
Encouraging Imagination and Creativity in the Teaching Profession

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ABSTRACT In this article it is argued that an important task of career-long teacher education is the encouragement of imagination and creativity in experienced teachers. The task implies a reversal of the managerialism that currently afflicts so many European education systems. The article begins by giving an analysis of pedagogical relationships to expose some of the reasons that teaching is an extraordinarily complex activity, which it is difficult to do well. Indeed it is so complex that it is not something that can be learnt in advance of experience. Therefore early-career teachers need to develop their skills before they can become fully competent. However experience is not enough on its own. To become excellent – that is, more than proficient – requires a career-long commitment to self-cultivation as teachers. Part of the reason that the commitment needs to be career-long is that teaching contexts are in a continual state of change, and teachers need to adapt through a process of self-cultivation.

I suggest that there are two broad approaches to career-long teacher education: (1) closed, standardised, benchmarked and (2) open, imaginative, creative. While the first can be encouraged in the usual managerial ways, the second cannot. Openness to change and adaptation requires teachers to carry out a daunting, exciting, risky re-evaluation of themselves and their pedagogical relationships. I draw on examples to illustrate what might be included in imaginative and creative self-cultivation. Many of these use creative and imaginative forms of practitioner research.

In the rest of the article I go on to argue that the second of these approaches is the one that will ultimately benefit the economy of the country, where ‘economy’ is understood in its full (original) moral sense as referring to the well-being and flourishing of all the people. I suggest that openness in teachers will encourage them to support creativity and imagination in their students, who may then contribute to the economies of their countries, in both the narrower and wider senses of the term. I ground the argument by considering the affordances offered by two contrasting teacher-education policies in the United Kingdom (England and Scotland), briefly putting them in their European and global context.

Introduction: teacher education, creativity and the economy

Creativity and innovation are key to EU education policy (Ferrari et al, 2009; European Union [EU], 2010; Coate & Boulos 2012). My major concern here is to do with how each of them may be relevant to the questions underlying any education policy: what is the value of education? How widely should educators see their role? How far is education good in itself, how far is it good for society as a whole and how far is it about preparing a productive and efficient workforce? Interestingly the theme of the 2013 European Conference on Educational Research (ECER) was ambiguous about this issue. On the one hand, using it extols creativity and innovation as an essential factor for creating a ‘more competitive and dynamic European society’. It uses the language of managerialism: educational research is *expected* to find solutions for developing creative

and innovative education as a means to foster 'creative competences and innovative skills'. On the other hand, there is room for critique: 'educational researchers *care* about what happens when a basic capacity for curiosity, experimentation and creativity is directed toward serving economic activity in an innovative society'.

To state my position at the outset, I think education is good in itself. What does that mean? It means that becoming and being educated is part of a good life. Such a good life includes the opportunity for developing our human capacities for curiosity, experimentation and creativity. Consider those many people who take educational courses regardless of their financial benefit to themselves or anyone else. Moreover schools and universities contribute to maintaining and developing a good society: good for each of us and good for us collectively. Prosperity is desirable only insofar as it contributes to these more basic goods. Creativity goes beyond its uses for promoting competitive trading and prosperity. It is relevant that some creative acts done for the good of society are *not* welcomed by governments interested in wealth and managerial control. The following examples help demonstrate political creative acts that were not welcomed by the governments concerned. In Istanbul, the site of the 2013 conference, there have been very creative responses to the troubles in Taksim Square and Gezi Park: examples are the Standing Man and the Taksim Square Book Club (Al Jazeera, 2013; BBC News Europe, 2013). In China, Ai Weiwei has used his art to challenge the state. A particularly poignant example for an education conference is his *Remembering* (Premier Art Scene.com, 2009). In the UK, Greenpeace activists in London climbed the 300m high building known as the Shard to draw attention to oil drilling in the Arctic (BBC News London, 2013). In Spain flamenco flash mobs have been protesting their government's response to the banking crisis (Webster, 2013).

In this article I show some of the connections between teacher education, creativity, and the economy. I argue that an important task of career-long teacher education is the encouragement of imagination and creativity in experienced teachers – but while this may be good for the economy it may not lead to the kinds of innovation that directly improve national prosperity, something often wrongly equated with the national economy. First I discuss some of the reasons why teaching is so difficult. I then explain my understanding of creativity and innovation. I go on to draw the two themes together as I look at the implications for teacher education policies. Finally I consider their practicality by looking at the contrasting policies of two similar countries within the European Union: England and Scotland.

