

Being a Teacher Educator during the Covid-19 Pandemic

ISBN: 978-90-74611-72-5

April 2021, Avans University of Applied Sciences

Series: Life and work of teacher educators, volume 5

Being a Teacher Educator during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Contents

Preface	3
Being a Teacher Educator during the Covid-19 Pandemic	5
Eva Dierickx: The importance of a cat on your keyboard	7
Christine Holbrey: The de-humanising and re-humanising impact of Covid-19	11
Steve Ingle: A unique opportunity to learn	15
Ann MacPhail: Leading by example in an unfamiliar space	17
Wesley van Meir: From chalkboard to online teaching	21
Csilla Pesti: Sharing is caring	25
Karen Punte: Learning about team dynamics in an on-line environment	29
David Valente: Being a guide by teachers' sides - not a sage on the educational stage	31
Karen Vincent: How theory has saved me!	35
Final Remarks	37
Further Reading	38
The Editors	40
Series: Life and work of teacher educators	42

Preface

This is the fifth booklet in the “Life and Work of teacher educators” series. With this edition we continue a tradition that Peter Lorst and Anja Swennen started in 2015. This booklet, **Being a Teacher Educator during the Covid-19 Pandemic**, like the previous one, **Teacher Educators’ Pathways to Becoming Research Active**, has its roots in the Professional Development of Teacher Educators (PDTE) Research and Development Community (RDC) of the Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) (<https://atee.education/rd-communities/professional-development/>). This booklet is prompted by current events: training teachers during Covid-19.

Whatever country, in whatever context, with whatever students and in whatever field teacher educators work, they all must deal with the personal and professional impact of this pandemic. From our international network, we have found 9 colleagues willing to share their experiences: what challenges do they encounter? what solutions do they have? and what do they learn from it themselves? Their stories share experiences, but also convey hope for the future. The development that teacher educators go through individually and as a group will strengthen the profession. A reinforcement that will also contribute to increasing the quality of education.

3

We are grateful to Dick de Wolff and Wichert Duyvendak for starting this series, we thank Peter Lorst and Anja Swennen for the inspiration in the first four issues and we are happy that we can pick up the baton from them. We would like to thank all international colleagues who have responded rapidly to the call and shown themselves willing to contribute and to reveal some of their own vulnerability during the current pandemic. We hope this booklet is an inspiration to teacher educators both now and in the future!

We welcome your comments and feedback.

Miranda Timmermans

Applied Professor Leerkracht, Avans University of Applied Sciences, Breda,
The Netherlands

Elizabeth White

Principal Lecturer, University of Hertfordshire, United Kingdom

**'As we listened to the stories we saw again and
again teacher educators taking an innovative stance.'**

**'We see an explicit desire not to return to
business-as-usual, but to harness the best of
both worlds.'**

Being a Teacher Educator during the Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted education systems internationally in a way that has never occurred previously. On-line teaching has predominated during the crisis, resulting in the need for teacher educators to adapt rapidly to new and often unfamiliar solutions to continue to provide for their learners. This booklet surfaces the stories of individual teacher educators from different countries and settings, to identify what we are learning, and how, in the face of a pandemic. It provides an interesting narrative of the way in which teacher educators have responded to the challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The changes in our experiences of this pandemic are still on-going and these stories represent a snapshot in time during the first wave of infections and 'lockdowns' where teaching shifted from classrooms and lecture halls to the screens of our digital devices. We are interested in the implications that our learning has for our practice in initial and continuing teacher education. Cohan (2020) warned that 'a crisis should not prompt us to add more; it should encourage us to distill things to an essence and to model for students how and what to prioritize'. More than this, the pandemic provides an opportunity to re-envision teacher education in a bold and exciting way (Mutton, 2020; la Velle et al., 2020; MacPhail, 2020; David Valente, p.31). As we listened to the stories we saw again and again teacher educators taking an 'innovative stance', as described by Ellis et al. (2020, p.569), in their study of 15 leaders of initial teacher education across four regions of the world. Our teacher educators too were 'creating the future' by 'stabilising the situation' and 'rethinking practices'; adding value to previous practices rather than responding with temporary solutions to plug the gap caused by the pandemic. For example, changes included not only a significant increase in the amount of online teaching, but also overall improvements in the quality of teaching, including the development of placements in 'virtual schools' (Christine Holbrey, p.11; Karen Vincent, p.35). This new emphasis on 'experience of' and 'training in' online teaching was perceived to add value to the process of learning to teach *per se*. The teacher educators had a desire to critically evaluate any changes in practice against their existing underpinning values and theories of learning. This is illustrated by the narratives of Csilla Pesti (p.25) and Ann MacPhail (p.17), where both teacher educators expressed an intentionality to improve their practice and not to implement changes solely out of necessity. This underlines the professionalism of teacher educators and their ability to innovate in a crisis, similar to that observed by Kidd & Murray (2020).

Other common themes transcending national boundaries include modelling professional adaptability, developing digital solutions and the challenge of building relationships with students on-line. Flexibility was a characteristic of teacher educators highlighted in the stories of Karen Punte (p.29); Ann MacPhail (p.17); Christine Holbrey (p.11) and Karen Vincent (p.35), whilst modelling was still high on their agenda. Mutton (2020) also identified that when teacher educators were faced with new pedagogical imperatives due to the pandemic, they were learners themselves, and modelled the way that they adapted their practice as a learning opportunity for their student-teachers. Relying on distance learning for some of their own development provides student-teachers with an opportunity to understand better the experiences and needs of their learners.

The pandemic has afforded opportunities to develop digital solutions for initial teacher education going beyond a stopgap solution during the crisis (La Velle et al., 2020) that can provide new opportunities to access learning – both ‘the what and the how’ and ‘the where and the when’. It can change the role of teachers from imparting knowledge to co-creating knowledge and working alongside and facilitating learning. With the move to digital resources, teacher educators recognised the need for a new pedagogy for online teacher education (Wesley van Meir, p.21; Karen Vincent, p.35; David Valente, p.31). This was mirrored by a desire to teach responsively, learning from the situation and from student feedback at each step of the way (Csilla Pesti, p.25; Steve Ingle, p.15; Karen Vincent, p.35). The rapid transition to new ways of working heightened the sense of responsibility that was felt for their students (Ellis et al., 2020; Karen Punte, p.29).

Concern about student and teacher well-being during the Covid-19 pandemic reported in the British Council survey (2020) and Cohan's exhortation (2020) ‘we need compassion for our students and ourselves more than ever’ has been taken to heart. This was reflected in the desire to provide opportunities for sharing and relationship building with and between students (Csilla Pesti, p.25; Eva Dierickx, p.7), with increased compassion towards both students and for themselves (Christine Holbrey, p.11; Eva Dierickx, p.7; Karen Vincent, p.35). A key to countering the reported challenge of supporting the participation and engagement of students on-line (Mutton, 2020; British Council, 2020) is relationship-building, which featured as part of most of the stories. This is described by Christine Holbrey (p.11) who adapted her practice to engage students in interactive synchronous learning to enable the establishment of a community of learners. In reviewing the literature about online teaching and learning practices, Carrillo and Flores showed that ‘the ability of teachers and learners to engage affectively in relationships’ was ‘central to meaningful educational experiences’ (2020, p. 476). They propose that to have a meaningful educational experience attention needs to be paid to the cognitive presence, teaching presence and social presence of the educator. Through these stories we see elements of each of these being developed by our teacher educators.

