholl, 2015). Contradictory trends co-exist in many contexts, for instance, a move towards higher qualifications for teachers at a Master degree level (e.g., Finland, Portugal, France, Malta), much of the time being associated with greater emphasis on the research component, whilst at the same time the development of a more pragmatic, short and school-based orientation (e.g., some ITE programmes in the UK, USA and Australia).

Improving teaching and learning needs investment in universal high quality teacher education with extensive clinical experience and coursework (Darling-Hammond, 2013). However, teacher education is not an isolated variable in the effort to improve education for all. A systemic view is needed in order to fully understand ITE philosophy, rationale, curriculum and goals, encompassing, amongst others, the nature and goals of school curriculum itself, the conception of the teacher as a professional and its role in curriculum development, teachers' professional status and issues of recruitment, selection and retention, the view of education or training that is advocated, the political, economic, social and cultural context in which it is embedded – clearly a complex and highly inter-related set of issues and ideas. For instance, in Europe, it is possible to identify different scenarios when it comes to teacher surplus (e.g., Portugal, Spain, Czech Republic and Poland) and shortages of teachers (e.g., Germany, UK and the Netherlands) with obvious implications for teacher recruitment and education.

The need to conceptualise teacher education as a 'lifelong enterprise' (Vonk, 1995) and as a 'long continuum' (Perrenoud, 1993; Marcelo, 1994; Develay, 1996) has been reiterated in the literature over the last decades. Within this view, ITE is seen as the first

step (preparation for entry into the profession) in a career-long process. Induction and continuing professional development of teachers are also viewed as crucial elements of the *continuum* (Bolam, 1987; Marcelo, 1999). Such an holistic view calls for different approaches to teacher education and professional development. However, practical and institutional constraints may be identified (González, 1995), namely the difficulty in integrating theory and practice and in articulating two institutional settings – schools and universities – in the preparation of teachers.

Considering the background (outlined above) the aim of this chapter is twofold: i) to identify and contrast the ways in which different key components are articulated in the curriculum of ITE programmes; and, ii) to analyse the rationale and underpinning assumptions of given models of teacher education, particularly the views and focus of the curriculum itself and the governmental intervention in the design of ITE programmes.

The chapter will consider the nature of the teacher education curriculum from an international perspective and draw upon existing international literature and the analysis of curriculum plans of ITE in Europe, Africa, Asia, Middle East and Americas. Examples of ITE programmes from countries as diverse as Angola, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, East Timor, Estonia, Finland, France, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Portugal, Spain, Singapore, South Africa, Sweden, UK and USA have been included in the analysis. However, due to space limitations a detailed analysis of the content of the curriculum plans is beyond the scope of this chapter. Rather the focus is on the key features of ITE curriculum programmes internationally in order to look for similarities and differences.

### **Revisiting the purpose of teacher education: Views of teacher professionalism**

ITE has been subject to a long and sometimes controversial debate, most of the time associated with its curriculum, its rationale and key components, and with its impact on the education and professional learning of pre-service teachers (e.g., Darling-Hammond, Newton, & Wei, 2010; Flores, 2011; Ingvarson, Beavis, & Kleinhenz, 2007). As Cochran-Smith and Fries (2008, p. 1051) argued, “teacher education has been a contested enterprise, and research has often played a prominent role in disputes by documenting the current status of the profession, suggesting directions for change, and providing ammunition for major debates”.

The preparation of prospective teachers for life in schools and classrooms – the main goal of ITE – has been discussed, re-defined and re-framed as a result of the social, cultural and political transformations in society. Thus, understanding teacher education curriculum, in its form and content, entails an analysis of the ways in which teacher professionalism is understood which raises a number of important questions, such as: What kinds of teachers are to be trained? How is a teacher's role in curriculum development understood? What are key competences, attitudes, dispositions and knowledge required of a teacher? How do the different components of the curriculum articulate and impact on preservice professional learning? How does ITE curriculum support student teachers' identity development?

In a review of a set of international papers on changes in ITE around the world, Townsend (2011) identified a number of major factors that have impacted education, and as a result, teacher education. The factors include rapid technological change, increasing globalisation and movement from one country to others, and a focus on standards for schools, for teachers and for teacher education. In the same review, issues such as teaching as a craft or a profession, with implications for teacher educators and teachers' views and the lack of trust in both teachers and teacher educators being shown by politicians and communities were also identified.

In the USA, Cochran-Smith and Fries (2008) identified teacher education historically as a changing problem, beginning as curriculum problem (1920s - 1950s), then as a training problem (1960s - 1980s), followed by a learning problem (1980s - 2000s) and final as a policy problem (1990s - present). Cochran-Smith (2004) previously asserted that teacher education is also a political problem in which values and ideology are played out. She identified the emergence of a "new teacher education" that has been constructed as a public policy problem, based on research and evidence and driven by outcomes (Cochran-Smith, 2005). The author made the case that this new teacher education was both for better and for worse and urged teacher educators to challenge the narrowest aspects and build on the promising elements.

ITE has undergone significant transformations as a result of different ways of seeing teaching and teachers' work in schools which have been confronted by: new challenges such as increasing roles and responsibilities (resulting from the multicultural settings in which they have to work and a broadening of their role, which goes beyond the traditional boundaries of subject matter); changes occurring in social agencies (for

instance, families who have witnessed deep transformations in recent years with implications for the role of schools and teachers); greater influence of the mass media in the education of children and young people; the co-existence of different educational models in a multicultural society; the fragmentation of teachers' work; growing opportunities for learning outside school owing to the development of information and communication technologies; and, the increasing accountability, bureaucracy and public scrutiny (Day, 1999; Esteve, 2000; Estrela, 2001; Hargreaves, 2001). New expectations and demands have been placed on schools and teachers even if their working conditions, their education and professional development, and the resources allocated to them (in many countries) have not been congruent with their needs.