Becoming an Excellent Teacher: the case of pedagogic relationships

Becoming an excellent teacher is a difficult, never completed business. It can also be engaging, exhilarating and satisfying, which is partly why teaching is such a good career to choose. Pasi Sahlberg (2013) suggests that: 'becoming a great teacher normally takes five to ten years of systematic practice'. For teachers, even beyond that first five to ten years, the truth of Maxine Greene's elegant formulation of becoming is always already clear: 'I am what I am not yet'. So by 'teacher education', I mean not just initial teacher education but the whole career-long business of becoming a good teacher.

I am going to focus on only one career-long aspect of being and becoming a good classroom teacher: pedagogical relationships between teachers, students and subject matter. These relationships are complex and also contingent on the circumstances. However, neither the complexity nor the contingency has been well represented in current research and theory. Educational research has tended to focus on single aspects: student engagement, and teachers' class control and authority (Fredricks et al, 2004; Sheppard, 2011; Hayden, 2012; Thomson, 2013), group relations in social justice terms (Griffiths, 2003; Tartwijk et al, 2003; Shuffelton, 2013), or on relationships between a teacher and an individual student, whether conceived as 'care', or following Levinas, as alterity (Noddings, 1984; Todd, 2003; Biesta, 2012). In any classroom all of these factors are relevant, hence the complexity. All classrooms are unique, time-bounded, social and political entities, hence the contingency. I consider each of these in turn, first complexity and then contingency.

The complexity of classroom pedagogic relationships may be analysed by distinguishing different forms of relationship between a teacher and her students. Here I distinguish four:

(1) dyadic, (2) associational, (3) instrumental, and (4) subject-based. All of them need negotiating both separately and in combination with the others. First, *dyadic* relationships are those that can develop between a teacher and a single student. Second, when there is more than one student, a relationship takes place within what Iris Marion Young (2000) calls an association: a group of people who have come together for a specific purpose and who interact with each other according to both explicit and implicit rules. The *associational* relationships of a classroom are not – cannot be – associations of equals. The teacher has both authority and power, and is working within the authority and power of the institution. Moreover a lot of schooling is compulsory. For all these reasons a third kind of relationship can be distinguished. Teachers foster relationships which are *instrumental* in intention, and aimed at promoting learning and order, through (for example) praise, reward, reprimands, punishments and the use of behaviour contracts. Fourth, and finally, there are *subject-based* relationships that result from attending to the subject matter of the lesson. This is the famous triangle of teacher, student and subject. What the simplicity of a triangle conceals are other important relationships that then arise: between the teacher's and a student's relation to how the others in the class related to their relationships (with each other and with the subject), and then, in a dizzying spiral, how each of them relates to those relationships and so on.

All of these relationships, the dyadic, the associational, the instrumental and the subject-based are established and maintained at the same time, each affecting the other. This is one reason why teaching is so complex and why becoming a teacher is so difficult. I will take a largely hypothetical, but I hope recognisable, example to show some of the difficulties to be negotiated. A teacher may be known as fair but frightening because she expects students to make strenuous attempts to work out answers to her difficult questions. Her questioning technique is an expression of her approach to her subject, and at the same time, a strategy of control. Some of her students are drawn to the subject partly just because she is so enthusiastic and challenging. Others are frightened by it and discouraged. One emotionally vulnerable student in the class is so frightened at the possibility of being questioned that he is unable to learn anything and begins to have physical symptoms of stress (stomach aches, racing heart) before and after her classes. It is the teacher's difficult task to continue attracting those who love the challenge of the subject, and who are being encouraged to think and engage with it, at the same time as keeping a reputation of fairness and order, and all this at the same time as creating a relationship with the one distressed student, to enable him not only to function but also to learn. The task is not simply one of enthusing students or of class management strategies, good social skills or sensitive individual relationships. Rather, most of the time, most teachers have to deal with the interaction of all of these different relationships.

Relationships are not only complex. They are also contingent on circumstance. This aspect of teaching is often overlooked. Teacher education is often discussed in terms of knowledge, skills, character, and attitude. But the teacher remains oddly disembodied, ageless and displaced from any specific social or political context.