Finally, we see in these stories, an explicit desire not to return to business-as-usual, but to harness the best of both worlds (Ellis et al., 2020; Steve Ingle, p.15; Wesley van Meir, p.21; David Valente, p.31).

Eva Dierickx: The importance of a cat on your keyboard

AP University College, Antwerp, Belgium

Email: eva.dierickx@ap.be

Personal story

As I was settling back in my job after a 4-month maternity leave, the unthinkable happened: a nation-wide lockdown. Because I was used to teaching blended courses before covid-19, combining face-to-face with online learning, I already had a lot of digital course material that I had made and gathered over the years. I had some webinars ready for my students to download, some quizzes with immediate feedback online, and a step-by-step guide on how to use all these tools. That's why my first reaction was one of relief. I knew I could handle this. I gathered that the only thing left for me to do was to make an introduction video and some other manuals. Everything a student needed to study my course was available for them to use, I thought.

That's when the e-mails started pouring in. No matter how much supporting documents I made and shared, students kept panicking and didn't seem to find what they needed. At the same time, I was getting frustrated because I saw how the students didn't make use of the materials that I had so carefully developed over the years...

Now I know I made a rookie mistake. During those first classes, I neglected to take time to build and maintain a relationship with my students. What they saw was a bunch of documents and videos, yet they were missing human connection.

We know how a good relationship between students and teacher is essential for learning in the early years. I believe the same is true for students in teacher education. In order to make sense of the complex and emotional job teaching is, they need more than just instruction and information, they need someone to smile back at them and give them the confidence to get back on their feet when they fall.

So, I set up a classroom-videocall to see the faces of my students and let them see me. I made some awkward jokes, as I normally do, and showed them the human being behind the distance-teacher. Almost immediately I noticed a change. With all the cameras on, I saw the opportunity to get to know these students even better than what would be possible on campus. We laughed at the cat that strolled over the keyboard of a student, which invited all my students to show their pets. We heard a baby cry in the background while a student was giving an answer, and we sympathized with the struggles of studying with young children at home. It wasn't possible to look each other in the eyes or to hear some laughs with all the mic's off, but all of us, both teacher educator and students, tried to ease up the loneliness of distance education by just being ourselves and giving room to light-hearted conversations in the digital class. Learning online can be lonely, but by showing up online and making the effort to get to know each other, we created a sense of belonging.

**'They need someone to smile back at them and
give them the confidence to get back on their feet
when they fall.'**

**'I'm more confident than before to invest in
online teacher-student relationships.'**

Eva Dierickx



Slowly, a relationship between us started to get shape and the engagement for the course seemed to grow simultaneously.

A few weeks ago I finally saw these students for the first time in real life. I must admit I didn't recognize them at first without the reflection of blue lights on their faces. But when they happily entered the classroom and shouted "So glad to see you in real life, Eva!", I couldn't agree more. I was so happy to see them. No cats or funny background can replace the random questions that are only dared to be face to face and the whispers amongst students when they share a joke only meant for the ears of their classmates.

I feel sad when I think of the time ahead in which I will only see students through their webcams, again. Yet at the same time, I'm more confident than before to invest in online teacher-student relationships. I now enter meetings fifteen minutes beforehand to give students the chance to ask questions or have some small talk, I make sure there are sufficient breaks during the webinars and I make time for student-to-student interaction in breakout-rooms without me constantly looking over their shoulder. I also notice and make use of the upsides of online synchronous classes for building a relationship with my students. The chat for instance seems to feel like a safe space for a lot of students to ask questions and give immediate feedback. One of the students noted "I don't get it." during my last online class. I'm not sure this student would've said the same thing in a full auditorium on campus. That comment was a great opportunity for me to check in with all the students. My colleagues and I also noticed how students show gratitude and positive feedback more openly both during and after online class in the chat. Let's look for and celebrate these small acts of connection and social closeness as we prepare for another period of physical distance.

9

Professional context

Teacher education for preschool and primary education in Belgium takes place in college universities during a three-year bachelor education. Usually teacher educators either have an academic background or are experienced preschool/primary teachers. I am a preschool teacher with some years of experience and hold a Master's degree in educational sciences. The last couple of years we can notice an evolution towards more flexible study programs in colleges and universities in Belgium. Some colleges offer distance courses next to their regular teaching program, some offer two-day programs and others opt for blended teaching in an attempt to be flexible and attract more aspiring teachers. In my current position I teach both student teachers in the so called 'flex-program' as in the standard study program. Students who take courses in Flex at our college get their lessons after office hours and take on a commitment for more self-study and blended learning. This way we give them the opportunity to combine their studies with a job and/or family.

I mostly teach didactics and diversity training to students who want to teach in preschool and primary education. I combine this assignment with research projects about gender, antiracism and academic language building.

'I felt abandoned and alone.'

**'I also began to genuinely appreciate the
struggles of others.'**

Christine Holbrey

10



Christine Holbrey:

The de-humanising and re-humanising impact of Covid-19

Carnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds, England

Email: c.e.holbrey@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Personal story

As an ex-secondary Headteacher I thrived on the opportunity to swing rapidly through the changes whenever the political climate took a new direction, as it frequently did. I had therefore not anticipated, as a teacher educator in the UK, my complete emotional meltdown at the onslaught of the Covid-19 pandemic. Despite the obvious benefits, and cost efficiencies, of avoiding the daily commute and increased flexibilities as a full-time working mum, the enforcement of home working and the shift to online teaching was the catalyst for a raft of irrational, and potential unhealthy, behaviours on my part. So, what went wrong?

Well firstly, I missed people. I hated the confinement and was engulfed by an overwhelming sense of loss at the absence of students, colleagues and family. These emotions were intensified by inadequate home working equipment, with my first few months spent struggling on a small 12" laptop. I felt abandoned and alone until the arrival of a large monitor from work which was, strangely, liberating. Adding to my unrest was home-schooling, what a disaster that was. Twenty-five years as a teacher amounted to nothing as my expectations of what should be achievable did not correspond with the efforts of an unregulated 12-year-old boy and one argument led to another. While my son's close attachment to his PlayStation meant that I was able to work, I was not productive. I was driven by guilt at not being able to devote adequate time to my son's education as well as to my final year graduates facing enormous uncertainties around incomplete placements, disrupted academic studies and a rapidly stagnating job market.

Simultaneously, my pedagogical beliefs around what constitutes great teaching and what high quality teacher training should look like were being challenged. The immediacy of university closure dictated a rapid transfer of all face to face teaching onto online platforms with little time, or thought, to what these new spaces might look like. I worried that the new provision would mirror my existing online course where students accessed pre-recorded materials but then worked as individuals and, where establishing a community of learners was very difficult. My ultimate passion for active and collaborative learning was being tested; it was soul destroying. I resisted the inevitable changes. I felt de-valued as a teacher, reduced to a provider of uninspiring online material and, apprehensive of my ability, through digital technologies, to provide an engaging student experience.