Estrela (2001, p. 122) drew attention to the "clear unrealistic social pressure on teachers" and Esteve (2000) referred to the tendency to attribute to teachers all the responsibilities for that which is wrong in education - becoming a sort of 'scapegoat' of the educational system. Gimeno (1991) highlighted the 'hyper-responsibility' placed upon teachers for the quality of teaching. When discussing the opportunities and threats in teaching, amongst other features, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012, p. 43) noted that there was "more interactive professionalism among teachers" but they also warned that it "can turn into hyperactive professionalism as teachers are thrown into hurried meetings to devise quick-fix solutions that will lead to instantaneous gains in student achievement results".

As the above suggests, teachers' work appears to have become characterised more by "ruptures rather than continuities" (Carlgren, 1999, p. 44) within an outcome-led conception of teaching which includes pre-specified and standardised learning goals to be obtained through a linear process in which effectiveness and efficiency emerge as key words in assessing its quality. From that perspective, teaching is seen as a highly controlled activity and teachers are viewed as technicians or 'doers' who implement curriculum directives according to a top-down perspective (Gimeno, 1995; Flores, 2005). Such technical rationality, it is argued, militates against teacher professionalization and represents a narrow view of professionalism.

Intensification and bureaucratisation, increased forms of managerialism, and greater accountability and public scrutiny are but a few examples of the changes to the teaching profession (Day, 1999; Helsby, 2000; Estrela, 2001). Such changes have led to a decrease in teacher motivation, job satisfaction and sense of professionalism. Research

has shown an increased level of teacher stress, fatigue and burnout as a result of the bulk of changes, which have affected teachers' work (see, for instance, Esteve, 1991; Flores, 2014a).

In a nationwide survey carried out in Portugal, in which 2,702 teachers participated, Flores, Ferreira, and Parente (2014) concluded that recent policy initiatives associated with a context of austerity and economic crisis, led to a decrease in teachers' motivation, to greater control of their work, to an increase of their workload and bureaucracy and to a deterioration of their working conditions including their social economic status. The same nationwide study also indicated that teachers have been subject to greater public scrutiny and that the image of teaching and teachers in the media has contributed to the deterioration of the teaching profession.

In many countries, teachers are blamed for what goes wrong in public education but, at the same time, they are simultaneously seen as the key-holders to its success (Flores & Shiroma, 2003). Nevertheless, if their involvement and participation is recognised, at the rhetorical level, as a key variable to the success of reforms, in practice, in many contexts, they have been left out of the public debates (Flores, 2012). In the context of ITE in England and Wales for instance, Furlong et al. (2000) found that "in the course of just fifteen years, the system had been moved from one of diversity and autonomy to one of homogeneity and central control" (p. 149). The shift Furlong et al. (2000) described suggests that a narrower concept of teacher professionalism, based on a restricted notion of professionalism, has gradually been achieved. More recently, Murray and Passy (2014) argued that there were still a number of unresolved issues in ITE in England, namely the need to foster a more developmental and inquiry stance.

The restricted view of teacher professionalism relates, in many contexts, to the 'technicisation' of teaching, to the 'technical' view of curriculum (in which norms and top-down directives are key features) and to the fragmentation of teachers' work, which, it has been argued, has led to a decrease in teacher status (Gimeno, 1991; Imbernón, 1994). This depiction co-exists, however, with a more positive (and proactive) vision of teacher professionalism in which teachers' sense of agency and their moral purposes in improving the quality of education provided for pupils and young people are key features (cf. Flores, 2012). Sachs (2000, p. 84) identified five 'fundamentals' upon which a "proactive and responsible approach to teacher professionalism" could be built:

- *Learning* – Learning both as an individual and a collective process (with other colleagues and students as well) becomes the ‘core activity’ of school life which reshapes the social relations amongst teachers, between teachers and learners and between teachers and their communities;
- *Participation* – Teachers become active agents in their own professional agendas;
- *Collaboration* – Both as an internal (within the school) and external (between the school and other education stakeholders) activity it brings together groups of people working collaboratively for the improvement of the educational enterprise;
- *Co-operation* – Collaborative work amongst teachers brings about opportunities to develop a shared language and technology for documenting and discussing practice and its outcomes;
- *Activism* – Teachers engage both individually and collectively in issues related directly or indirectly to education and schooling, responding to the moral purposes of their profession, an enterprise which requires risk-taking, determination, passion and energy.

This view of professionalism entails a perspective of teaching which goes beyond the mere delivery of curriculum within the boundaries of classroom and subject-area. It implies new sets of professional relationships and new forms of approaching the work of teachers – who become key elements in determining the nature of their professionalism. It is therefore essential to overcome the “naïve view of teacher quality” which has been associated with “a linear relationship between policy and educational outcomes without accounting for school culture, resources and communities” (Mayer, 2014, p. 471).

A look at international contexts indicates that contradictory trends do co-exist ranging from a broad perspective which views the teacher as a “professional” who makes decisions in curriculum development, and who is a key player in improving teaching and learning in schools through a more engaged perspective, towards a restricted view of the teacher, despite the rhetoric of the teacher as a professional, as a doer or technician who implements, in a rather simplistic and rigid way, external impositions on teaching and curriculum, in the light of an outcome-oriented view, sometimes identified as a set of narrow standards to be met. These views have implications for teacher education.

## **Internationalisation of teacher education**

More recently, issues of globalisation and internationalisation have become key themes in the teacher education literature (e.g., Gray, 2010). A key element in the general European framework is the issue of mobility, which is regarded as a “central component of initial and continuing teacher education programmes” (EC, 2005, p. 3). The same document stresses the importance of providing student teachers with opportunities to study European languages during ITE and in continuous professional development programmes as well as the need for “greater trust and transparency of teacher qualifications within Europe to allow for mutual recognition and increased mobility” (p. 5).