In order to discuss the significance of bodies and context, I want to use a distinction made by Hannah Arendt (1958). She talks of human beings being both a 'who' and a 'what':

In acting and speaking, men show who they are, reveal actively their unique personal identities ... while their physical identities appear without any activity of their own in the unique shape of the body and sound of the voice. This disclosure of 'who' in contradistinction to 'what' somebody is – his qualities, gifts, talents, and shortcomings, which he may display or hide – is implicit in everything somebody says and does. (1958, p.179)

Both the 'who' and the 'what' of teachers and students play a significant role in determining their relationship. The unique individual, the 'who', modifies all the actions and interactions of teachers: how they keep order, how they approach their subjects, how they communicate sympathy or enthusiasm. Equally so, for the associational relations among the students. The social and political 'what' of each teacher and student is equally significant. Classrooms are inhabited by embodied beings: each with a sex, a skin colour and their gendered, classed, racialised, enculturated gestures, stances and voices. And they react to each other accordingly.

Time is another little mentioned contingency of teaching and pedagogical relationship. Becoming a good teacher is a never-ending project and not only because good teaching is so difficult. Both the 'who' and the 'what' of a teacher changes over the years. For instance, I am not the same person – and not perceived as the same teacher – as I was 40 years ago. Not only have I

aged, and my 'who' matured, but also cultural and educational norms and expectations have changed. Even when a 'what', such as sex, skin colour or sexuality, persists over a teacher's lifetime, its significance alters.

The 'who' and the 'what' of teacher and students has an impact on all of the pedagogical relationships I have described: dyadic, associational, instrumental and subject-related. To take just the last of these, consider how the age and gender of the teacher and students matters in, say, mathematics, sports or cookery lessons and how that has itself changed over time. And then there is the entanglement of *eros* with pedagogy: that passionate, transformative and risky aspect of personal relationships which is connected to the desire for knowledge and wisdom (McWilliam, 1996a, b; Dumas, 2012).[1]

Creativity, Imagination and Innovation

I want to discuss the implications for teacher education. I have only considered one aspect of the complex and always contingent project of becoming an excellent teacher, but already it is clear that doing so is not just a matter of acquiring some new techniques or becoming familiar with some new technologies. I will be arguing that creativity (rather than innovation) plays a crucial role in career-long teacher education. However before doing that I need to explore the complex and contested concepts of both creativity and innovation.

The words 'creativity' and 'innovation' both cover a range of meanings in English, though they tend to appear as a couple in EU policies. Moreover, the connections between the different meanings are not clear or agreed. So the terms are extremely ambiguous especially in how they relate to the purposes of education. In what follows, I explain why I focus on the first, creativity, rather than the second, innovation. In English, these two terms pull in different directions, even though they overlap. Creative always carries a connotation of the arts, in phrases like 'the creative industries'. Innovation is more about problem solving or even just newness.

As I said at the start, my major concern is the question underlying any education policy: what is the value of education? So it is relevant that value is one way of distinguishing creativity and innovation, as can be seen in widely accepted definitions. Creativity is: 'imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are original and of *value*' (NACCCE [2] 1999, p. 29), while innovation is: 'the implementation of new ideas to create something of value, proven through its uptake in the marketplace' (Craft, 2005, p. 20). These definitions show that the values of creativity are wider than those of innovation. Of course the value of education may include its uses in a market economy. However creativity is clearly a concern for teachers, but innovation is not, except in relation to some vocational education. [3] After all, only the market can judge market values. So my main concern is with creativity, rather than innovation.

The definition of creativity given by NACCCE is widely accepted but it raises almost as many questions as it answers. Value is crucial, but value itself is something that is contested. Indeed there is considerable disagreement about creativity and how to recognise it. So it is important that I explain the aspects of creativity to which I want to draw attention. In doing so I don't want to analyse and pin down the meaning of the term, or legislate for its use by others – or even by me in other work. I agree with Graeme Sullivan that the impulse to try and define the term 'creativity' is a reflection of the scientific impulse to analyse, categorise and measure. He says:

A common approach in coming to understanding the conceptual basis of creativity research was to construct binary or categorical concepts that characterise its distinguishing features, methods and uses. This in itself was a telling strategy for it reflected the predominance of a scientific mindset in analysing and synthesising creativity as an individual and social construct. (Sullivan, 2011, p. 108)