Then I found Zoom, through my son's music teachers. This was a humbling experience where people not formally trained as teachers, and not necessarily prolific in IT skills, were working hard to keep their businesses afloat by cultivating online collaborative spaces and providing interactive engaging teaching. I felt ashamed of my despondency and with renewed vigour and determination I rose to the challenges of re-imagining course delivery, over-hauling module content and mastering new technologies. With the university closed for the foreseeable future and reconciled with the idea that new virtual spaces would look very different, I hastily accessed training and embraced webinars, becoming competent in a range of digital applications including Spark, Collaborate Ultra, Wakelets and Microsoft Teams, championing the possibilities they now offered for effective online teaching.

For me, the student experience and the quality of learning remain the keys to success in this strange new world and, trying to remain true to my beliefs, I made a conscious decision not to pre-record sessions, engaging students instead in interactive synchronous learning. Over time I have become confident talking to an inanimate computer monitor while sharing my screen. I can facilitate breakout rooms, manage virtual whiteboards, oversee online chat and, despite a lifetime avoiding social media, am comfortable recording live sessions for students to revisit in their own time. Ironically, this led me to reflect on my earlier decision not to record; however initial feedback clearly endorses the value students place on both live lectures and collaborative opportunities.

- 12 Despite the brutalising reality of Covid-19, the necessity of compromise and, reluctantly, accepting what was actually achievable in the new norm was incredibly humanising. I found a kind of inner peace, a balance, conflicting directly with my normal relentless drive to be super-efficient as a mother and educator. I also began to genuinely appreciate the struggles of others, and now through regular course updates try to emphasise the normality of feeling anxious and provide students with well-being advice alongside updates on the changing criteria for graduating and achieving qualified teacher status. Afterall, as teacher educators, we should continue to lead by example and to model best practice, even when our re-imagining and remaking is driven by something completely out of our control!

Personal Context

Following a 25-year career as a secondary school geography teacher and two headship positions in northern England I moved into the higher education sector. I now work as a senior lecturer in Education and Initial Teacher Training (ITT) at Leeds Beckett University. The move, after such a long time in one education phase, was initially quite daunting however I thoroughly enjoy my role and feel honoured to be educating the next generation of new teachers.

As a member of the secondary ITT team (ages 11-16), I lead on a one-year geography course, supporting trainees with specialist geography subject knowledge and pedagogy. I also work on the three-year primary education (ages 5-11) course delivering geography, professional studies and having oversight of all final year undergraduates.

Both courses feature a high proportion of school-based experience and lead to Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), the professional accreditation for teachers in England, as set out by the Department for Education.

While the majority of my work at university involves face to face teaching through lectures and seminars, I also work closely with a number of partner schools, both primary and secondary, supporting the student experience, monitoring the students' journey towards achieving QTS and ensuring effective school-based mentoring. I am also delighted to still be involved in the delivery of our well-established, and rapidly growing, international distance learning postgraduate certificate in education course.

**'How could I make best use of the time and space
caused by an enforced national lockdown?'**

**'The pandemic has forced me to better understand
my learners as well as myself.'**

Steve Ingle



Steve Ingle: A unique opportunity to learn

Freelance teacher educator, UK

Email: steve.ingle@assessmentassociates.co.uk

Personal story

As a freelance teacher educator and trainer, you would be most likely to find me at the station or airport, en-route to the next school, college, university, or training provider to lead a staff development session, observe teaching, or meet with student teachers. That was until 16 March 2020. An announcement was made that evening by the UK government that due to the increase in COVID-19 infections, all unnecessary social contact should cease. Within 72 hours, five months of teacher training events and quality enhancement activities had been cancelled or postponed for the foreseeable future, my agenda was empty. I asked myself how could I make best use of the time and space caused by an enforced national lockdown?

It quickly became clear that as schools scrambled to provide fully online provision, my skills in using technology to enhance learning could be useful. I was invited to support teachers in creating self-paced, asynchronous eLearning content that pupils could access remotely. I was asked to support teachers to quickly develop their interactive use of video conferencing software to deliver live, synchronous online lessons. Following this necessary period of reactionary support, to help institutions make some learning content available and accessible to their pupils, it soon became clear that the lockdown was having an impact on pupils in different ways. Teachers began to report concerns over the level of engagement and participation by some of their pupils. Some were attending all live sessions and diligently completing the homework activities set. Others were logging in but doing very little. Other schools had made recordings of lessons available, however, many learners were no longer accessing them. Communication was slowing and it was becoming more and more challenging to know what learning was taking place, if any.

At this point my role shifted, as teachers, trainers, and education leaders were looking for effective ways to support all of their pupils at a distance. We explored how the lockdown situation had benefitted some pupils; those who were more independent, with higher levels of self-efficacy, and the metacognitive skills to self-regulate their learning within this 'new normal' environment. For them, the closure of the school building had created a productive and purposeful learning space at home, free from distractions, poor behaviour, and without the need to travel long distances. For those pupils who lacked the patience, focus, self-management, and learning strategies needed to profit from remote schooling, this unique situation had worryingly created a new set of challenges. These pupils found it difficult to be productive without the face to face support, monitoring, and prompting from teachers and teaching assistants. Others were struggling to deal with chaotic living situations, no parental support, or lack of reliable access to technology.

As pupils started to return to some physical classes, it became clear that a new type of assessment was needed, to diagnose the extent of the learning loss and to formulate a plan of teaching and guidance, prioritising support for those who needed help the most. I worked with institutions to help them evaluate each pupil based on key indicators such as readiness to learn independently, support at home, access to learning technologies, levels of engagement, and other personal vulnerabilities such as special educational needs. From here, teachers were able to allocate a category of 'emergency', 'priority', or 'important' (but non-urgent), to help them prioritise the level and type of support they could provide, as pupils returned to school.

For me, the pandemic provided a unique opportunity to combine my passion and expertise for teacher education, technology enhanced learning, and developing learner's academic resilience and self-concept, supporting teachers and leaders to think about different ways to support their pupils whilst teaching from a distance. I have improved my own skills in creating eLearning content using new software, and have enjoyed the time and space away from constant travelling, to reconnect with writing, completing a new book for teachers. Rather than simply returning to the status quo, as familiar and comforting as it may be after such uncertainty, the disruption to norms imposed on all educators by the pandemic, provided me a unique opportunity not just to bounce back, but to learn, grow and thrive as a result of the tension it has caused. The pandemic has forced me to reevaluate existing practices, to find new ways, to be more creative, and to better understand my learners as well as myself. In this way, I was able to bounce back better than before.

Professional context

I have been working as a freelance teacher educator and trainer for the last ten years, after leaving my role as a senior lecturer in lifelong learning for a UK university. Leaving the security of full-time employment was somewhat daunting, moving into the unknown, but it afforded me the privilege and opportunity to work with educators in many different contexts, from pre-school through to higher education, both in the UK and internationally. I work with teachers, tutors and lecturers of vocational education, who teach and train learners aged 14 and over in secondary schools, general further education colleges, sixth form colleges and independent training providers. Colleagues are usually teaching accredited vocational qualifications such as employer-designed apprenticeship standards. Apprenticeships can be undertaken by anyone living in England aged over 16. I also work with teachers in pre-school and primary school settings (ages 3-11), providing staff development in areas such as academic resilience, metacognition, self-regulation and growth mindset. I regularly provide guest lectures to undergraduate and postgraduate student teachers and newly qualified teachers on technology enhanced learning. I provide coaching and mentoring to senior leaders in education on quality assurance and enhancement.