In a similar vein, another EC document (2007) highlights the importance of reflective practice and research in order for teachers to take charge of their own development as professionals within a lifelong learning perspective. The need for a well-qualified profession and the idea of a mobile profession based on partnerships have hence been identified as key principles at a European level but also elsewhere. As such, the qualification of teachers in Europe plays a prominent role in the European Qualifications Framework, which implies the notion of learning outcomes (defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competences reflecting what trained teachers ought to know and be able to do). Extensive subject knowledge, solid pedagogical knowledge, and the skills and competences necessary to guide and support students’ learning and understanding of the social and cultural dimension of education have been identified as core elements in teacher education (EC, 2007).

Based on the EC documents, Piesanen & Valijarvi (2010) identified a number of clusters of skills and competences as core elements in teacher education programmes: i) subject competence; ii) pedagogical competencies; iii) the integration of theory and practice; iv) cooperation and collaboration; v) quality assurance; vi) mobility; vii) leadership; and, viii) continuing and lifelong learning. Although an analysis of these clusters is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is important to note that issues such as research-based learning, self-development, student exchange, learning European languages, understanding different European cultures, etc. are of paramount importance for internationalising teacher education in Europe. It is also significant that subject competences, pedagogical competences and integrating theory and practice occur more frequently in European Member States’ documents, to the detriment of mobility,



leadership, and continuing and lifelong learning, which have received less attention (Piesanen & Valijarvi, 2010). In Norway, for example, mobility has become a key issue within the new reform and student teachers should have the opportunity to study elsewhere after two years (Munthe et al., 2011).

Czerniawski and Ulvik (2014, p. 51) drew attention to the fact that “A European agenda for improving the quality of teacher education is, for a variety of reasons, problematic when considering the variety of ways in which teachers in different European countries are trained, educated and inducted into the profession.” Moreover, Kissock and Richardson (2010) highlighted the need to internationalise teacher education and the difficulties in doing so, stating that “within the current narrowly defined framework of standards, the internationalisation of teacher education is essentially non-existent” (p. 92).

By and large, internationalisation is seen as a “gain, which enables flexibility and mobility helping student teachers to visit other countries, to strengthen their intercultural competence while they have the opportunity to earn credits (ECTS)” (Peterson & Carlsen, 2014, p. 136). Olmedo and Harbon (2010) were of the view that

internationalising teacher education means viewing education from the perspective of a global citizenry, thus not only broadening the knowledge base of teachers but also sensitising them to different perspectives on issues that can affect children, families and communities, and having those perspectives inform the way they teach. (p. 77)

There is room for improvement in this field by providing student teachers with more opportunities to study other languages during ITE, developing a multicultural and inclusive view of education, and also fostering student teacher mobility within Europe and beyond.

Another important aspect of ITE is the development of collaborative initiatives regarding not just field experience but also the development of solid partnerships between schools and universities within a consistent view of education and training. Issues such as research-based training, learning other languages, understanding different cultures, fostering mobility and collaboration are among key features that could enhance the internationalisation of teacher education. So doing might help to enhance the development of other aspects of ITE such as issues of diversity, inclusion

and social justice, which are less evident in some curriculum plans, although these issues no doubt deserve further attention (Zeichner, 2014; Cochran-Smith et al., in press).

### **Reconsidering the teacher education curriculum**

This section of the chapter aims to summarise the main features of ITE curriculum and highlight some of the issues that deserve further analysis. ITE is the first step in preparing prospective teachers for entry into the teaching profession; something that needs to be reiterated more than ever in face of the challenging times for the teaching profession. Teacher's work is multidimensional and complex and the teacher plays a number of different and challenging roles: instructional manager; caring person; and, generous expert learner and cultural and civic person (Conway, Murphy, Rath, & Hall, 2009). Analysing the role of the teacher in six countries, Duda and Clifford-Amos (2011, p. 29) highlighted the following dimensions: key participant in society; enabling an individual model of work with every child to develop his/her abilities; a source of cognitive and moral growth in pupils; capable of spiritual and moral development; self-motivated; user of ICT; key person laying the foundations for life in complex, diverse and uncertain socio-economic conditions; a conveyer of traditional values and civil society; and, a model of exemplary conduct in society. The expectations on teachers can most certainly be described as challenging.

Taking an international perspective, Townsend (2011) suggested that from the policy, research and practice points of view, ITE stakeholders are “on a quest” in an era of increasing accountability framed by conditions when:

... governments are seeking to limit the level of funding provided for teacher education activity, while increasing the range of expectations required; when think-tanks propose new models for the education of teachers that will impact on the jobs of those previously involved in this process; and when many teacher education staff within universities are being asked to increase their research output to make up for funding challenges brought on by government responses to the global financial crisis. (p. 483)

Teacher education needs to respond to the increasing uncertainties and complexities of teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. What is apparent in most of the recent policy initiatives is an attempt to re-think the teaching profession by introducing significant changes in the

way in which teachers are trained, whether they encompass an extension of the formal training or a greater emphasis on a school-focused apprenticeship model. The bulk of the changes in teaching are occurring alongside new and more demanding expectations in relation to teachers' role in society which calls for new ways of training them.

In a recent review aimed at charting the landscape of teacher preparation in relation to larger social, political and economic forces and resulting ideologies that have shaped education over the last 50 years, Cochran-Smith and Villegas with Abrams as well as Chavez-Moreno, Mills and Stern (in press) identified three major trends: i) unprecedented attention to teacher quality and accountability; ii) changing conceptions of how people learn and what they need to know to thrive in a knowledge society; and, iii) increasingly diverse student populations coupled with growing social and school inequality.