This can become self-defeating. To quote Sullivan again:

The tendency to reduce complex artistic practices to a performance that is assessed to be creative because of (e.g.) the fluidity, frequency, and flexibility of ideas and how rare or original they might be (Lubart, 1999), offers a limited perspective at best. (Sullivan, 2011, p. 108)

Rather than offer a definition of creativity, I draw attention to how I understand some aspects of it which are significant for my purposes in this article. I draw on Anna Craft's (2005) focus on

everyday creativity: something that all human beings share to some extent. Then I summarise Margaret Boden's three possibilities for the generation of new ideas (Boden, 2004, 2007), all of which can be done by a computer. I go on to draw attention to the human in creativity, especially the subjective inner life, using Lesley Saunders' discussion of creativity and silence in education (2012). Finally, I consider attentiveness and its relation to public life through what Maxine Greene has called 'social imagination' (Greene, 1997, 2000).

Craft and Boden both distinguish between creativity which results in something that is significant nationally and internationally, and a more everyday creativity, in which the ideas are new to the individual and their immediate social context. As Craft has pointed out, it is the second which is of relevance to education in schools or other educational institutions, including those focusing on teacher education (Craft, 2005, 2012).

Boden has usefully distinguished three kinds of ways in which creativity can happen. The first is the combination of familiar ideas, for instance in metaphor, analogy, collage and fusion music. The second way is the exploration of a conceptual space, be it ways of writing prose or poetry, styles of painting, theories in biology, or a particular cuisine. Thirdly it is possible to transform the space by changing rules: by: 'thinking something new which with respect to the conceptual spaces in their minds, they could not have thought before' (Boden, 2007, p. 89). As Boden (2004) demonstrates, all of these three kinds of creativity are performed by computers – except that the computer is unable to assign value to its creations, and evaluation is required in all definitions of creativity. Evaluation needs to be done by human beings.

However, human creativity seems to demand something else. I think this is properly described as imagination. Imagination is needed to symbolise experience whether using the full riches of language such as the use of metaphor, story, and poetry, or by using other media, such as pictures, diagrams, sculpture, music or dance. The point here is that there is something that is being symbolised – symbolisation is the attempt to express *something* about experience, something about the subjective inner life, which as Saunders points out, is what makes us human. As she says, the inner life is a way of attending, dwelling, on the world, of using the imagination. It is the reverse of busyness. She quotes Margaret Atwood as saying 'a poet is someone who sits looking out the window when other people think she should be cutting the lawn' (Saunders, 2012, p. 219). Thus human creativity is a way of expressing a point of view. Therefore it is not exactly the same as a computer apparently doing the same operation. It is a way of expressing 'what is it like to be' someone, me, for instance, or you, and also of learning something of what it might be like to be somebody else.

Finally, Maxine Greene's concept of the social imagination is helpful in thinking about imagination and creativity in education. She has pointed out a connection between paying close attention to experience, its creative expression and the creation and re-creation of a social world and its politics. Thus imagination is doubly significant in education. Not only are the arts valuable in themselves, but also they make it possible for people to build the common, public world that Dewey called democracy, and Arendt called action. For this people need to express who and what they are. Greene quotes Dewey's remark in *The Public and Its Problems* that the function of art has always been to break through the crust of conventionalised and routine consciousness. She says:

The common world we are trying to create may be thought of as a fabric of interpretations of many texts, many images, many sounds. ... When Hannah Arendt wrote about a common world (1958), she put her stress on the innumerable perspectives through which that common world perceives itself. (Greene, 1997, p. 9)

A similar view is expressed by Sullivan:

Creativity, however is not merely a distinctive habit of mind, rather it becomes manifest through individual agency and creative social action. (2011, p. 118)

Implications for Teacher Education Policies

In the first section I discussed some of the complexities and contingencies of becoming – and continuing to become – a good teacher using the example of a teacher's responsibility for relationships between teacher, students and subject matter. In the second section I described what I

intend (in this article) by the term, creativity, and why I am not concerned with innovation as part of the task of a teacher. In the rest of the article I bring these two subjects together to consider the education of teachers.