Ann MacPhail: Leading by example in an unfamiliar space

University of Limerick, Ireland
Email: Ann.MacPhail@ul.ie

Personal Story

The narrative I share here is based on teaching a group of 20 Professional Master's in Education (Physical Education) student teachers who have completed a related undergraduate degree to gain entry to the two-year programme.

I have appreciated the different and challenging experiences with respect to teaching and student teacher learning that have arisen during the Covid-19 pandemic. While the conversations and decisions to be made regarding the move to a reliance on remote learning were all-consuming at the time, it was the impetus required for me to begin engaging with the reality of having to 'move' to remote teaching (and learning). I have been genuinely surprised by the extent to which the 'move' has not been as significant an ordeal as I had envisaged. In working with two colleagues in planning and preparing two shared modules it was a comfort to find that our respective strengths in pedagogy, blended learning and innovation led to an excitement in what we could do, and student teachers could experience, in the remote learning space.

The reliance on remote learning has made me more appreciative of the university-supported learning platform that encourages communication, collaboration, teaching and learning for all involved in the modules. I now value more the notion of a collective workspace where all resources, discussions, recordings and videos across a module are openly available to all. Related to this, is the use of an online storage and synching service that encourages centralising the sharing of resources. Covid-19 has brought me into a remote teaching and learning space that I was not engaging with before and this has positively resulted in interrogating my teacher education orientations and pedagogical practices. I have been genuinely surprised by the extent to which pedagogical practices (e.g. presence, managerial skills and instructional skills) I have honed over the years are still relevant and somewhat transferable to an online platform. The relationships I develop with student teachers, and foster among them as a professional community, has successfully remained central to my teaching and to student teachers' motivation to learn.

My initial reaction here is that we may never 'return' to face to face teaching in the same way, or in the same space, we were familiar with before Covid-19. I will strive to maintain that (i) effective teacher education is not solely reliant on me as the teacher educator but also the meaningful, relevant and worthwhile learning environment I construct in association with the student teachers, (ii) it is imperative that there is an ongoing acknowledgement that there are many 'realities' in student teachers' lives (and my life) that affect their access to, and engagement with, teaching and learning, and (iii) encouraging

**'...this encourages me to consider, and re-assess,
my philosophies, values and practices as a teacher
educator.'**

**'I remain conscious of modelling what is important
as well as modelling how and what to prioritise.'**

Ann MacPhail



professional learning community activities within, and across, teacher educators, student teachers and teachers is even more prevalent now given the level of uncertainty, crisis, fear and change and the associated effects on physical and mental health. Regardless of a 'return' to face to face teaching, 'It just might be that this current emergency prompts us to re-evaluate our real purpose in teaching' (Cohan, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic leads us to re-examine what teacher educators continue to consider as important and central to teacher education and teaching, as well as acknowledging the necessary changes to teaching and teacher education initiated by the pandemic. In turn, this encourages me to consider, and re-assess, my philosophies, values and practices as a teacher educator (MacPhail, 2020).

It is imperative that I remain conscious of modelling what is important as well as modelling how and what to prioritise (Cohan, 2020). In doing this, I will continue to re-educate myself on the extent to which the view that there is a need for a heightened reliance on face to face teaching in teacher education programmes is challenged by remote learning experiences. I will uphold a level of honesty, trust and transparency with respect to the challenges I face in preparing student teachers to teach in school environments that are likely to maintain some level of change arising from COVID-19 should it prevail. I will strive to embrace the level of flexibility and responsiveness to doing things differently that, in turn, encourages a shared negotiation between student teachers and I of the most effective way in which to heighten the student teacher learning experience.

19

Professional Context

I am working as a post-primary (physical education) teacher educator in a university setting in Ireland. The Professional Master's in Education (Physical Education) programme focuses on pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge on the premise that the student teachers have completed appropriate content/subject knowledge in their previous respective programmes. The university's academic delivery model minimised the risk of an outbreak of Covid19 on campus combining reduced numbers due to the campus capacity, with a social bubble approach (year cohort) and a circuit break (periods off campus). The model was intended to provide a stable pattern of regular face-to-face learning and online learning thus supporting the structuring of learner time. However, given the ongoing changes in Government public health guidelines a directive was issued the weekend before semester started that any planned face to face activity that was not considered as essential was to be cancelled. The plans that we had considered for meeting our cohort of student teachers face to face on weeks one, five and nine of semester was therefore disbanded. This, coupled with the directive that all faculty work at home throughout the pandemic, led to a reliance on remote platforms for all planning, preparation, teaching and reflection.

**'Looking back, as a historian, we have come
a long way in the way we teach over this time.'**

**'The present time will most definitely have a major
impact on the way we teach in the future.'**

Wesley van Meir



Wesley van Meir: From chalkboard to online teaching

Avans University of Applied Sciences, Breda, The Netherlands

Email: cjm.vanmeir@avans.nl

Personal story

In March 2020 life in the Netherlands came to an abrupt standstill. Just like other countries, the Netherlands went into a lock-down because of the Covid-19 pandemic. My university moved teaching entirely online with student teachers and staff working at home. I had just finished my last classes of our third semester where our first year student teachers got a hands-on approach of teaching history. For the fourth and last semester I had already selected a multitude of physical source materials that student teachers had to analyze in class. I had two goals: using source materials to enhance their knowledge of the historical subject matter; and how to use physical materials in class and the didactical principles that a teacher needs to achieve this. The chosen materials included texts and objects that had an important role in European and Dutch history, like the Dutch declaration of Independence (Plakaat van Verlatingen), the Universal declaration of human rights, signed during the French Revolution, and physical sources like a medieval helmet and objects from the second world war. These physical sources were meant to inspire and awe my students and get them to ask questions about the source material, such as:

"From which time era does this source come from?"

"What is the subject matter described in the source?"

"How does the source material relate to the curriculum?"

"How can I use source material in my own lessons?"

With all lessons online, I could not as planned share the source materials physically with the students. At the same time it is not possible to share every source found on the internet on our digital learning environment as each source must either be copyright free or have written permission from the owner to be shared. The internet and smartboards in classrooms have done a lot for history education, by bringing images, film fragments and other sources into the classroom, and I used this to my advantage while working in secondary education. However, copyright laws prevent me as a teacher educator from sharing all these sources in a digital environment. The solution at that moment was to limit the amount and type of digital/digitized sources that could be used. These limitations meant that students only had a theoretical understanding of using physical sources in their own internship and not a hands-on experience.

The platform that hosted my lessons enabled me to start with the entire class together and then to split the class into smaller groups to analyze the (now) digital (written or image) source materials. In preparation for the class the students received my PowerPoint presentation with audio recordings to explain the theory, to save lesson time.

I visited the groups, listened in and guided the learning. The adjustments to my lesson for working with source materials seemed to work.

However, the students did not participate as well in the online lesson as in a live version. During group work students did not start with the assignment but were discussing other things, until I visited them. There were challenges because webcams remained off due to unstable internet connections or for student privacy, making formal and informal interaction harder. The distance between student and teacher felt greater in a digital setting than in a live one. By solving the problem how to use sources with all the restrictions that I had to deal with, I experienced another problem with digital education, the interaction with my students.

The interaction with students in a digital environment is something I still struggle with. The students told me that they also missed the informal interactions with each other but also with their teachers, so recently I gave a digital lesson and allowed time at the end of the lesson for us to talk together. This was well received.