Teacher education in many countries is facing major challenges and in the USA it is facing an uncertain future - taking into account the different visions of university-based teacher education challenged in terms of costs, focus, effectiveness, structure and format, and ideological orientation (Imig, Wiseman, & Neel, 2014). Some research points to a more optimistic view of ITE in terms of formal professional learning and its impact upon student teachers by introducing innovative strategies into the courses (Koetsier & Wubbels, 1995; Korthagen & Wubbels, 1995; de Jong, Korthagen, & Wubbels, 1998; Wood, 2000), namely within a realistic model of training (see Korthagen, 2010) and an accountability model (Ludlow et al., 2010).

Teacher education exists at "the nexus of multiple institutional and policy contexts" (Grossman & McDonald, 2008, p. 185) and it entails the paradox of being seen as fundamental for quality teachers and quality teaching, but at the same time, it has been subjected to criticism in regard to its effectiveness and impact on student teacher learning. There is a need to rethink education and its main goals (Sancho, 2014) and therefore a concomitant need to reconsider teacher education.

Some of the concerns with ITE are political and deal with national policies but others are micro-political in nature and relate to programme quality (Munthe et al., 2011). Some critical issues relate to the integration and coherence of ITE curriculum, the relevance of its components and the interaction amongst them, and the tensions visible in trends towards a more didactic-oriented perspective and a research-based approach.

In Norway, one of most critical issues is the coherence and progress in teacher education and the research orientation (Munthe et al., 2011) as is also the case in some other countries around the world (e.g., Portugal, Mozambique, France, etc.).

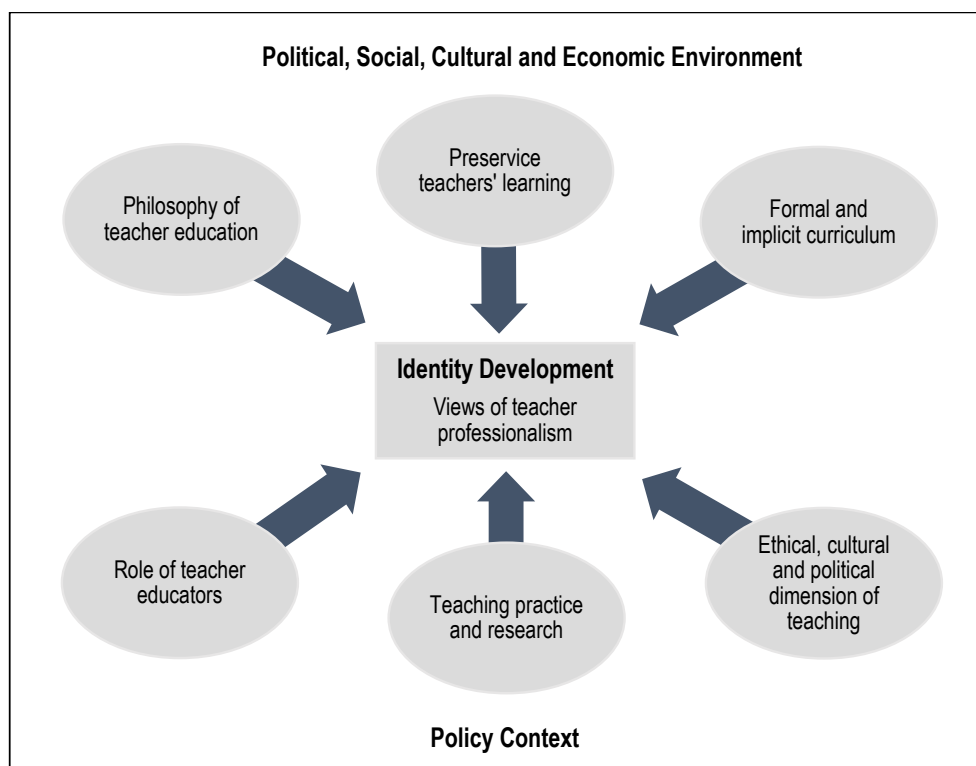
In the context of academic and university-based ITE in Finland, Hökkä and Eteläpelto (2014) identified three major challenges: i) obstacles in renegotiating professional identity; ii) internal competition between subject-matter groups within the department, and, iii) discrepancies between individual agency and organisational development. The authors argued that teacher educators' individual and collective agency needs to be supported to enhance their continuous professional learning and organisational change.

A cross-national study (Conway, Murphy, Rath, & Hall, 2009) of teacher education in Ireland, Northern Ireland, Scotland, England, Finland, USA, Poland, Singapore and New Zealand identified a number of principles underpinning quality programmes: vision (common and clear vision of good teaching practice); knowledge of learners linked to curriculum; integration of foundations, methods, and teaching practice; addressing the apprenticeship of observation; strategies to examine culture and schooling (cultural homogeneity, diversity and change); strong relationships, common knowledge and shared beliefs (built on university-school partnerships); and, integration focused projects (e.g., case studies, portfolios).

As noted earlier, in order to fully understand the nature and purpose of ITE, it is necessary to take into account the political, social, cultural and economic environment in which it is embedded. Figure 5.2 summarises the key elements that influence teacher education as well as the core issues in reconsidering its curriculum. The ways in which different countries look at teacher quality, teacher competences and standards and the priorities for ITE depend upon the wider context as well as the policy context, i.e., the legal framework for teacher education and school curriculum, the role ascribed to teachers in curriculum development, the goals and priorities of school curriculum which, although they tend to be very much linked to international assessments, are designed and implemented differently in national contexts. A paradigmatic example of this is the European context where the Bologna process was implemented and in which 'Common European Principles for Teacher Competences and Qualifications' were issued (2005).

A wide diversity of programmes and curriculum organisation and content exists across countries and within the same country. Of importance are the policy documents regulating the education of teachers in light of national priorities which encompass certain ways of looking at teacher professionalism. Similarly, the nature and process of school curriculum – and the role ascribed to teachers in its development – along with a given view of teaching and learning are also important elements in defining teacher professionalism and the ways in which teachers are to be trained (Gimeno, 1995).

