RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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WHAT IS RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION?

*HOW DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS? WRITE DOWN YOUR 3 MOST IMPORTANT THOUGHTS AND SHARE THEM WITH THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU.

RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION: STUDENT TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE

STUDENT TEACHERS

- read educational research and learn about research findings – the course contents of teacher education are tightly related to research – *consumers* of educational research

- learn educational research methods and research process, and understand their relevance for practice

- learn to observe, analyse and conceptualise classroom practice – *inquiring orientation* towards the work of teaching

- conduct educational research during their studies, e.g. MA thesis – *producers* of educational research

- build connections between research and practice of teaching during teacher education

- during the TE programme, learn an inquiring orientation towards teacher's work

(e.g. Healey, 2005; Grossman, 2007; Kansanen, 2005; Elen et al., 2009; Munthe & Rogne, 2015; Toom et al., 2010; Jenset, Klette & Hammerness, 2017)

STUDENT TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

- In terms of learning to become teachers, student teachers experience teaching practice periods and MA thesis process especially crucial parts of their teacher education (Saariaho et al., 2015; Toom et al., 2015)

- Student teachers report to learn practical knowledge and a variety of strategies relevant for practice of teaching *through teaching and analysing teaching* during teaching practice periods (Allas et al., 2016; Heikonen et al., 2017)

- Student teachers expect scholarly approach in their pedagogical studies and integration of research in the supervision of their teaching practice (Byman et al., 2009)

- Student teachers report to appreciate research-based approach in their teacher education (Byman et al., 2009)

RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION: TEACHER EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVE

TEACHER EDUCATORS

- read and become familiar with the research related to teachers, teaching and teacher education – as *consumers of research*

- use own and others' research findings in their teaching and supervision

- collect feedback and data from their own practice to evaluate, inform and improve their own (and their colleagues') practice

- conduct research projects related to education, schools and teacher education – *as producers of research*

- have capacity to provide academic teacher education and supervise theses

- develop as researchers on teacher education though teaching in teacher education

- engage in collaborative design and development of teacher education programmes

(e.g. Munthe & Rogne, 2015; Healey, 2005; Toom et al., 2010; Cao et al., 2018)

TEACHER EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

- Teacher educators perceive themselves primarily as teachers (49%); equally as teachers and as researchers (32%); and primarily as researchers (19%) (Cao et al., 2018)

- Most of the teacher educators (77%) reported that their teaching and research are highly or totally related (Cao et al., 2018)

- Teacher educators report to integrate research and practice through their pedagogies (Toom et al., 2017)

  - Pedagogies focusing on reflection on practice were emphasised

  - Pedagogies focusing on experimenting and modelling practice of teaching were less utilised

TEACHER EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

- Teacher educators working in academic (Finnish) teacher education context reported (Cao et al., 2018) that

  - the *contents* of their teaching are based on research **(50%)**

  - their *teaching methods* are based on research (10%)

  - they apply *inquiry-oriented methods* in teaching (5%)

  - they *do research* on their own teaching **(22%)**

  - *integrate* students to their own *research projects* (9%)

  - they experience to *develop as researchers* through teaching (2%)

  - *research supports* their teaching (2%)

RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION: PRACTICE /FIELD SCHOOLS' PERSPECTIVE

PRACTICE OR FIELD SCHOOLS COLLABORATING WITH TEACHER EDUCATION

- teachers utilise research-based knowledge and evidence when teaching pupils and supervising student teachers

- teachers allow student teachers, teacher educators and researchers to enter their classrooms for data collection or other research activities

- teachers and schools engage and contribute actively in co-designed and collaborative research projects

- teachers and schools are active in the evidence-based development of teacher education and education at their own schools

- school principals support and promote research-based collaboration and evidence-based development at schools

(Hytönen & Kansanen, 1982; Mincu, 2013; Husu & Toom, 2016; Toom & Husu, 2017)

RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION:
# TE PROGRAMME AND CURRICULUM PERSPECTIVE

TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME

- Program and curriculum design demonstrate research orientation through organising theme, logic supporting student teacher learning, course contents, pedagogies, assignments and assessment

- Is implemented in the academic context of teacher education

- Research related to teacher education and empirical evidence from student teachers are utilised to improve the programme