My teaching career started in a classroom with a chalkboard and an overhead projector. For films I had to use VHS and later DVD's. I witnessed the introduction of the beamers and smartboards connected to computers, this made teaching history easier because the world of sources and examples was digitally in reach. Every day new digital tools are released to help us as teachers in our online lessons. Now the Covid-19 pandemic is changing the way we teach. I believe that after the pandemic is over we will have developed a hybrid form of learning, using both digital and physical elements. I will continue to use materials with audio recordings for students to prepare for lessons, be they in a digital or physical environment, after the pandemic.

Looking back, as a historian, we have come a long way in the way we teach over this time. The present time, however unfortunate it is, will most definitely have a major impact on the way we teach in the future.

Professional Context

For the last six years I have been working as a teacher educator at the Teacher Education Institution at Avans University of Applied Sciences in Breda the Netherlands. Before working at Avans I worked for almost ten years in the Dutch secondary education system. I taught History at all levels and grades and always found it challenging and interesting to teach the older students.

The switch to work for a Teacher Education Institution teachers college came when I saw the job advertised and thought this is exactly what I want to do. I applied, was appointed, and have never regretted it. My work changed when I made this switch from teaching the national history curriculum (for secondary education) to teaching how to teach the national history curriculum for primary education. History is mandatory in the first two years of our four year curriculum and in the third year students can choose History to further enrich

themselves in the didactics of the subject. The focus is no longer the subject matter of the curriculum but how student teachers can teach the subject matter in an inspiring way and according to the 21st century skills. Our students can practice these didactics in the classrooms during their internships.

Together with colleagues in my own institution, and also with colleagues of other teacher colleges we constantly improve our curriculum, in my case for history education, to help prepare our students for teaching in tomorrow's world.

**'These few months of online education helped me
to reframe what education meant to me.'**

**'...empower future teachers to be brave enough
to take responsibility for their own learning.'**

Csilla Pesti



Csilla Pesti: Sharing is caring - The story of becoming a teacher educator during the Covid-19 pandemic

Karoli Gaspar University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, Budapest, Hungary
Email: csilla.pesti@gmail.com

Personal story

There I was in the autumn of 2019 with a fresh PhD degree in Educational Sciences in my hand, ready to change the world... But the world did not need me to change it! The Covid-19 pandemic topsy-turved every aspects of our lives. When education moved online in most parts of the world, including Hungary, I was a novice, university-based teacher educator. I was not sure how I was going to cope with digital education, but very soon I realized that the fact that I was new to this 'business' also meant that I did not have fixed practices and strong preconceptions about teaching online, therefore I could start from scratch – and this change of mindset was the beginning of a very exciting journey.

While building up my online courses, I established the principles of my teaching practices that I wanted to include despite finding them hard to implement online: cooperative learning techniques, meaningful collaboration, and the indescribable value of thinking together, creating knowledge and sharing it with others. It was undoubtedly time-consuming, and it was undoubtedly worth it. This was partly because the students produced high quality outputs, showing that they have made great steps towards becoming great teachers, but mostly because, based on their feedback, they became aware of their own development. I learnt a lot about learning (again), these few months of online education helped me to reframe what education meant to me (again).

Teaching online has brought to my attention a few things that I have assumed previously, but also revealed some other things that face-to-face instruction might have never made me realize. One of the most pronounced realization was that students are not only thirsty for feedback, but they also value it. Formative feedback in a continuous and planned manner has gained even more importance in my teaching practice than it had before. And to mention the other side of the coin: I created opportunities for students after every online session to give feedback for me, which I used as an input for the next week's planning, and I always made it visible how I did this – my intention was to show them my pedagogical thinking in action.

Secondly, students love to share their opinion, previous experience with the world of schools, fears of, and motivation for, teaching. This is an incredible resource for introducing them to meaningful ways of reflection. During face-to-face sessions it is almost impossible to listen to all 20 students' views in a group within a 90-minutes time frame, but the online environment allowed me to 'hear' all students, and not only to give

feedback, but to help them use their experience, fears and motivation as the driving force on their journey of becoming great teachers.

Thirdly, creating opportunities for student teachers to conduct research seemed to be an empowering way of learning. Designing research-based activities facilitated the development of a myriad of competences that future teachers need, such as communication, collaboration, critical thinking or problem solving. According to their feedback, they valued these activities, as they opened a new dimension of learning.

And last, but definitely not least, I became aware that many students do not feel responsible for their own learning and development. They tend to just “go with the flow”, and they cannot be blamed for this, since public education in Hungary allows, or even supports this attitude with its outdated teacher-centeredness. Teacher education has a very important role to change this mindset and empower future teachers to be brave enough to take responsibility for their own learning. Therefore I introduced new practices to my teaching. After beginning the course with very little freedom for the students to decide on their learning, I let the students make a personal SWOT analysis for their studies enabling them to start thinking of and planning their own learning. I also arranged virtual ‘corridor walks’ every week for students to pop in when having a question or problem and talk to me about it.

- 26 Looking back at these few months, at all the challenges and new practices I wanted or had to implement, I can identify one single phrase that strongly resonates with this whole period: “sharing is caring”. The sharing attitude of my colleagues and students became the driving force for me. The object of this sharing was almost completely irrelevant – it could be a lesson plan, a good idea for an activity, an interesting piece of scientific literature, feedback for a lesson, a thought-provoking opinion, a funny meme about the hard life of teachers or students, or just an emoticon for a reminder I posted to my students during the night about the next morning’s deadline. All these gestures of sharing, and being shared with, facilitated the learning of my students, my colleagues and myself, and ensured the humanity of the otherwise impersonal environment of online education.

Professional context

It might sound trite that I have always wanted to be a teacher, but the truth is that as the oldest among the children in my extended family, I have vivid memories of ‘playing school’ with my sister and cousins. This might also sound like a straight path into teaching; however, as adolescence hit me with all its rebellious attitude, I chose a career in Computer Science. Although I enjoyed the logical, pragmatic world of numbers, algorithms and codes, I felt that supporting others in their learning was what I wanted to do.

I was very lucky to have had excellent opportunities to make this career change: firstly, by acquiring an MA degree in teaching, I got insights into formal education; and following this, by joining an international research project as a Marie Skłodowska Curie research

fellow during my PhD studies, I dived into teacher education research. I acquired my PhD degree in 2019, therefore I am a novice teacher educator.

I mostly work with pre-service student teachers in the so-called 'undivided' or long-cycled system of initial teacher education (ITE). In this undivided system, ITE programmes prepare students for teaching general subjects on either lower or upper secondary level, or on the full continuum of secondary education (studies last 5-6 years). I also enjoy working with other types of student groups: besides the long-cycled programmes, there are shorter ones, usually lasting 2-5 semesters, aimed for those with a non-teaching degree who would like to change their career to teaching. I also facilitate the learning of in-service teachers with a special focus on the development of their digital pedagogy competences in the framework of formal CPD courses.

'My usual tools seem to have been lost.'

'...the process side and "being a team member"

is always on my mind...'