Focusing on England, Maguire (2014) highlighted the need to ensure teacher quality “by reforming teaching at source by regulating and controlling ITE” (p. 779). She discussed the “technology of erasure” which relates to “the erasure of the work of progressive and reforming teacher educationalists who have in different times attempted to produce new ways of using school-based experiences to produce new forms of teacher (and trainee teacher) knowledge” (p.780). Also of importance is the nature of preservice teachers’ learning combining a wide array of knowledge (content, pedagogy, curriculum, philosophy of education, beliefs, attitudes, etc.) and the kinds of opportunities provided during their ITE programme.



**Figure 5.2:** Key elements in reconsidering teacher education curriculum

If ITE is to be reconsidered in the face of both internal and external pressures for quality and effectiveness, teacher identity development is pivotal as well as the ways in which it is explicitly included in ITE curriculum both formal and implicit (e.g. Flores, 2014d). This is certainly a big challenge in the case of shorter and more compact ITE programmes within the context of the consecutive model as in the Portuguese Two-year Masters degree in Teaching. Sachs (2001) described identity as a negotiated, open and shifting process stating that “for teachers this is mediated by their own experience in schools and outside of schools as well as their own beliefs and values about what it means to be a teacher and the type of teacher they aspire to be” (Sachs, 2001a, p. 154). As such it is neither a stable nor a fixed entity. It is not a “taken-for-granted process nor a product ... It is a space of struggle and conflict, and of construction of ways of being a teacher” (Nóvoa, 1992, p. 16). As such, the development of teacher identity in ITE becomes a core element in reshaping its curriculum as is also the views of teacher professionalism advocated. These are influenced by the kinds of opportunities which are provided to student teachers for professional learning and development of dispositions, attitudes, behaviour and skills in both the formal and implicit curriculum of ITE. Also influential to the development of preservice teacher identity is the philosophy of teacher education held by teacher educators and within ITE curriculum and the ways in which it is coherently and explicitly enacted in a given institutional setting. If a professional view of the teacher as a curriculum maker is to be advocated and put into practice, attention needs to be given to both the explicit and implicit curriculum of ITE, including teacher educators’ practice, as well as to more effective connections between research and teaching practice and to the ethical, cultural and political dimension of teaching and teacher education.

The literature draws attention to the influence of ITE in shaping teacher identity in different ways (Flores & Day, 2006; Flores, 2013, 2014d; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Friesen & Besley, 2013) that prompt a number of important questions, such as: “What has been the impact of the new contexts (and curriculum) for improving the quality of ITE?”; “What kinds of teachers are being trained under the new framework?”; and, “What kinds of teachers need to be trained?” Central to these questions are views pertaining to teacher professionalism which are embedded in the explicit and formal curriculum components of ITE but also in the implicit curriculum and the curriculum of processes understood as practice in ITE (Formosinho, 2009b). These include the

curriculum practices and the organisational features of teaching (the former relates to the syllabi and teaching methods and assessment; the latter includes, for instance, ways in which the different kinds of courses and modules are organised).

Attention needs to be paid to the explicit articulation and integration of the key components of the formal curriculum, but also to the ways in which the curriculum is put into practice within the institutions which calls for the key role and status of teacher educators, another central element in reconsidering teacher education, to be better understood through questions such as, “Who are the teacher educators?”; “What are their views about teaching, teacher education and learning?” and, “How do they connect the key components of ITE curriculum in their practice explicitly?” In that regard, another issue that deserves attention is the philosophy of training held by teacher educators but also explicitly advocated in formal documents and in the practice of ITE in the institutional settings. The departmental structures and the hierarchical prevailing logic make it difficult for cooperation to occur. Political and departmental-led interests sometimes prevail in detriment to the pedagogical and scientific logic in negotiating and debating ITE. Thus, the role of teacher educators, the practice and research components and the ethical, cultural and political dimension of ITE need serious consideration.

### ***The (in)visibility of teacher educators’ work***

Teacher education as a “late arrival” to the academy has implications for its status (Maguire, 2014) which has been a highly scrutinized as those associated with teaching practice are consistently buffeted by the demands of research and its status in the academy. Concerns with impact on performativity, funding challenges and external compliance have had implications for academics and also for teacher educators: “competition rather than cooperation came to be seen as a key driver of quality with accountability measured by performativity and compliance with raising achievement as key” (Alcorn, 2014, p. 447). This is also true for teacher educators in countries facing economic and financial crises such as Portugal and Spain (and where a teacher surplus exists) as well as for those experiencing alternative routes to teacher education (e.g., USA, UK and Australia) which can lead to a struggle to recruit student teachers. In the English context, Maguire (2014) called into question an “attempted erasure of the role of university-based teacher educationalist as a knowing expert and the valorisation of practical experience, craft and skills” (p. 782).

In some instance, the perpetuation of structures, namely departments, and an academic culture that fosters separation between the university teachers of the foundational courses and those of pedagogical practice, associated with hierarchical ways of functioning, can militate against curriculum articulation, coordination and coherence and in fact reflect the perceived “lower” status of practice within ITE. In general, university teachers of curriculum, didactics, and pedagogical practice see themselves as teacher educators, i.e., the effects of teacher educators’ teaching practices on students’ learning how to teach (Formosinho, 2009a). Further to this, Formosinho (2009a) was also of the view that university teachers may not always fully apprehend the demands of being a teacher educator and so could function as uncommitted researchers within their communities, professional groups and organisational contexts. It is not difficult to see that the specific and crucial work of teacher educators needs to be made more explicit and visible within institutions in order to not only promote the status of ITE but also as a way of fostering cooperation and catalysing curriculum integration. For that to be the case, it is crucial to take into account the peculiar status of university teachers as teacher educators.