The account I have given of becoming – and continuing to become – a good teacher is one in which Initial Teacher Education is very much only the beginning of a career-long undertaking. It is also one where considerable reflection is needed after acquiring a certain level of proficiency. Such proficiency will be demonstrated by the teacher being able to understand and then cope with some of the complexities of the job. Most research dealing with experienced teachers seems to assume that five years teaching [4] is the minimum period to count as an experienced, proficient teacher, thus agreeing with Pasi Sahlberg's remark quoted earlier about the time it takes to become a great teacher.

New teachers are still inexperienced, even the best of them. Happily, the best can be very good indeed (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Yet for many, the process of beginning teaching is one of struggle and survival (Beijaard et al, 2007; Melnick & Meister, 2008). New teachers are at the beginning of a process of moving from novice to expert (Richardson, 1990). In an early influential article Calderhead (1981) described this in terms of learning to identify a large number of typical situations and sequences of behaviour. Later researchers agreed that such schemata were significant in processing visual classroom information (Carter et al, 1988), and during classroom interactions (Peterson & Comeaux, 1988).

By the time the novices have become more expert, they are likely to have established themselves in the school, and quite possibly gained some seniority. This would be a good point for them to reflect on their practice, and reconsider what they are doing. It may be difficult for them to admit to difficulties and uncertainties but it should be possible with support from a facilitator, even for a proficient and senior teacher (Lange & Burroughs-Lange, 1994; Hoekstra et al, 2007). Reflective teacher education is more likely to be worthwhile after five years when the novice period is over. Given the significance of aging and time that I described in the first section, it would also be useful after, say, 10 years and then at regular intervals, career-long – each time with the help of facilitators who understand reflective practice and who have had the opportunity to research and theorise. This kind of teacher education would be a partnership bringing two kinds of expertise into relation. It might enable two equally misleading discourses to become less common: teachers and policy makers might be less inclined to believe teacher educators to be irrelevant and out of date. Teacher educators might be less inclined to blame schools for socialising teachers into forgetting research and theory.

How should those opportunities for experienced, proficient teachers to reflect on their practice be best utilised? The answer must depend on what kinds of teachers policy makers want. The choice is between two contrasting approaches of career-long teacher education: one focusing on technical matters of pedagogy without questioning its basic principles; the other involves the kind of critical reflection which includes the teacher's own beliefs and values. The first can be described as a way of renewing skills and knowledge of the kind to be imparted by an expert. The second is more challenging and risky as it is a process of acknowledging uncertainty and resolving it in conditions in which failure is allowed and cherished beliefs may be overturned. All experienced teachers will discover dilemmas of how their practice does not cohere perfectly with their own best purposes, to use Pádraig Hogan's useful phrase (2013), that they are in Jack Whitehead's vivid phrase, 'living contradictions' (1989). Richardson (1990) describes how teachers can become accustomed to a top-down technical model of staff development, and then be uncomfortable when not given exciting ideas to use in the classroom. She remarks on the significance of external facilitation to support teachers in the difficult job of critical reflection, re-thinking and re-adjusting coherence between their beliefs, values and practices. Her findings are in tune with later research in many countries and educational systems (e.g. Hoekstra et al, 2007; Zwart et al, 2007; Avalos, 2011; Beach & Bagley, 2013; Clarke et al, 2013; Hogan, 2013).

It will be clear by now that I favour the second kind of career-long teacher education. I think that it is important for we teachers, and also for we teacher educators, to reflect on ourselves as 'living contradictions', and to discover our own evolving best purposes in our different but connected countries, taking due account of the work of education policy makers. The interaction of the public with policy is a form of democracy – a deep democracy that goes beyond simple voting and extends into civil society. This is describable as democracy in the sense Dewey means it

in *Democracy and Education* where part of the point of education is to have a public discussion in which there is continuing openness to change and new circumstances. As Arendt says, we need to 'think what we are doing', and that doing so may be as she put it, 'thinking without a bannister' (1958). In the continuing creation of a common world each of us has to bring not only who and what we are, but also who and what we are not yet – a continuing becoming of ourselves and our common world. So teachers need to do this work of deep democracy – to participate with each other, the wider community of educators and the rest of society, to work out the values we see in education, and how best to realise them. That sounds very grand, but it begins with teachers' individual and collaborative reflective practice in their classrooms and schools.