Karen Punte



Karen Punte: Learning about team dynamics in an on-line environment

Rijn IJssel, School for Vocational Education, Arnhem, Netherlands – Teaching School with HAN University of Applied Sciences
Email: k.punte@rijnijssel.nl

Personal story

Our school-university partnership vision is that working and learning together contributes positively to the development of future teachers. This vision underpinned our work in peer groups in September 2019. I supervised two peer groups in my department (Creative Industry). One peer group was young students, the other, part-time students who had a paid job in addition to their studies. Guiding these groups before and during the Covid period and lockdown provided me with a number of observations, dilemmas and learning moments.

After a joint start with all peer groups within our partnership, I met the group of young students and we made agreements how to continue (independently) as a group. As a school-based teacher educator (SBTE) I am used to leading groups of students, but because it was the intention that the peers would undertake activities themselves, it was not a good idea for me to lead this first meeting in the usual way. I asked the group whether they wanted me to supervise them making further agreements with each other about content and working methods, or to do that themselves. They chose the latter. One of the students set himself up as a leader and discussed with the group how they would approach the collaboration. The group got to work.

29

I realize that my main contribution consisted of having the students think about their own role in the group: do you take the initiative? do you stick to agreements? how about when others don't keep agreements? what is your contribution? do you ask for help? By linking this to their future professional practice in teaching teams, I tried to give them insight into team dynamics and the effects of their behaviour. My guidance was more on process than content. As an SBTE, I really like it when new insights arise, and people start to feel responsible for their own contribution and development. There were real challenges in these Covid times: how to get the group enthusiastic in an online meeting? how to guide a process if you miss a lot of (non-verbal) communication? what if people are reluctant because they do not want to talk over each other? My usual tools seem to have been lost.

Things went differently for the part-time group. There the process did not get off the ground after the joint start. In the meetings I had with them individually, I always expressed the expectation that they would form a peer group, but due to their different schedules, working hours, locations, and jobs, it was not possible to plan a meeting until the lockdown - then everyone switched to online contact in no time. The part-time students arranged

an online meeting, agreed what they wanted to discuss and planned some meetings in advance. They liked the meetings so much that they planned one at least every two weeks. A major advantage of “online peer groups” was the ease of arranging meetings. There were a lot of possible topics, for example, the group practiced the online lessons together, watched each other’s lessons online, gave presentations and shared information. The results have been described as “great” by several participants in their final reflections. I met the group online several times and had to re-discover my role. The group had a lot to bring in terms of content and hardly seemed to need any support from me: the agenda for meetings was filled, tasks were shared out. I appraised this group to be functioning well independently and could continue in their chosen way. Later it turned out that there had been a need for more guidance on my part. One of the participants, for example, stated that she felt she was unable to have enough time within the peer group meetings and was not sure how to tackle this. Looking back, I realized I was focused on what I saw them talking about and not on the collaborative process, assuming they already had the necessary work experience to run meetings that addressed everyone’s needs sufficiently. I had not given enough attention to what I normally (in physical contact) focus on: the process. As an SBTE, I will have to pay explicit attention to the process if it is not discussed by the peer group itself, even in an online situation.

30

We are more than six months later now, and new peer groups have started. I now supervise one of the supervisors of the peer groups. Because of my experiences of last year, the process side and “being a team member” is always on my mind and I discuss this with the supervisor. Together we coordinate his interventions. Online meetings and teaching will continue to play a (larger) role after Covid and it requires extra attention to guide the process in this online contact. This applies to myself as an SBTE, in contact with the mentors, the students, my colleagues, but also for the students with their online classes with pupils.

Professional context

I work as a SBTE at Rijn IJssel, department of Creative Industry. Rijn IJssel is a school for secondary vocational education in Arnhem. Vocational education follows secondary school. Our school, the Graafschap College – also vocational education – and HAN University of Applied Sciences work together in a School-University Partnership. Together we offer about 150 students a work placement every year. We ensure that these students can practice their teaching skills, learn to link theory to practice and vice versa and to adopt an inquiry stance. The workplace mentors and SBTEs play an important role in guiding and teaching future teachers.

My roots lie in working with vulnerable young adults. I have worked at all levels in various schools, especially as a mentor of (care) students, as a counselor in future career orientation and, later, as a coach of colleagues who started working with vulnerable young people. On the pedagogical side, creating a safe learning environment, has always been a motivation for me in my work. It is still what I find most interesting, also in the team building with student teachers and how to develop a good (learning) environment?

David Valente: Being a guide by teachers' sides - not a sage on the educational stage

David Valente, Nord University Norway
Email: david.valente@nord.no

Personal story

In March 2020, as the wave of pandemic-related lockdowns occurred around the globe, per teacher education more widely, there was a major call to action on the part of English language teacher educators. This required swiftly providing primary English teachers with principles, resources and strategies for their unprecedented move to emergency remote teaching. At the outset, there was naturally a focus on digital technologies, learning platforms and related tools, so when I was approached by my coursebook publisher to craft teacher development content (such as blog posts¹, interactive presentations² and podcasts³) my main goal was to refocus English educators' attention on aspects which I felt had been rather inadvertently eclipsed in the rapid response: children's engagement and their language learning. Encouragingly, this much needed focus on principled, engaged learning for children was also being echoed by other teacher educators in several contexts. It was therefore reassuring when for example, I was asked to review a new open-access publication authored by a team of English teacher educators in Brazil specifically to give practitioners urgently required methodological support: *Playbook for Emergency Remote Teaching to 6-10 Year Old Learners* (Venables, Bard, Taylor & Dobson, no date).

31

My PhD researches the role of teacher education for the use of children's literature in primary English language teaching. During my observations and reflections, I have identified a major obstacle due to the prevalent lack of access to powerful literary formats – and this is where innovations during the pandemic could be truly game-changing. At the outset of the lockdowns, two teacher educator colleagues from the outstanding project, 'Picturebooks in European Primary English Language Teaching' (PEPELT) embarked on developing a series of open-access e-lessons⁴ based on read-alouds by picturebook creators - recorded and shared on YouTube. This is an incredibly inspiring example of how adversity can function as a pedagogical catalyst and offer genuine support for teacher education. The lesson plans and accompanying materials are underpinned by robust e-learning pedagogy for primary English teachers, resulting from an innovative fusion of the HighScope *Plan-Do-Review* curriculum model and an action-orientated planning framework linked to Bloom's taxonomy.

¹ <https://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2020/03/18/teaching-children-online/>

² <https://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2020/04/06/supporting-every-teacher-teaching-primary-english-online/>

³ <https://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2020/04/01/action-interaction-teaching-primary-children-online/>

⁴ <https://pepelt21.com/mini-e-lessons/>

**'The pandemic has underscored the crucial need for
a more multimodal experience to literature.'**

**'Teacher educators can model hope by being visibly
willing to move beyond our current practices and
own comfort zones.'**

David Valente



This enables primary teachers to invigorate their online English lessons with diverse stories, varied author / illustrator voices and creative children's reader-responses. In addition, this particular innovation has further equipped me as a teacher educator with creative insights for helping teachers to develop children's receptive sub-skills and scaffold creative speaking and writing tasks online. The rich potential for contextual adaptations also enabled me to share this pedagogy with the primary ELT teaching community throughout 2020 during keynotes at the TESOL Gulf Young Learners conference, the English language teachers' association of Northern Macedonia conference as well as for a global schools' festival.