Korthagen et al. (2006) asserted that:

... so long as teacher educators advocate innovative practices that they do not model, illustrate, and read as text in their own teacher education classrooms, teacher education reform will continue to elude us. (p. 1036)

The “narcissistic view of individual autonomy” within institutions of ITE (Formosinho, 2009a) can make it difficult to collaborate due to fragmentation and a culture of separation in departments and knowledge territories along with the perverse effect of teacher educators’ practice on preservice teachers’ professional learning (Formosinho, 2009b). Thus, the reconceptualisation of teaching implies the need to attend to the clinical aspects of practice which in turn need teacher educators to add “pedagogies of enactment” to an existing repertoire of pedagogies of reflection and research (Grossman, Hammerness, & McDonald, 2009). For that to happen there is a need to overcome historical divisions namely the curricular divide between foundations and methods courses as well as the separation between universities and schools.

In China Zhou (2014) identified a number of challenges for ITE:



... changing content from context-free knowledge and a knowledge of disciplines to disciplines' knowledge in practice, improving the quality of teacher educators and changing their indoctrinated instructional approach, joint help from the university faculty and cooperative teachers for student teachers to develop practical knowledge, using research-based evidence to evaluate programs. (p. 521)

Further to what can sometimes appear to be a paradoxical position of teacher educators in relation to their practice, Moreira and Vieira (2012) noted that:

Teacher educators frequently avoid direct participation in making decisions about the future of teacher education – some have no convictions about the direction it should take, some fear confrontation between perspectives and prefer to keep silent, and others just don't care. (p. 102)

Clearly then if such actions prevail across the system, then serious questions arise such as: “Who are the teacher educators?”; “What do they do when they teach how to teach?”; “What kinds of learning experiences do they promote in their teaching?”; and, “Why are they teacher educators?”

As a personal response to concerns with the development of ITE at University of Minho, Portugal, a number of teacher educators engaged in a study group in order to investigate the ITE model and to discuss and disseminate their practices. The initiative gathered together 25 teacher educators who volunteered to participate in the group and to conduct a self-study. The potential of the self-study of teacher education has been recognised in the literature over the last decade, pointing to its key role in understanding and challenging teacher education programmes, processes and practices (see, for instance, Loughran, 2005, 2009; Kitchen, 2005; Schulte, 2005). However, challenging the institutional status-quo and changing existing practices, especially those which imply a “profound cultural shift in the existing views of teacher education which is often threatening to experienced educators” (Korthagen, 2010, p. 419) are difficult processes which, in many cases, mean teacher educators going beyond their ‘comfort zone’. Despite the adverse circumstances, the study created a relevant space for sharing and looking beyond one's own individual practices and for co-training and professional development as teacher educators (e.g., Vieira, 2013, 2014).

Teacher educators' "special and unconventional role" means there is a need to: be able to create suitable learning experiences for student teachers; be competent at promoting further awareness and reflection; and, be able to offer theoretical notions from empirical research (Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006). In addition, there is a need for more explicit pedagogies of identity development and collaboration if preservice teachers are to become reflective and collaborative professionals. Therefore, there is a need for preservice teachers to be educated within a context in which explicit articulation of formal and implicit curriculum and relevant pedagogies are to the fore (Flores, 2014d). ITE curriculum articulation is far too important to be left to individual preservice teacher to have to make 'possible connections' throughout and across their preservice education programme.

The pedagogies that student teachers experience are crucial in shaping their understanding of their sense of identity, as well as the importance of pedagogical reasoning, and understanding learning about teaching through an inquiry stance (Loughran, 2014). Teacher educators need to "model transformative curricular and pedagogical practices" (Olivier & Oesterreich, 2013, p. 414).

In Finland, Tryggvason (2009) found that teacher educators promoted theoretical and pedagogical aspects of teaching by using them in their own teaching which itself was research-based; demonstrating further the importance of promoting the pedagogical voice and productive learning in ITE (Russell & Martin, 2014).

... every teacher candidate takes a unique personal set of messages from the shared experiences of an education course. The single most important influence on what candidates take away is the nature of the relationship that is developed with the teacher educator. (Russell & Bullock, 2013, p. 216)

### ***The centrality of practice and research in ITE***

The missing link between theory and practice is one of the critical elements in ITE (Elstad, 2010). As noted earlier, the literature highlights the gap between theory and practice and the sense of inadequate preparation felt by student teachers in dealing with the realities of schools and classrooms (see, for instance, Flores, 2000; Flores & Day, 2006). However, teaching practice is recognised by student teachers as a crucial component of professional learning (Flores, 2014c; Flores, Santos, Fernandes, & Pereira, 2014). As a key structural component of ITE, teaching practice and research

need to be given more attention not only in regard to the role of cooperating schools and universities, but also to the reflective component geared toward student teachers' professional development within a democratic view of education, and the relationship between theory and practice and between teaching and research (Flores, Vieira, & Ferreira, 2014). Thus, despite ITE facing many challenges, integrating research into the practicum can be seen as a window of opportunity through which gains might be made in post-Bologna teacher education (particularly in Portugal, see Flores et al., forthcoming).

Tang, Wong, and Cheng (2012) in their study of professional learning in ITE found that student teachers attending a Bachelor of Education Programme in Hong Kong held a constructivist vision and conception of teaching and learning based on student construction of knowledge and a capacity for lifelong learning. That outcome was the result of their learning experiences during the ITE programme, including the core components of the formal curriculum (coursework), informal and hidden curriculum (student teachers' experiences both in coursework and fieldwork, namely, the interaction with faculty and cooperating teachers and the participation in activities beyond the formal curriculum), field experience (classroom teaching), and non-local experiences. In terms of the degree of influence on their conception of teaching and learning, field experience was the most influential, followed by the formal, informal and hidden curriculum.