Creativity is key to a continuing reassessment of beliefs, values, perceptions and professional commitments. So I now return to the theme of creativity in the senses I am using in this article: small 'c' creativity, Boden's three possibilities for the generation of new ideas, a subjective inner life symbolised through imagination, and creative social action. These are all key to accommodative reflective practice. First, it is clear that I am talking about small c creativity. It is difficult to think of how a teacher could be devoid of new ideas: all teachers have to come up with ways of responding to the endless newness their students present them with. So I am talking about the cultivation of this capacity in experienced teachers. One way of doing this is to use the combination of unfamiliar ideas mentioned by Boden: asking teachers to symbolise their practice or to understand their students' or colleagues' perspectives using visual methods, stories, metaphors, drama, role play, sculpture or poetry. The attempt to symbolise in more than one medium is often itself generative of new ideas and perspectives on something that might have otherwise seemed utterly familiar. It is also a way of expressing the subjective inner life, in a way that may feel risky. However if the process is made safe by a facilitator, it becomes possible to use some of the insights generated to explore the pedagogic conceptual space of beliefs, values, strategies, perceptions, and so on. It may even be possible to transform it. Finally this is best done within a community of practice so that creative social action becomes possible.

The process may sound daunting, since it requires facing uncertainty, risk, tensions and dilemmas. However it is also engaging, absorbing and energising for both teachers and teacher educators. A brief example from Edinburgh University will give a flavour of this, from a teacher who chose to call herself Carol for the purposes of my inquiry. The course had asked the teachers to symbolise their self-understanding. Carol made a small paper mache sculpture of a chameleon:

The chameleon became part of my artefact describing my learning journey so far. And the real nub of it was that I was in a military family. So I moved around an awful lot And every school I went to, I felt that none of the schools really adapted much to fit me. I had to do all the changing. I've been in this school I'm in now for seven years and that's the longest time I've ever lived anywhere in my whole life. So I think this is what led me to take up this course. It's because I felt settled. It's always been moving forward and changing and now I feel like I don't have to change.

The research process was ... the Turkish Formula 1 Grand Prix ... A sports journalist ... was going round interviewing people. He hadn't realised that the Turkish Grand Prix is the only one where they go anti-clockwise. So he went the wrong direction and stepped out. And somebody yanked him back. And it's like, 'Oh, gosh I never knew that'. And do you know I feel like that sometimes.

Later the teachers were required to use visual methods in a study reflecting on their practice. Carol used photos, and she also asked the children to draw their experience:

[In the photo] there's a group of children sitting round a table making a poster or drawing or writing something. The child who's an elected mute is sitting away on the same table but at the end. She's looking down and it's just heartbreaking because [she looks so unhappy and alone] and she's only five.

One of the other teachers said:

I've tried all sorts to get her engaged and she really doesn't like it. And I've tried everything.

However when Carol went to find the picture the child had drawn she found, to her surprise:

It's the most colourful picture. Everybody's really bright. There's about five or six people in the picture and they've all got smiley faces. There's a massive sun in the window. And she's written right across it 'It's fun'. I'm like, 'Oh my word.' ... She may not participate actively but she's taking something from it.

Creative methods may also help teachers symbolise their values, reflect on them, and then be able to realise them more effectively. Another brief example: this time from some action research in Nottingham as part of the English Creative Partnerships project there. [5] The example is provided by John, who was a teacher in a school for children with severe and profound special needs. He came to understand more deeply what it was about some of his practice that was consonant with his values and so to develop it in that direction as a result of working closely with visiting artists and performers. Noticing that the school found it straightforward to collaborate with the artists, unlike many of the schools in the project, he investigated what it was they were doing through the medium of video. Watching a video of one project he was prompted to observe:

Come into the Theatre of Possibilities; walk through the door into the empty darkened stage area. The educational performance is about to start. By analogy we have actors, stage and technical crew, a director with a number of producers. However we have no script. Losing our analogy we have students, learning support assistants, [an] ICT technician, a teacher in charge and we are all a staff of enablers. (John Naylor, research log, 2004)

As he put it, the ethos of the school offered 'fertile ground' for cooperation:

Special schools are used to working in small teams, usually a teacher with a learning support assistant and a care assistant. It is essential that members of these teaching and learning teams regardless of status can offer their ideas and observations. (John Naylor, research log, 2004)

There are many other examples to be found in the literature (e.g. Dadds & Hart, 2001; Mitchell et al, 2005; Tidwell & Fitzgerald, 2009).