(e.g. Healey, 2005; Kansanen, 2005; Elen et al., 2009; Munthe & Rogne, 2015; Zeichner & Conklin, 2005; Toom et al., 2008; 2010; Zeichner, 1983)

RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION: MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM
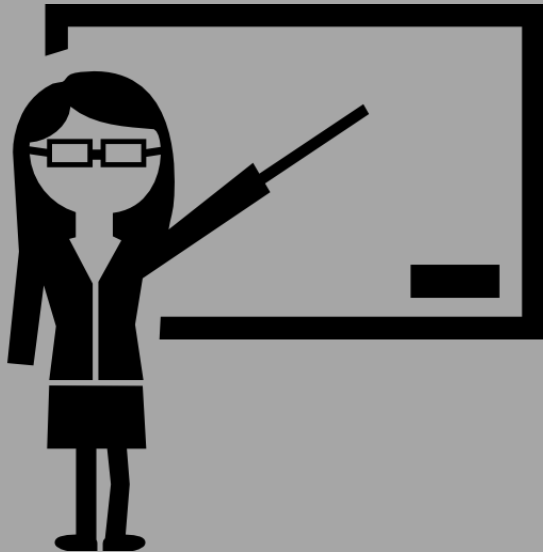
STUDENT TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVE

TEACHER EDUCATORS' PERSPECTIVE

FIELD SCHOOLS' PERSPECTIVE

(e.g. Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005; Cochran-Smith & Demers, 2008)

THE ROLE OF RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

PROJECTS OF TEACHING AND TEACHER EDUCATION

Tensions: political / sociological / philosophical

- Moral and theological project

- Ideological projects

- Scientific project – psychology, scientific pedagogy

- Multidisciplinary developmental project: child development and social transformation

- Professional project

(Oancea, 2014)

THE WOW FACTOR…

TE: preparation for selflessly and resiliently exercising your craft in order to act on your calling in line with the best evidence while efficiently excelling against top-down performance measures!

PERSISTENT TROPES ABOUT EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

"Resilience"

"Common sense"
(in contrast to "academic expertise")

"Selfless love"

"(Messy) craft"

"The gap"
(between practice and research)

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

- **Australia**: 'disconnection between theory and practice' → 'better ways to integrate the theory and practice components of ITE' (TE Ministerial Advisory Group, 2014)
- **England**: 'the integrated working of the best university-school partnerships'' (DfE, 2011)
- **Scotland**: TE "requires a more integrated relationship between theory and practice, between the academic and the practitioner, between the provider of teacher education and the school" (Donaldson, 2011)
- **US**: against practical training as merely an 'add on semester after years of instruction in educational theory' (Dept of Ed, 2011)

Solutions?

co-siting (osmosis);   practitioner research;   evidence-based practice

IF IT'S SO SIMPLE, WHY HAVE WE NOT SOLVED IT YET?

- **epistemic fallacy**: assumption of divide requiring bridging by TEs→ co-siting
  - <u>But</u>: lacks integration in account of human rationality, action and flourishing

- **institutional fallacy**: practice and theory as bounded institutionally → e.g. practitioner research.
  - <u>But</u>: both are more complex and topography is divisive

- **cultural and pedagogical fallacy**: assumption research = theory while educational activity = practice →evidence based practice.
  - <u>But</u>: ignores educative potential and diversity in research; practitioners as *paedagogus laborans*.

INQUISITIVE   PRACTICES

- **Systematic flexing of inquisitive thought**
  - systematic process
  - shared internal norms and standards of quality
  - hospitable attitude towards educative purposes

- **Reflective use of tools**
  - procedural reasonableness, trustworthiness and rigour
  - methodological theorising
  - intelligent apprenticeship

- **Considerate exercise of virtues**
  - deliberative and conversational
  - interpretative normative practices grounded culturally, historically and politically
  - considerate of other practices and their norms of educative-ness

THE BASIS FOR INTEGRATION

Systematic flexing of inquisitive thought
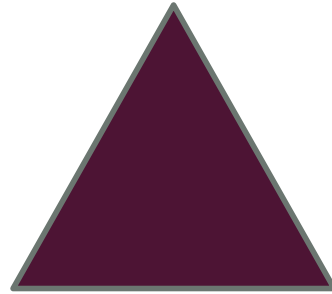
Reflective use of tools

Considerate exercise of virtues

DEVELOPING RESEARCH CAPACITY IN TEACHER EDUCATION

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "CAPACITY"?

- **What 'capacity' – for what?**

  - individual capabilities to act professionally and support others to do so: expertise, motivation, opportunities (Desforges)

  - organisational resources, including human, culture, structures and infrastructure to support professional activity

  - systemic frameworks, resources, structures and infrastructure to facilitate and sustain this activity

- **Whose capacity?**

  - Teacher educators
  - Practitioners
  - Trainee teachers
  - Policy makers
  - Organisations
  - Systems

EXAMPLES FROM THE UK: A HISTORY OF EXPERIMENTATION

- **UK-wide, large scale (1998-2009, £30m): ESRC TLRP,** incl RCBN &TEG :
  - CB required in each project plan → ECR, practitioner and PhD support
  - formal training workshops & resource dissemination to diversify methodological repertoires
  - online research training resources, VRE, professional networks to support communities of practice (including in specialist sub-fields)

- **UK-wide (2008-10): SFRE etc:**
  - Multi-stakeholder stock-taking and agenda-setting fora

- **England: TERN (2008-09)**
  - Informal professional learning in multi-institutional research groups for collaborative bidding
  - Research fellowships with mentoring: one-to-one, one-to-many, peer
  - Blended learning experience: workshops and VRE

EXAMPLES FROM THE UK: A HISTORY OF EXPERIMENTATION

- **Scotland (2003-2008, £2m): AERS**
  - Formal pedagogy through distance learning modules
  - Mentoring and peer coaching for 'supported (collaborative) research project experience', including fellowships and studentships

- **Wales (2007-09, £350k): WERN**
  - Research project bursaries to inter-institutional groups, with mentorship provision
  - Collaborative fellowships

- **Wales (2012-15, under £1m): WiserdEducation**
  - On-site coaching and mentoring; fellowship placements; data infrastructure
  - Writing retreat, PhD support, conference funding, institutional visits, directory of expertise

- **Northern Ireland**: stakeholder forum, CPD, online resource

BARRIERS: CONTEXTUAL AND INSTITUTIONAL

- Fast pace of systemic and policy **change**, plus tight **accountability** regimes
- Conflicting pressures generated by **restructuring**
- Institutional **reluctance to invest** in emerging research cultures
- Perceived **financial disincentives** to institutions' investing in TE research
- Teaching and research not part of the same **professional culture** in institutions
- Insufficient recognition of research as part of **workload** allocation
- Insufficient appreciation of the demands of **high-quality** research
- Difficult to grow '**critical mass**' in institutions
- Insufficient understanding of education research in other subject **faculties** in HEI

BARRIERS: FIELD - RELATED

- Relatively **small size** of research community in education

- **Geographical** imbalance in distribution of research qualifications/ expertise

- **Fragmentation** of research activity across types of institutions, groups of staff, modes of research and disciplines

- Insufficient spread of **advanced research skills**→ small recruitment pool and need to import

- Uneven recognition of the value of **different forms** of educational research

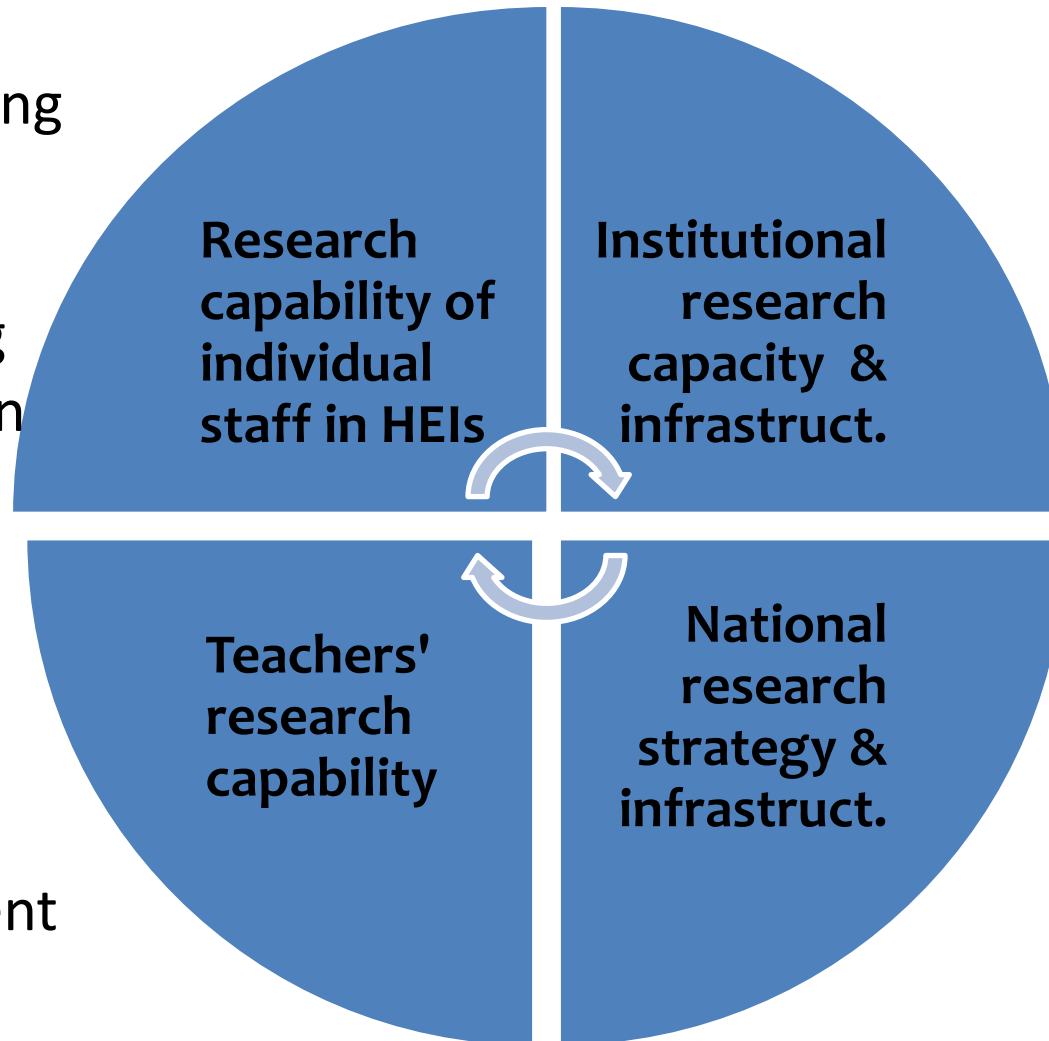- Insufficient infrastructure for **research communication** in education

BARRIERS: INDIVIDUAL - LEVEL

- **Time** and workload pressures

- Increasing **workloads** in the aftermath of restructuring

- Perceived lack of **senior management** and institutional support

- Perceived lack of **funding** opportunities

- Limited or non-supported **access to training** opportunities

- Difficulties in securing **employment conditions** that match higher levels of research training and capabilities.

CAPACITY BUILDING - LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

Coaching &mentoring
Fellowships
Writing support
Conference funding
Project participation
PhD support

Co-production
Communications
Support pupils'
research engagement

Research capability of individual staff in HEIs

Institutional research capacity & infrastruct.

Teachers' research capability

National research strategy & infrastruct.

Partnerships
Working environment
Institutional visits
Bespoke activities

National frameworks
Directory of expertise
Data infrastructure

(Oancea et al 2018)

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Public investment** in the profession, including in PG and teacher research
- Supportive **political agenda** to develop a research-rich and practice-oriented profession
- New **research leadership** roles, emergent **strategic emphasis** on research in institutions
- New **research initiatives** across the system
- Opening educational research **data infrastructures**
- Appetite for dialogue and **partnership** HE - schools
- Integration of **mobile researchers and practitioners**, including internal
- Opportunities to learn from **Masters-level** teacher education provision

CONCLUSIONS

- Research in teacher education concerns all those involved: student teachers and teacher educators as well as TE institutions and field schools through curriculum, pedagogies and research

- Educational research and practice are intrinsincally connected and this is a strong basis for integration

- Research capacity building needs to encompass all stakeholders and levels of intervention (individual, organisational, systemic)

THANK YOU!