Teaching practice is generally regarded as a key element of the ITE curricula not least because of the possibilities of bridging the theory-practice divide but also due to the connection between the two sites of professional learning (schools and universities) which offer opportunities for collaboration between university supervisors, cooperating teachers and student teachers, and the possibility of linking and putting into practice knowledge and competencies (see for instance Flores, 2000; Dawson & Norris, 2000; Al-Hassan, Al-Barakat, & Al-Hassan, 2012). However, whilst teaching practice is viewed as a vital part of the initial teacher education curriculum, the lack of consensus about what it entails is revealed by its diversity of form, content, duration and focus (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001; Flores, Vieira, & Ferreira, 2014). If, for example, improvement in the quality of practicum learning is to occur, there is a need to challenge the implicit assumptions about the nature of school-university partnerships (Russell & Martin, 2013). No quick fix initiatives will overcome the complexities of

teaching and of the role of the practicum in preservice teachers' professional learning. Long term commitment and solutions are needed which require strong collaboration between schools and universities as sites for professional learning through active and collaborative partnerships between teacher educators, cooperating teachers and student teachers. In so doing, it may well contribute to challenging existing teaching professional cultures and foster more collaboration.

Nóvoa (2013) was an advocate for teacher professionalism through which professional knowledge might be developed as an aspect of a pedagogical journey in which reflection and experience play a key role. The implementation of research studies, active learning experiences, quality of supervisors and integration with other studies have been identified as crucial elements in the positive evaluation of ITE in Finland (Niemi & Nevgi, 2014) and further reinforce notions of collaboration and development of professional knowledge. Kansanen (2014) stressed teacher education as a twofold practice comprising teaching and researching, and the integration of theory and practice in professional learning in the workplace mediated through the key role of university practice schools. It is interesting how important the research component in ITE curriculum is, yet its integration into the practicum varies within and across countries (Flores, Vieira, & Ferreira, 2014; Munthe & Rogne, 2015).

Reporting on a review of existing research, Cochran-Smith (2005), in the USA, asserted that consistent vision, strong collaborations between universities and schools, school/community fieldwork, and effective use of certain teacher education strategies were amongst the most distinctive features of ITE programmes. Similarly, Korthagen, Loughran, and Russell (2006), based upon an analysis of three teacher education programs in Australia, Canada and the Netherlands, identified seven principles they suggested were foundational to quality ITE, they were: i) learning about teaching involves continuously conflicting and competing demands; ii) learning about teaching requires a view of knowledge as a subject to be created rather than as a created subject; iii) learning about teaching requires a shift in focus from the curriculum to the learner; iv) learning about teaching is enhanced through (student) teacher research; v) learning about teaching requires an emphasis on those learning to teach working closely with their peers; vi) learning about teaching requires meaningful relationships between schools, universities and student teachers; and, vii) learning about teaching is enhanced when the teaching and learning approaches advocated in the programme are modelled

by the teacher educators. In other words, the authors stressed the importance of coherence between three components: views of knowledge and learning; programme structures and practices; and, quality of staff organisation in order for ITE to make a difference.

Thus, a redefinition of university and school roles with a growing emphasis on strong, coherent and supportive partnerships is clearly at the heart of challenging the binary of theory and practice and might be possible through a research-based design. As such combining teaching and research and promoting teaching practice as a space of transformation rather than a process of adaptation or of application of theory may well represent a move forward towards a more consistent, coherent and solid practicum along with explicit connections with the other ITE curriculum components.

### ***The relevance of the ethical, cultural and political dimension of teaching and ITE***

Literature on the ITE curriculum internationally highlights a strong emphasis on subject knowledge and subject didactics in many programmes, in some cases following a narrow view of curriculum within a competence-driven logic and a task-oriented perspective (for teachers to learn how to deal with given activities and meeting given goals previously set up by government). As Maguire (2014) described it, preoccupations with raising standards and measured attainment have been prevalent for “ensuring that curriculum, pedagogy and the teaching force are managed in order to ‘deliver’ these demands” (p. 778). In a similar vein, in the USA, Zeichner (2014, p. 559) argued that “Many of the early-entry alternatives that currently exist are often closely linked with a mostly technical view of the role of teachers and with efforts to erode teachers’ autonomy and collegial authority”.

In many contexts, it is possible therefore to identify an alignment between a restricted view of school curriculum in which an outcome-led orientation, along with, in some cases, a back to basics movement, prevails in ITE curriculum within a didactic-orientation leaving behind the ethical, cultural and political dimension of teaching. However, as mentioned above, other perspectives co-exist within a view of teachers as professionals and as curriculum makers largely within a research-based orientation to ITE.

Teaching entails a technical dimension but it also goes well beyond that:

... more importantly, [teaching is] an intellectual, cultural, and contextual activity that requires skilful decisions about how to convey subject matter, apply pedagogical skills, develop human relationships, and both generate and utilise knowledge. (Cochran-Smith, 2004, p. 298)

Teaching is also about making moral judgements and taking decisions in context in face of the complex situations with which teachers have to deal on a daily basis; learning how to do that in ITE means that:

... learning to teach entails a constellation of factors. It is a process that goes beyond the mere application of a set of acquired techniques and skills. Not only does it imply the mastery of practical and more technical issues, but it also encompasses the construction of knowledge and meaning in an ongoing and challenging dialogue with the practice. (Flores, 2001, p. 146)

Thus teacher education needs to focus not only on what teachers should know and be able to do but it also needs to address the ways in which teachers as agents of change think and how they are able to transform education. Their work, including the ethical, cultural and political dimensions needs to be recognised and nurtured. Therefore, ITE needs to focus on what it means to be a teacher as teaching is also about values, beliefs, actions and commitments. Ball and Forzani (2009), argued that:

... the work of teaching includes broad cultural competence and relational sensitivity, communication skills, and the combination of rigour, and imagination fundamental to effective practice. (p. 497).