The evidence suggests that asking teachers to participate creatively in professional development will influence them in being more open to allowing for their pupils to be creative. [6] That is, it should help them move away from managerial, assessment driven approaches, which require clear pre-defined outcomes. Having experienced the value of creative reflection the teachers are more likely to be tolerant of the different rhythms and stages of generating new ideas. None of that kind of re-conceiving can be managed in terms of clearly defined and timed stages and outlines. Moreover it cannot be done without personal engagement, so extrinsic motivation is unlikely to get much purchase, as it can with outcome driven learning.

It is now time to bring in the economy. It is a much misused word. In one well-regarded sense of it, as its original name, political economy, indicates, it is as allied to the good and to peace as it is to prosperity; it is concerned with political systems as well as with wealth. The original sense of economy in a Greek household was the wise organisation of the family. We all know that finances are an important, but not the sole consideration in organising a family. Some economists have emphasised prosperity over all else (such as William Petty in seventeenth century England). Many have been taken to do so, I think wrongly, such as Marshall and Hayek. Some of the greatest and most influential economists have been explicit about the intimate connection of economics and the good life for human beings. For example both Adam Smith and John Stewart Mill were moral philosophers. Smith taught that:

Wealth consists of the annual produce of the 'necessities and conveniences of life' and equality was not just about an equality in the consumption of 'necessities', which had already been achieved in 'savage' societies prior to civilisation. He extolled the improvements of civilised society and the fact that many conveniences were also accessible by the civilised poor majority. (Kennedy, 2011, p. 55)

John Maynard Keynes provides an example of an economist acting on this understanding of what Smith calls 'conveniences'. He was responsible for setting up the Arts Council just after the Second World War, a time the UK was not wealthy.

Two Contrasting Policies within the EU: Scotland and England

It is possible for policy makers within the EU to implement reforms which give teachers career-long education. I have argued that such a policy would provide the best chance of integrating experience, research through engaged reflection and so could significantly improve the education of children. However I recognise that doing so would be difficult for them.

The context in which teacher education policies are formulated is significant. As many commentators have noted, national policy in Europe is strongly influenced and constrained not only by EU policy but also by global trends, especially those towards globalisation and neo-liberalism. Teacher education is no exception. The focus of interest continues to be on initial teacher education at the expense of later stages. Bauer and Prenzel (2012) describe the effect of the Bologna process on European teacher education reforms. They show that there has been a move across Europe to increase the length of initial teacher education programmes. As Collinson et al (2009) show, both in Europe and beyond, these moves have been accompanied by an increased willingness to support induction for new teachers. There have also been some moves to support professional learning through collaborative inquiry and collegiality. However as they point out, these innovations often have to co-exist with global trends towards using judgements of teachers' performance and results to grade them and their schools. Moreover, standards and competencies which are increasingly used in initial teacher education are being used to assess experienced teachers (Pantić & Wubbels, 2010; Beach & Bagley, 2013).

However, while change might be difficult, it is not impossible. National responses to European and global influences and constraints on teacher education depend on specific national histories and political contexts (Gray, 2010; Mentor & Hulme, 2011; Chung et al, 2012; Conway, 2013; Furlong, 2013). Policy makers do have room for manoeuvre. England and Scotland provide interesting examples of very different ways of localising European and global policy trends in relation to professional development (Collinson et al, 2009; Biesta, 2012).

England

John Furlong (2013) discusses how English teacher education policy has responded to perceived globalising and neoliberal imperatives. However, the perception of what those imperatives are has changed with each change of government. An example of this has been the MTL (Master's in Teaching and Learning) which was implemented by the Labour government in 2009 as a way of improving the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores by borrowing ideas from Finland. However the policy was withdrawn in 2010 when the new Coalition government came to power (also see Chung (2012) on the MTL). The Coalition takes the view that schooling is fundamentally concerned with the maintenance and transmission of an agreed upon cultural heritage (Furlong, 2013, p. 41). Schools should be free to employ unqualified teachers since inspirational teachers do not need any specific teacher education. Schools who fall within the flagship initiatives of Free Schools and Academies are free to employ teachers without any teacher education accreditation at all. When the minister, Michael Gove, introduced this policy, he commented:

Teaching is a craft and it is best learnt as an apprentice observing a master craftsman or woman. Watching others, and being rigorously observed yourself as you develop, is the best route to acquiring mastery in the classroom (quoted in Furlong, 2013, p. 43)

Professional development at all stages from induction onwards is seen as being very much a matter of up-skilling and learning new knowledge. Schools hold professional budgets which they can use to buy in expertise. At the same time the standards for judging the performance of experienced teachers have been shortened and simplified, requiring only a minimum proficiency.

Scotland

Scotland has taken a very different direction from England. Partly this is the result of a wish to assert a specific Scottish identity, different from its bigger neighbour. Partly it is the result of there being several different powerful groups that have a say in teacher education policy – unlike in

England where the minister of education is the main instigator of policy. Graham Donaldson, the author of the recent, highly influential report into teacher education (Donaldson, 2011a), expresses a view of teaching which is diametrically opposed to Gove's:

Some see teaching as a relatively simple task that depends heavily on techniques, subject knowledge and personality ... but twenty-first century education is far more complex and challenging and requires the highest standards of professional accomplishment and commitment. Teacher education must ... develop expertise, scholarship, collegiality and creativity. (Donaldson, 2011b, p. 21)

The report makes it clear that teacher education has to be seen as career-long:

Teacher education must build throughout a career and go well beyond recreating the best of past or even current practice. It must help to develop a teaching profession which, like other major professions, is not driven largely by external forces of change but which sees its members as prime agents in that change process. (Donaldson, 2011b, p. 5)

This view has been welcomed by the General Teaching Council (GTC), which is responsible for the standards by which teachers are assessed. New standards have just been published (August 2013). There is now a requirement for each teacher to undertake a five yearly Professional Update through Professional Review and Development, in order to maintain registration. What is required is stated in the new Standards for Career-Long Professional Learning. How it will work in practice has yet to be seen (Seith, 2012) but the GTC has stated that the purpose is not to provide a mechanism to test teachers and it does not aim to 'weed out' supposedly bad teachers. Rather they say that the purpose is to provide a framework for self-evaluation and reflection.

The Importance of Encouraging Creativity in Experienced Teachers

In this article I have argued that: (1) encouraging imagination and creativity in experienced teachers is a powerful way to promote the activities of contemplating, considering, reflecting, and re-conceiving our actions as 'we think what we are doing' (Arendt, 1958). (2) The focus should be especially on experienced teachers, because it is only when teachers have a basic proficiency (where proficiency is understood in a wide sense to include moral and ethical as well as their technical aspects) that they will have the capacity to re-think their positions. In other words, they need to develop a position before they can question it. Further, when they are no longer junior teachers they are more likely to have the institutional power to re-think. The article has said nothing about the creativity of students in school. Creative teachers will not necessarily produce creative students. Some students will be creative despite their teachers. But for most students, creative teachers are more likely to make space for creative students, and, possibly, encourage them. It is entirely conceivable that this will lead to the kind of creativity that has market value. (3) Teacher education for experienced teachers is important for two connected reasons: (a) teacher education for experienced teachers gives us the opportunity for a powerful integration of scholarship and experience. Scholars, researchers, teachers and policy makers can each contribute what they do best and all of them learn from each other; (b) without life-long teacher education, at worst we will get schools that never get better than basic proficiency as they have no opportunity for creative reflection. (4) Creativity in teacher education is also important just because it includes creativity. If a major value of education is to contribute to the good life, and being creative is part of that good life (at least for most human beings) then creativity contributes to the economy, in itself as well as (probably) contributing to the prosperity of the nation.

Notes

[1] I explore these issues in more depth in Griffiths (2013).

[2] National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education in England.

[3] Students who are studying catering or carpentry need to know the market values of their materials and products. Equally drama and other performance arts students need to understand pricing and marketing.

- [4] For instance, Carter et al (1988), Hoekstra et al (2007) and Clarke et al (2013). Melnick and Meister (2008) are an exception in using three years as the cut-off.
- [5] For details see Griffiths et al (2006).
- [6] See Project Dream DVD on Balerno High School's production of *Midsummer Night's Dream*. However note that I am not suggesting that any of these experiences are either sufficient or necessary to produce a more creative population. Happily, human creativity can flourish in the most unlikely of conditions.

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