On returning to work on face-to-face teacher education programmes, I intend to incorporate a more systematic focus on theories and practices for *both* physical and virtual language learning environments. Regardless as to whether further pandemics occur any time soon, I believe that e-learning for children learning English will become a reality in one form or another, now that global education has experienced its affordances firsthand. It is therefore part of our remit as teacher educators to ensure pre-service and in-service English teachers are suitably skilled and confident to undertake this task. Furthermore, I will also approach my work with children's literature differently by adding virtual read-alouds and book browsing into my teaching via flipped approaches. The pandemic has underscored the crucial need for a more multimodal experience to literature and therefore, teachers need to encounter it in electronic as well as print formats. Finally, for semester coursework and end-of-course examinations, I will provide multimodal aspects such as virtual lesson planning and video reflections on teaching practice to really maximize the unplanned upskilling and newly found confidence that many English teachers have acquired as a result of their collective emergency remote experiences.

33

Teacher educators can model hope by being visibly willing to move beyond our current practices and own comfort zones and in this way, encourage teachers to take supported risks and really experiment with their pedagogical practices. Overall, the crucial importance of showing and *not only* telling is essential for all of us in teacher education, if we hope to be truly credible and genuinely relatable role models.

Professional context

David Valente is a Nord University, Norway research fellow in English language and literature subject pedagogy. His research interests include children's literature in primary English teaching, primary and secondary teacher education and intercultural learning. His PhD research explores the positioning of children's literature as a catalyst for intercultural perspective shifting in primary English education and he is a member of the *Nord Research Group for Children's Literature in English Language Teaching (CLELT)*. David has over 20 years' experience in English language education as a teacher, teacher educator, academic manager, coursebook author and journal editor. He is also reviews editor for the *Children's Literature in English Language Education* journal and is an active member of two international teacher education projects: Erasmus+ *Intercultural Citizenship Education through Picturebooks in Early English Language Learning* and the NOTED project, *English Language and Literature – In-depth Learning*.

**'My Covid-19 experience has shown me that
research has been my anchor during this pandemic.'**

**'My thesis has offered a way through new
pedagogical considerations in my teaching.'**

Karen Vincent



Karen Vincent: How Theory Has Saved Me!

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Education, Canterbury Christ Church University, England
Email: karen.vincent@canterbury.ac.uk

Personal story

March 2020. Covid-19 struck as I was working towards my final doctoral review. I was teaching full time and facing additional caring responsibilities for my children returning from university, alongside supporting my parents who were 'vulnerable' to the virus. Teaching was moved rapidly online and my immediate concerns were how to enable my students to continue to learn online, as a replacement for face-to-face teaching. They were in a state of shock as their placements had been halted along with their usual routines, so support for their emotional wellbeing was paramount. Helping students remotely with their anxieties and worries, whilst regulating my own was necessary, whilst as we waited for further placement guidance. Fortunately, adapting, responding and changing direction at the 'drop of a hat' is the staple of early years teachers' practice, so my career had prepared me well for these challenges. Embracing these uncertainties had implications for my pedagogical decisions and behaviours. The three areas of teacher educators' pedagogical practices, drawn out through my thesis literature review: modelling, reflexivity and learning experiences, formed lenses through which I have reflected upon the professional changes that I made in response to the pandemic.

35

Modelling

I was conscious of the need to respond to my students with even more kindness and forbearance than usual, as I modelled professional behaviours. Many were paralysed by the removal of their placements and found themselves frozen with fear for the future. They needed gentle nurturing and loving support, to move them sensitively but realistically towards the university expectations. I hope that, 'modelling the processes, thoughts and knowledge of an experienced teacher in a way that demonstrates the why or the purpose of teaching' (Loughran, 1997 p. 62), has helped to reinforce the importance of socially and emotionally warm responses and the primacy of relationships for learning. Sharing my thinking and vulnerabilities is good preparation for students teaching young children, because not everything can be planned for! Young children are naturally spontaneous and unpredictable. I hoped that modelling my own anxieties, helped them to share a little bit of what I was experiencing too and helped them to see into my 'processes, thoughts and knowledge' (Loughran, 1997 p. 62).

Reflexivity

Being reflective is an important skill for teachers and teacher educators to develop. However, justifying this thinking to be able to say why we are doing what we are doing is vital, and teacher educators support students in making these pedagogical decisions visible. Finding approaches that helped students to, 'question attitudes, theories-in-use, values, assumptions, prejudices and habitual actions' (Bolton, 2014 p. 7) is therefore

advantageous, but no-one knew the script! I hadn't lived through a pandemic before, so I didn't have any answers or experiences of this. However, I found that because I saw teaching from a position of inquiry (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999), as a way of finding out about the individuals I was working with, that this was an opportunity for me to voice my thinking aloud so that my students were able to see how I was thinking critically about the situation. It was an opportunity to be explicit about my reflexivity.

Learning Experiences

As the placement module lead for early childhood studies students, I thought carefully about how to bring placement to them because they were no longer able to attend placements 'in the field'. Creating new ways to enable them to experience learning about teaching young children was challenging, but this turned into an opportunity to create new contacts. Our alumni came to the rescue, willingly talking to me about their new careers teaching within a diverse range of international settings. This turned out to be an advantage, as students were able to watch conversations between me and a wide variety of professionals on videos that I recorded. They were able to see into different classrooms and career pathways in a way that attending one placement setting does not allow. However, developing my ability to teach through play-based approaches online was more challenging. I am still developing my ability to engage my students dialogically online, so that they can continue to appreciate the importance of play for the children that they teach.

36

My Covid-19 experience showed me that research has been my anchor during this pandemic. I was able to regularly retreat into my thesis world as a distraction from the challenging news and events around me. Not only has this offered me academic respite as a means of escape from the reality and gravity of the situation, but my thesis has also offered a way through new pedagogical considerations in my teaching. My academic thinking was closely coupled with my teaching considerations and has really reiterated the vital role of research and theory in practice.

Professional context

I am an English early childhood initial teacher educator based in a university in South-East England. Following 17 years as a classroom teacher along with master's study, I developed a love of research which led me to work in a university where I have now taught for ten years.

Many children in England begin school at the age of 4 which is one of the earliest school starting ages in Europe, and this means that new teachers need to be able to support the learning and development of very young children through a play-based approach. I teach student teachers about teaching in early childhood. As part of my full-time role, I support student teachers on placement in early years nurseries, settings and schools, and I also teach early childhood students who go on to work with children and families in a range of careers. Five years ago, I started my doctoral study and I am now in the final stages of completion. My doctoral research is focused on the narratives of early childhood initial teacher educators and the ways in which their pedagogies are defined through their discourses of practice.

Final Remarks

To find the inner strength not just to survive, but to grow during the Covid-19 pandemic, we can see from these stories that teacher educators evaluated their own practice – questioning the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of their teaching and examining the changes that they adopted against their philosophies of teacher education and even challenging their deeply held philosophies. This is brave, as is being willing to be vulnerable through publicly sharing their reflections with both students and other teacher educators. Thus, individual growth impacts on our learners, our peers, and others further afield, as we share our learning, strengthening the profession and contributing to increasing the quality of education. The changes we are making in response to the Covid-19 pandemic will have consequences now and for the future of teacher education, and it is important for us going forward to consider what this will mean for the professional learning and development of teacher educators and of teachers. Important competencies needed to address the nature of future teacher education provision include critical evaluation of evolving practice; ability to build a learning environment and effective relationships in an on-line community; appreciation of the challenges of uncertainty; and compassion towards our learners and ourselves.