Clearly then, all of these expectations point to a need for ITE to take into account information and communication technologies, the changing and complex nature of teachers' work and core issues such as critical reflection, social justice and use of professional judgment if it is to genuinely develop a curriculum that serves the needs of the profession (Jasman, 2003).

ITE curriculum needs to provide preservice teachers with opportunities to think and reflect upon their role as teachers in transforming education and on the implications of their actions as teachers and to rethink and challenge narrow views of teachers as doers or implementers in many contexts. Their goal is not to develop the school curriculum in context but to deliver and manage the prescribed curriculum in order to meet the demands and goals set up by governments. In order to go beyond a "didactisation" or

didactic-orientation perspective of ITE curriculum, attention needs to be paid to the ethical, cultural and political dimension of ITE. As Tryggvason (2009) argued, ITE curriculum should provide students with opportunities to learn how to take responsibility for ethical choices.

Reflecting on the English context, Maguire (2014) suggested that the curriculum:

more and more [focused] on successful in-school experience, technical skills such as teaching literacy through centrally prescribed methods, behaviour management, familiarity with testing regimes, etc. Other matters, for example, those of commitment, values and judgements are frequently side-lined, made optional or simply omitted. (p. 779)

Tirri (2014, p. 15) nominated as one of the major challenges in Finland the need for a set of competencies for “professional and ethical” teachers in the light of the moral dimension of their work in dealing with a rising number of immigrant students and children with difficulties. In the USA, Zeichner (2014, p. 560) argued that “the teacher as a professional view goes beyond providing teachers with teaching and management skills”. There is little doubt that teachers must be able to exercise a significant degree of professional autonomy, their work involves a “complex matrix of knowledge and competences”, including transversal competences related to learning to learn as well as social and civic competences (ETUCE, 2008).

If ITE is to make a difference it requires careful programme design, an elaborated view of the intended process of teacher learning, specific pedagogical approaches and an investment in the quality of staff members (Korthagen, Loughran, & Russell, 2006). Besides the need to develop further the educational research competences, the coordination and articulation of the various ITE components, the shared reflection of pedagogical practices (and of the content of each of the ITE components) amongst teacher educators within the same programme, and the integration of teaching and research in practice, the inclusion of the ethical, cultural and political dimensions is also of paramount importance. If that were the case, then ITE could be seen as seriously seeking to make a difference through the lens of teachers as professionals with ITE as a space of transformation.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter sets out to analyse initial teacher education curriculum from an international perspective. It has revisited the purposes of teacher education in the light of different views of teacher professionalism and the changing and complex nature of teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Contradictory trends were identified ranging from a broad perspective which views the teacher as a “professional” who makes decisions in curriculum development towards a restricted view as a doer or technician who implements, in a rather simplistic and rigid way, external curriculum impositions in the light of an outcome-oriented view, sometimes identified as a set of narrow standards to be met. Thus the definition of standards and/or competences in ITE internationally is associated with a diversity of meanings varying from a more instrumentalist and narrower view of standards and competences towards a more flexible orientation.

Also, it was possible to identify a number of convergences and divergences in ITE curriculum internationally, namely in regard to the inclusion of subject knowledge, subject didactic knowledge, general education studies and practicum. However, diversity of ITE curriculum both in its content and form as well as fragmentation *versus* integration of its different components was identified in different contexts. A great deal of variation in regard to the location of various components and to their interaction to enhance preservice teachers’ professional learning was also identified. It was possible to look at programmes in which a more didactic-oriented view of ITE curriculum was prevalent, especially in the case of consecutive models, whilst in other cases a research-based perspective was advocated. Also of interest was the role of practicum in ITE as a space to link theory and practice. In general, as a key component of the ITE curriculum practicum was also marked by ambiguity and diversity. Although there is consensus concerning its vital importance in the process of learning to teach, there is less agreement with regard to its aims, the approaches to education and professional training underpinning it, the strategies and professional competencies to be developed, etc. Further developments in this regard are needed to improve the research dimension within the ITE curriculum in a more explicit and articulated way in the light of two main purposes: the conception of professional development underpinning student teachers’ pedagogical projects and learning experiences; and, the training of preservice teachers in research methods.

The chapter concludes with the need to reconsider the teacher education curriculum in order to respond to the increasing uncertainties and complexities of teaching in the 21<sup>st</sup>



century. The development of teacher identity in ITE becomes a core element in reshaping its curriculum as well as the views of teacher professionalism advocated in a given institutional setting. Also, the specific and crucial work of teacher educators needs to be made more explicit and visible within institutions in order to not only promote the status of ITE but also as a way of fostering cooperation and catalysing curriculum integration.

Teaching practice and research become then two crucial elements which also need long term commitment and solutions which require strong collaboration between schools and universities. These may well contribute to challenging existing teaching professional cultures and foster more collaboration. A redefinition of university and school roles with a growing emphasis on strong, coherent and supportive partnerships is clearly at the heart of challenging the binary of theory and practice and might be possible through a research-based design. As such combining teaching and research and promoting teaching practice as a space of transformation rather than a process of adaptation or of application of theory may well represent a move forward towards a more consistent, coherent and solid practicum along with explicit connections with the other ITE curriculum components. The ethical, cultural and political dimension of teaching and ITE also deserves more attention in the view of teachers as professionals and teaching as a complex profession. There is a need to focus not only on what teachers should know and be able to do but attention needs to be paid to the ways in which teachers as agents of change think and how they are able to transform education. Teaching is also about values, beliefs, actions and commitments. Therefore, ITE needs to focus on what it means to be a teacher if it is to be seen as seriously seeking to make a difference through the lens of teachers as professionals with ITE as a space of transformation.

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