37

Elizabeth White and Miranda Timmermans

Further Reading

Bolton, G. (2014). *Reflective Practice*. London: Sage

British Council (2020) *A survey of teacher and teacher educator needs during the Covid-19 pandemic April - May 2020*. Retrieved from: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/covid19-teacher-teacher-educator-survey.pdf>.

Carrillo, C. and Flores, M. A. (2020). 'COVID-19 and teacher education: a literature review of online teaching and learning practices', *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 466–487. doi: 10.1080/02619768.2020.1821184.

Cochran-Smith, M. and Lytle, S. L. (1999). Relationships of Knowledge and Practice: Teacher Learning in Communities. *Review of Research in Education*, 24. pp. 249-305. doi: <https://doi.org/10.2307/1167272>

Cohan, D. (2020). What do we need to teach now?, *Inside Higher Education*. Retrieved from: <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2020/03/20/beyond-focusing-educational-delivery-models-faculty-should-prioritize-essential>

Cohan, D. (2020). 'Beyond focusing on educational delivery models, faculty should prioritize the essential truths they want students to learn', *Inside Higher Education*. Retrieved from: <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2020/03/20/beyond-focusing-educational-delivery-models-faculty-should-prioritize-essential>.

Department for Education (DfE) (2013). *The national curriculum in England*. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/425601/PRIMARY_national_curriculum.pdf (Accessed: 11 November 2020)

Department for Education (DfE) (2017). *Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/596629/EYFS_STATUTORY_FRAMEWORK_2017.pdf (Accessed: 20 August 2020).

Ellis, V., Steadman, S. and Mao, Q. (2020). "'Come to a screeching halt": Can change in teacher education during the COVID-19 pandemic be seen as innovation?', *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 559–572. doi: 10.1080/02619768.2020.1821186.

Kidd, W. and Murray, J. (2020). 'The Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on teacher education in England: how teacher educators moved practicum learning online', *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 542–558. doi: 10.1080/02619768.2020.1820480.

la Velle, L. et al. (2020). 'Initial teacher education in England and the Covid-19 pandemic: challenges and opportunities', *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 46(4), 596–608. doi: 10.1080/02607476.2020.1803051.

Loughran, J. (1997). 'Teaching about Teaching: Principles and Practice', in J. Loughran and T. Russell (ed.) *Teaching about Teaching. Purpose, Passion and Pedagogy in Teacher Education*. London: Falmer Press, pp. 57-69.

MacPhail, A. (2020). 'Time to really re-envision teacher education', *Research in Teacher Education*, 10(1), 53–56. Retrieved from: <https://www.uel.ac.uk/research/research-in-teacher-education/volume-10-no-1-may-2020>.

Mutton, T. (2020). 'Teacher education and Covid-19: responses and opportunities for new pedagogical initiatives', *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 439–441. doi: 10.1080/02607476.2020.1805189.

Schleicher, A. (2020). The Impact of COVID-19 on Education: Insights from Education at a Glance 2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.gcedclearinghouse.org/resources/impact-covid-19-education-insights-education-glance-2020>.

Venables, Claire, Bard, Rosemary, Taylor, James M. and Dobson, Jen (no date). *Playbook for Emergency Remote Teaching to 6-10 Year Old Learners*. Active English. https://mcusercontent.com/95bf902e98b210d78ee06ac77/files/b1b650e7-843f-4cb5-98e3-4038618f977f/PLAYBOOK_FOR_EMERGENCY_REMOTE_TEACHING_TO_6_10_YEAR_OLD_LEARNERS.pdf

The Editors

Miranda Timmermans

Avans University of Applied Sciences, Breda, The Netherlands

E-mail: m.c.l.timmermans@avans.nl

My intrinsic motivation as a primary school pupil for learning and education has underpinned my choice for a professional career in education. After years of volunteering at the kindergarten in the village where I lived, I started studying developmental psychology with a major interest in Russian learning psychology, which resulted in a one-year study abroad in Moscow.

My first real job in education was as a teacher educator at a Pabo. There I not only learned a lot about educating and guiding student teachers, but I also saw how powerful teacher education can be when there is a strong cooperation between TEI (Teacher Education Institutes) and schools and what added value this has for all stakeholders involved.

As a teacher educator and researcher I got involved in the first developments around 'school-based teacher education', which resulted in my PhD-research into the quality of Professional Development Schools. My current research and professional activities take place in the field of Teacher Education in School-University Partnerships. Alongside my focus on the quality of such learning and teaching pathways/programs, I am also concerned with learning and training in the workplace, the development of workplace curricula and the development of school- and institute-based teacher educators. On the latter subject I work closely with Liz and together we have developed a tool for teacher educators from schools and universities: www.platformsamenoopleiden.nl/groteverhalenboek/ and www.go.herts.ac.uk/FLiTE. In addition to my work, I am the chair of Velon, the Dutch Association of Teacher Educators (www.velon.nl).

Elizabeth White

University of Hertfordshire, UK

E-mail: e.j.white@herts.ac.uk

My journey to teacher educator began as a mentor to a student-teacher, which I found the most energising aspect of my school life. After 11 years teaching I made a gradual transition into becoming a university-based teacher educator. I became involved in the professional development of my peers and started visiting science student-teachers in their school settings and leading some taught sessions. For five years I took increasingly more responsibility for the learning of secondary student-teachers until I moved fully into a career in teacher education, after completing my Masters in Leading Learning.

My research and professional practice are closely linked, as my interests are the professional learning and development, pedagogy and identity of teachers, school- and institute-based teacher educators; teacher leadership; development of subject knowledge for teaching; collaborative partnerships; and modelling professional values and practice. My work as a teacher educator has given me unique access to listen to other professionals in the field in primary and secondary schools and Higher Education Institutes, to execute and disseminate my research. I currently co-chair the Professional Development of Teacher Educators Research & Development Community of the Association for Teacher Education in Europe. Miranda and I have a close collaboration that has produced resources for practitioners in English (www.go.herts.ac.uk/FLiTE) and Dutch (<https://www.platformsamenoopleiden.nl/groteverhalenboek/>).

Series: Life and work of teacher educators

The first booklet **Maatschappelijke Wortels van lerarenopleidingen** (Social Roots of Teacher Education) (2015) gives a short overview of the education and professional life of teacher educators in the Netherlands. The second was published in February 2016: **Life and Work of Teacher Educators**, containing the personal stories of teacher educators from different countries and how they came to be teacher educators. The third was published in 2016: **Schoolopleiders, leraar en lerarenopleider tegelijk** (School-based educators, teachers and teacher educators at the same time), provides an insight into the professional life of these workplace-based teacher educators. The fourth booklet, **Teacher Educators' Pathways to Becoming Research Active** (July, 2017) has its roots in the Professional Development of Teacher Educators (PDTE) Research and Development Community (RDC) of the Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) (<https://atee.education/rd-communities/professional-development/>) and describes how teacher educators are engaged in carrying out practitioner inquiry or have research interests in an area that closely relates to their practice.

- 42 All the booklets are on the site of Hogeschool Utrecht (<https://issuu.com/hogeschoolutrecht/docs/>).

Colophon

Editors

Miranda Timmermans

Elizabeth White

Layout and Production

Studio I Powered by Canon & Avans

Photography

Privately owned

Design

HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht

