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Bodies of knowledge:
Early childhood teachers' experiences of their initial teacher
education programme and sense of preparedness for teaching

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the phenomenon of ‘preparedness’ as it is employed in relation to the preparation of early childhood teachers through initial teacher education. It is a descriptive account of how newly qualified teachers made sense of their learning to teach process through the lens of preparedness; a construct that was brought to the research process. Individual and group interviews with field-based and pre-service newly qualified early childhood teachers participating in the study were conducted over eighteen months. The programme leaders of participating teacher education institutions were also interviewed, and a range of teacher education programme and official documentation was examined. An interpretivist approach was employed in the design of the research, including data generation, data analysis and presentation of findings.

This thesis argues that newly qualified teachers equate ‘being prepared’ with ‘being knowledgeable’. Rather than holding this knowledge as a store of ‘in-the-head’ knowledge, the research texts strongly suggested that as students approaching newly qualified teacher status, they desired to hold this knowledge in a practice, or an embodied sense. Through investigating participants’ stories of becoming knowledgeable this thesis argues that the process of accessing and acquiring the formal knowledge of teaching was aligned to the structural form of each institution, and to the way in which each positioned students in relation to that knowledge. From participants’ perspectives each institutional setting represents discursively different ways of coming to know teaching and being teachers.

This thesis clarifies the conditions for teacher education students to understand knowledge for teaching and thus become “self authoring members” (Edwards et al., 2002) of early childhood communities of practice. It argues that the key to teacher education students’ sense of preparedness lies within the design of teacher education programmes. The stories of newly qualified teachers and the author’s interpretations of them make a contribution to on-going dialogue about what constitutes knowledge and knowing for teachers. It adds a voice to those who argue that learning to teach is not principally a cognitive process that privileges thought over action and theory over practice. Rather, this thesis contends that the nature of knowledge for teaching must be reconceptualised to take account of practice theories of knowledge.

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

Overview

This thesis explores the phenomenon of preparedness as it is employed in relation to the ‘preparation’ of early childhood teachers through initial teacher education. From December 2005 to July 2007 I talked with 13 newly qualified early childhood teachers about their experiences of learning to teach through teacher education and across their first 18 months of teaching. Based on the participants’ stories this thesis offers a descriptive account of the learning to teach process through the lens of preparedness; a construct I brought to the research process. Unlike much research that asks about levels, perceptions, or sense of preparedness, I did not begin with preconceived notions in order to find out what participants said about these. Instead, I started by asking participants into the problem space of the study—the phenomenon of preparedness—with the intention of seeing where this pointed.

I sought to prioritise personal meanings of newly qualified teachers at the level of lived experience. At the same time, I recognised that the effects of institutional discourses “are seen in the subjects it produces” (Denzin, 2001, p. 50). The study, therefore, has a dual focus. First, it seeks to gain an understanding of how newly qualified teacher participants describe their lived experience of ‘being prepared’ through initial teacher education. Second, it describes how they are positioned and position themselves in relation to official discourses of preparation.

The purposes of the study are to listen to, and explicate how ‘being prepared’ through initial teacher education is experienced from the perspective of student teachers and to examine how their sense of preparedness plays out in their first 18 months as newly qualified teachers. As a teacher educator, I wanted to understand how newly qualified teachers interpret their experience of teacher education and how these interpretations contribute to their identities as teachers.

Little is empirically known about the experiences of early childhood teacher education students or newly qualified teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand (Cameron & Baker, 2004) or elsewhere (Aitken, 2005; Genishi, Ryan, & Ochsner, 2001; Ryan &

Goffin, 2008). While significant research energy has gone into establishing the relationship between teacher qualifications and the quality of early childhood provision for children, more typically research in early childhood education has tended to focus on children and their learning and development. One previous Aotearoa New Zealand study (Mahmood, 1996) has, however, similarly focused on the experiences of beginning (newly qualified) early childhood teachers and their sense of preparedness and perceptions of initial teacher education. Mahmood's study identified beginning teachers' struggle with the complexity of the social, relational and structural 'realities' that constituted early childhood education at that time. Mahmood concluded her participants felt largely unprepared for the early childhood settings in which they started their teaching careers.

More recently, Aitken's (2005) study that explored the occupational identities of newly qualified teachers, suggests early childhood education and teaching are no less complex today than Mahmood's participants experienced them to be.

Most research projects have a beginning, so how did my decision to investigate the experiences of early childhood teacher education students through the lens of preparedness come about? I respond to this question in the next part of the chapter in order to position both the study and myself as researcher. I also outline key assumptions that I brought to the study. In the second part of the chapter I introduce the key research question, outline my methodological orientation, and provide an overview of the substantive findings of the study. The chapter concludes with an overview of the thesis organisation.

Part I: Situating the study

The genesis of this study lies in a larger research project entitled "*Making a difference?: The role of initial teacher education and induction in the preparation of secondary teachers in New Zealand*" (hereafter *Making a Difference*) (Anthony & Kane, 2008). A key focus of the *Making a Difference* study was to ascertain the levels of preparedness a national sample of secondary teacher graduates felt on completion of their initial teacher education programme, and as beginning teachers (with a smaller interview sample at six monthly intervals over the following 18 months). The *Making a Difference* study was designed to provide empirically based evidence to enable teacher educators and policy makers to better understand secondary teacher education in the

dynamic sociopolitical context of initial teacher education (hereafter also termed ‘teacher education’) in Aotearoa New Zealand. It was envisioned a smaller scale study be carried out in parallel with the aim of identifying key issues concerning the ‘preparation’ of teachers in the early childhood sector; hence the origins of this doctoral project.

The *Making a Difference* study was undertaken during a political climate of review (Education Review Office, 1999; Education Science and Select Committee, 2004; Ministry of Education, 1997; Te Puni Kokiri, 1998, 2001), government policies focusing on teacher supply and quality (Alcorn, 1999; Jesson, 1997), and anecdotal concerns about the quality and variability of initial teacher education programmes and induction to the profession. It was set within a policy and funding context of deregulated teacher education, resulting in the proliferation of new teacher education providers (Jesson, 1997; Kane, 2005; May, 2001) and programmes (see Kane, 2005).

The *Making a Difference* study was a response by a group of teacher educators who sought to engage with the wider political, ideological (including media driven positions) and theoretical debates in a proactive and empirically informed manner. It may also be argued the study was a strategic attempt to reclaim knowledge about teacher education from what some thought to be subject to ill-informed and/or narrowly focused rationalised and technical discourses at play in the political discursive environment at that time (Moore, 2004).

Early childhood education context

Early childhood teacher education during the 1990s was also caught up in similar currents as outlined above, but was additionally linked to broader political and scholarly debates about the quality of provision of early childhood services relative to the nature and level of teacher qualifications (Meade, Podmore, May, Te One, & Brown, 1998). For example, there had been several attempts to make the diploma of teaching (ECE) the benchmark qualification for at least one person (the ‘person responsible’) in every licensed and chartered early childhood centre throughout the 1990s.

This issue was settled in 1999 by the requirement that by 2005 ‘persons responsible’ would hold a recognised diploma of teaching (or its equivalent). By the time I began this study, government policy requiring *all* teachers in teacher-led services to hold a recognised teaching qualification (set at a level 7 diploma), and thus be eligible for provisional registration as teachers, by the year 2012 had been announced. This led to an increase in the numbers taking part in early childhood teacher education. (The

qualification/registration goals have since been amended so that by 2012 80%, rather than 100% of teachers in teacher-led services will be required to be either provisionally or fully registered teachers. It is not known whether the 100% fully qualified targets will be reinstated)

Concerns about the nature and level of qualifications in the early childhood sector are aligned to issues about teacher preparedness and thus the kinds of “new knowledge, skills and disposition that recently qualified teachers must have” (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 7) to be considered well prepared. There is evidence which strongly suggests that teachers who feel better prepared are more effective—particularly so in terms of the core tasks of teaching (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002).

‘Preparedness’ as a cultural storyline

The framing of initial teacher education as ‘preparation’ for teaching has a long history in the compulsory schooling sector (primary and secondary education) and as such it has become both a taken-for-granted and a metaphoric way of referring to teacher education as teacher preparation, and to the outcome of a “well prepared” teacher (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 1). Statutory organisations such as the New Zealand Teachers Council (hereafter Teachers Council), in their document *Standards for Qualifications that lead to Teacher Registration: Guidelines for the Approval of Teacher Education Programmes* (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002), require "graduates from the [teacher education] programme [to be] *well prepared* for teaching" (p. 8 italics added).

In turn, measures of preparedness are articulated through Teachers Council structures such as the ‘Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions’ (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002) and more recently, the ‘Graduating Teacher Standards’ (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2007). These are subsequently operationalised through teacher education institutional compliance with Teachers Council programme approval and reapproval processes (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002). The standards in turn are embedded as requirements within the ‘graduate teacher profile’ of each institution. Lastly, the notion, and effectively the promise of ‘being prepared’ (or ‘equipped’) is used by many early childhood teacher education institutions when communicating with potential candidates through publications such as *Discover early childhood teaching: Teacher education qualifications for 2005* (Ministry of Education, 2005). Arguably,

‘preparation’ forms part of our cultural text of teacher education, and as such is a key construct that legitimates teacher education at the political, societal and institutional levels.

‘Preparedness’ and early childhood education

Having substantiated that ‘preparation’ did indeed form part of the texts of early childhood teacher education I became curious about what constructions of teacher education and of ‘the teacher’ were possible when learning to teach is framed in this way. I wondered how official definitions and interpretations of preparedness would align with the meanings early childhood teacher education graduates attached to their experiences of learning to teach.

I was familiar with the notion of initial teacher education framed and positioned as ‘preparation’ for teaching but began to have doubts about it being a ‘ground level’ construct subscribed to by early childhood teacher education students. My doubts arose because early childhood teachers in this country invariably work in groups, and thus are not perhaps as physically isolated from one another as can be the case for beginning primary and secondary teachers. Additionally, I wondered how those who became qualified through field-based (also known as centre-based), as opposed to pre-service programmes, would relate to the idea of being ‘prepared’ for teaching. It is not uncommon for field-based students to have had many years of experience in the workplace prior to engaging in teacher studies (Bell, 2004).

Dictionary definitions equate the word ‘prepare’ with actions such as ‘to make’ or ‘get ready’. This reflects the idea that the better prepared the smoother subsequent experiences will be. The sense of ill-preparedness of beginning teachers evident in Mahmood’s (1996) study piqued my curiosity. The opportunity to build on Mahmood’s work and my relationship with the *Making a Difference* study provided the warrants for this study. Moreover, the policy requiring all teachers in teacher-led services to hold the diploma of teaching and subsequent increases in numbers undertaking teacher education strongly suggested it was timely to carry out such a study as the one reported in this thesis.

Positioning myself as researcher

Following Denzin and Lincoln (2003), I position myself as a “biographically situated researcher” (p. 31) whose influence and interpretive positioning pervades all

phases of a qualitative research endeavour. While my involvement in the *Making a Difference* project provided the initial focus on preparedness, it was my long term interest in the learning to teach process that provided the substantive motivation to more closely explore student/newly qualified teacher perspectives.

As a teacher educator, I have been firmly committed to the process of learning to teach as a relational and co-constructed endeavour. This is in contrast to a transmissive approach to learning where success or failure (preparedness or ill-preparedness) is located solely in the student who “provides the individual effort to apply such [propositional] knowledge” (Wideen, Mayer-Smith, & Moon, 1998, p. 2). Some (Britzman, 1991, 2003; McLean, 1999; Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996) have referred to this individualised view as an additive process whereby teacher education, and thus the process of learning to teach, is conceptualised as adding onto the individual the knowledge and technical skills of a teacher. The terms “front-end loading” and the “just-in-case curriculum” (Mulcahy, 2006, p. 65) are evocative of this view, and as Britzman (2003) states, “the euphemistic label ‘teacher training’ captures the essence of this project” (p. 46).

My experiences as a teacher educator suggested, however, that no matter how relational, co-constructed, or well-grounded I believed the content and process of the classes I taught to be, students did not necessarily embrace these messages and some appeared to actively resist them. Furthermore, I had a sense that at times teacher educators and students were often “talking past each other” (Metge & Kinloch, 1978). I did not attribute the problem to students’ lack of understanding as many were academically able. Rather, I considered the situation in pedagogical terms. The pedagogy of teacher education (in which I was complicit) was not sufficiently adroit at addressing the issue of why students might resist some of the processes and content of teacher education. Other teacher educators have had similar experiences and quandaries (Bullough, 2008; Good & Weaver, 2001; Kane, 2007; Loughran & Russell, 1997; McWilliam, 1994; Scheirer, 1998; Yonemura, 1991).

My concerns were shared by other colleagues e.g. Surtees (2003). Yet, the fast pace of change in the colleges of education (where I taught at the time), the contestation over the early childhood benchmark teaching qualification, and other political struggles and debates in the wider teacher education community during the 1990s made it especially difficult to significantly discuss and address these issues within a community of inquiry approach. In addition, ‘teacher educator as researcher’ was not an identity advanced

within colleges of education until more recently (Cameron & Baker, 2004; Clarke, 2001; Zeichner, 1999).

Positioning the teacher education student

Woods (1996) has argued that historically, teacher education has ‘oversimplified complex situations [...] and [created] a deficit view of teachers’ (pp. 21-22). Teacher education has largely been organised around a transmission model of learning where students are ‘filled up’ with knowledge about teaching (Woods, 1996). This view is supported by McLean (1999) who noted how it was only recently that teacher education programmes have begun to acknowledge “the critical relationship between beginning teachers’ lived experience and their professional development” (p. 56) as teachers. Britzman (2003) argues that learning to teach is an existential and relational encounter, not solely an intellectual and individual one. She argues learning to teach involves:

a social process of negotiation ... This dynamic is essential to any humanizing explanation of the work of teachers. Teaching concerns coming to terms with one’s intentions and values, as well as one’s views of knowing, being, and acting in a setting characterized by contradictory realities, negotiation, and dependency and struggle. Yet the normative discourse of learning to teach presents it as an individual dilemma that precludes the recognition of the contradictory realities of school life. The contradiction here is that while learning to teach is individually experienced and hence may be viewed as individually determined, in actuality it is socially negotiated. (p. 31)

In her study (of secondary teacher education) Britzman wanted to go beyond well worn narratives about the ‘problems’ of beginning teachers and locate the story of learning to teach within wider contexts in which cultural myths and dualisms structure the teacher education process. She was interested in tracking how “student teachers became constituted as a problem population” (p. 247) in research on teacher education. Arguing that the process of learning to teach is much more complex and contradictory than dominant conceptions perceive it to be, Britzman “wanted to move beyond the impulse to represent the real story of learning to teach and attempt to get at how the constraints and frustrations of teaching are produced as the real story” (p. 247).

In also suggesting we look to students, Australian teacher educator McWilliam (1994) maintains ‘the problem’ has been with how they have been perceived and positioned within research processes:

Rather than attempt to engage with the voices of pre-service teachers through the language they themselves might choose, teacher education researchers have tended to rely on pre-service teacher reactions to the language of the researcher for reasons of efficiency or perceived scientific rigor. (p. 72)

McWilliam is concerned to understand the process of learning to teach from the perspective of the student and their needs. She argues that much of the research carried out in teacher education has “denied the complexity, contradiction and richness of student language” (p. 72).

Swedish teacher educator Lenz Taguchi (2005) reminds us that in constructivist learning theory, which nowadays underpins many teacher education programmes (Beck & Kosnik, 2006; Kane, 2005; Sumsion, 1996), the fit between what is taught and what is learned is often not perfect. Yet, it is often the student who is blamed for not appropriating ‘correct’ interpretations when it is more likely to be “how the pedagogical practice itself is planned and performed” (Lenz Taguchi, p. 248) that is at issue.

Lastly, Australian teacher educator Martinez (1998) writing about secondary and primary teacher education draws attention to the plight of students “adrift on a sea of knowledges” (p.1) having been left to individually negotiate the various, and at times conflicting, knowledge on how to construct themselves as teachers. In this scenario, it is the student alone who makes sense of the “collected offerings” (Martinez, 1998, p. 4) of their teacher education programme. Martinez argues that a possible cause of the stress experienced by pre-service teacher education students can be attributed to a sense of being isolated and alone in the process of learning to teach. Beauchamp and Parsons (1989, cited in McWilliam, 1994, p. 71) contend “the student teacher is operating in a situation which almost demands him or her to hide, rather than reveal” what sense they make of their teacher education course. They may perceive there is too much risk in sharing any difficulties, confusion or resistance about the content and programme of their teacher education (McWilliam, 1994).

Many of my experiences as a teacher educator resonated with the concerns of the teacher educators/researchers discussed above. In considering a focus for this inquiry I drew on Martinez’s (1998) imagery of students “adrift on a sea of knowledges” (p. 1) to consider ways in which early childhood teacher education students experience, interpret and understand their teacher education and the process of learning to teach. I wanted to know what sense those who had recently completed a programme of teacher education made of that process. Would they consider it as ‘preparation’ and if so what did preparation mean to them?

It is not unusual for research to contribute to increasing the researcher’s self-understanding whilst seeking to understand others (Woods, 1996) and their professional selves (Britzman, 2003; McWilliam, 1994; Miller Marsh, 2002; Segall, 2002).

Undertaking this study presented an opportunity to more fully and systematically investigate the perspectives of students/newly qualified teachers, more so than I found possible as a practicing teacher educator.

Gaps in the literature

Selecting a topic that is of interest to the researcher is recognised as appropriate, but not the sole or sufficient starting point of research (Denzin, 2001; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). As I continued to develop the focus of this inquiry I began to more fully appreciate the under-explored, empirical knowledge base of early childhood teacher education, and in particular, inquiry into the experience of learning to teach for early childhood students (Aitken, 2005; Ryan & Goffin, 2008; Sumsion, 1996). McLean (1999) asserts it is only in the past 20 years that models of teacher education across the Western world, within which I position myself as a Pākehā teacher educator, have begun to afford a central place in the meaning-making and interpretations of students. Prior to this, the predominant model was based on a transmissive pedagogy (McLean, 1999; Sumsion, 1996; Woods, 1996) where student perspectives were not considered central to the process.

Sumsion (1996), however, argues the notion of ‘empowerment’ is implicit in models of teacher education underpinned by a view of learning as constructed. Thus, she argues, there is a pedagogical imperative in these programmes that students’ “voices” (p. 33) are listened to. The use of constructivist and socio-cultural approaches to learning has gained momentum both in early childhood pedagogy (Fleer, 2003a; Ministry of Education, 1996) and among teacher education programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand (Kane, 2005); Ministry of Education, 2007). This includes the two teacher education institutions that are part of this study.

The scarcity of empirical research confirmed my interest in focusing on students’ experiences of early childhood teacher education. A key aim of this study therefore is to address this significant gap in the research literature. In doing so it accords with Cameron and Baker’s (2004) call for research that focuses on different approaches to initial teacher education and more research that informs our understanding about how people are currently being prepared to teach in this country. Kane (2005) specifically identifies the need for discussion and policy development in terms of “the specific

contributions and issues surrounding field-based [early childhood] teacher education programmes” (p. 237) as an important area for research in this country.

Learning to teach: the person in the process

This study rests on the assumption that learning to teach and becoming a qualified teacher substantially entails a search for “personal meaning” (Britzman, 2003, p. 36). Britzman argues from a post-structural perspective that “while personal meaning is the sense each individual makes, it can never be reducible to one essential source” (p. 36). All meaning for Britzman “is historically contingent, contextually bound, socially constructed, and always problematic. Thus any search for meaning must be situated in the practical context within which they are voiced” (p. 36).

McLean (1999), drawing on Britzman (1991), suggests becoming a teacher is about “choosing yourself—making deeply personal choices about who you will be as a teacher. But this is not a solitary or self-contained process—it occurs in a time and place where others, some much more powerful than yourself, are also bent on “constructing” you, in an image they value” (p. 60). Conceptions that recognise “the person in the process” (McLean, 1999, p. 55) of learning to teach need to challenge, however, prevailing humanist notions of the individual as:

a unified, coherent and rational agent who is the author of their own experience and its meaning. Humanism is essentialist; it assumes there is an essence at the core of an individual which is unique, coherent and unchanging. But it also says that the individual’s experience and the meaning it holds originates within the person, their essential nature. (Burr, 2003, pp. 53-54)

The process of choosing ourselves as teachers (and researching) is better understood through being mindful of post-structural conceptualisations of language, identity and power. These concepts, and the theoretical positions they derive from, are able to take account of the complex, contradictory and interpersonal or inter-subjective realities of learning to teach (Britzman, 2003; Mayer, 1999; McWilliam, 1994; Miller Marsh, 2002). Although much teacher education research is situated in the compulsory sector, Sumsion’s (1998, 1999, 2002, 2003) body of work suggests that learning to teach, or being prepared, is no less complex for early childhood teacher education students than it is for primary and secondary counterparts.

Mayer (1999) suggests that there is “no comfortable metanarrative” (p. 3) or single theory of how one learns to be a teacher. Nor is there agreement on what constitutes the body of knowledge on which to base teacher education (Alcorn, 1999;

Britzman, 2003; Cameron & Baker, 2004; Edwards, Gilroy, & Hartley, 2002). Current consensus suggests that learning to teach is complex (Darling-Hammond, 2006a; Davis & Sumara, 1997; Flores, 2001; Goffin & Day, 1994; McLean, 1999; Walshaw, 2008; Wideen et al., 1998; Zeichner & Conklin, 2008), highly personalised (biographical) and contextualised (Mayer, 1999; McLean, 1999) or situated (Gallimore, Ermeling, Saunders, & Goldenberg, 2009). It is therefore considered by most to be an idiosyncratic process that is best understood as a social exchange rather than as the transmission of knowledge about teaching (Britzman, 2003; Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005; Edwards et al., 2002). Despite the increased levels of research and new directions of study in teacher education (Zeichner, 1999) there is also widespread agreement that there is still much to be learned about processes of learning to teach (Cameron & Baker, 2004; Grossman & McDonald, 2008; Kane, 2005; Nuttal, Murray, Seddon, & Mitchell, 2006). This is arguably more so in early childhood education where the empirical knowledge base is thin.

'Preparedness' under erasure

Having adopted a focus on the notion of preparedness through my involvement in the *Making a Difference* study, concurrently I began to question its suitability as a conceptualisation for either teacher education (teacher preparation) or the process of learning (or preparing) to teach. Britzman (2003) is one of the few writers in the field who is also wary of this notion. She argues as a “a common-sense formula” (p. 222) it arose out of normative discourses of teacher education embedded in transmission approaches, adding “[t]o view the problem of learning to teach as simply one of preparedness and ill-preparedness does not allow for the contradictory realities that individual's confront” (pp. 221-222).

As a result of this questioning, I effectively put the notion of preparedness under erasure whilst I carried out the study. Mac Naughton (2005) suggests that erasure allows us to wonder about other meanings because “it shows that we mistrust a word and its meanings” (p. 98). In this way, I came to treat ‘preparation’ as part of the activity I was studying, an object of inquiry due to its relatively unquestioned part of the linguistic landscape of teacher education.

Part II: The study takes shape

Experience as a source of knowledge

In the spirit of feminist epistemologies (Kitzinger, 2004; Ramazanoğlu, 2002; Smith, 1990; Wilkinson & Kitzinger, 1995) I approached this study with the assumption that experience is a source of knowledge. Experience in this sense is “lived rather than picked up or acquired. Something different from mere circumstance” (Britzman, 2003, p. 13). There is an element of consciousness that is termed ‘lived experience’. Ramazanoğlu (2002) defines experience as a “commonsense term referring to people’s consciousness of their social existence” (p. 12). For van Manen (1990), however, lived experience is about attaching significance, either consciously or intuitively to an experience.

Denzin (2001) suggests experience “if it is to be remembered and represented, must be contained in stories that are narrated. We have no direct access to experience as such. We can study experience only through its representations, through the way stories are told” (p. 59). Understandings about how people make sense of experience and “who owns meaning” (Holquist cited in Wertsch, 2001, p. 222) in language based accounts of lived experience are central to claiming experience as a source of knowledge. Although representational issues may arise when approaching recounted narratives of experience as knowledge, personal narratives “provide knowledge that otherwise does not exist” (Ramazanoğlu, 2002, p. 127).

The primary concern of this study has been to understand the perspectives and realities of newly qualified teachers and the ways in which they made sense of their experience of teacher education through the lens of preparedness. While acknowledging the narratives we tell about ourselves are performative in that the selves we present are created rather than revealed through our narratives (Convery, 1999; MacLure, 1993) the story of this thesis gives priority to newly qualified teachers’ interpretations as they recalled their experience of learning to teach.

Research question and methodological orientation

I initially conceptualised this study by asking: how do students/newly qualified teachers make sense of their preparedness for teaching? This question locates the study in the space between newly qualified teachers’ lived experience of learning to teach and the wider socio-political and historical milieu that pre-structures possibilities for

interpretation. Importantly, it signalled my interest in exploring the discourse of preparedness without assuming that newly qualified teachers viewed it that way. Because I wanted to understand the experiences of both pre-service and field-based graduates I drafted the following additional guiding questions:

- Do newly qualified teachers' experiences of preparedness differ when they enter through distinctive programmes and pathways, and if so do the differences matter?
- How is 'preparedness' defined by participating initial teacher education institutions?
- How do the teacher education programme structure, content and processes seek to prepare students for their role as teachers? [later changed to 'role and identity']
- What is the relationship between students' sense of preparedness and official discourses of preparedness?

I drew on the approach and tools of phenomenology to help me access the meanings participants attached to their experiences of 'being prepared' and broadly used the analytic method of Interpretive Interactionism (Denzin, 2001) to interpret and understand their narratives. Whilst this study is located within a phenomenological interpretivist approach to meaning making, it does so in a manner that is mindful of post-structural claims that assert understandings are shaped not solely by the individual, as an essential author, but in tandem with socially inscribed discourses. Post-structural insights and the notion of deconstruction (Garrick, 1999) challenged me to think differently about 'the person', including myself as researcher/teacher educator/woman. I was interested in questions such as 'How does 'the person' become the teacher one wants or desires to be?' and 'In what ways do initial teacher education programmes and the wider socio-political environment contribute (or not) to 'becoming' a teacher?' How I came to understand these questions and others constitute key storylines of this thesis.

I have employed McLean's (1999) phrase 'the person in the process' as a leitmotif to anchor a central assumption underpinning this thesis; that the teacher education student is a central player in the process of learning and being prepared to teach. In my approach to the interviews and participants' narratives I drew from Dahlberg and Moss's (2005) articulation of 'pedagogy of listening'. They consider 'listening' as involving: "being able to hear the ideas and theories of the Other, and to treat them seriously and with respect, neither ignoring them nor dismissing them for not providing the right answer" (p. 99).

I recognise however, that the data stories contained in this thesis are mine, and indicate this by writing in the first person throughout. In doing so I acknowledge that it

is through my agency of “researcher as writer” (Holliday, 2007, p. 120) that the particular data stories are crafted and the thesis argument is developed. For this reason I have previously openly positioned myself as researcher and elsewhere (in Chapter four) include a detailed account of how I moved from data generation to analysis to the written study. This detail is designed to make more transparent, and accountable, research as a form of social action and to recognise that “the presence and influence of the researcher are [not only] unavoidable” (Holliday, p. 137) but are integral to the study.

My research process involved interviewing two groups of newly qualified teachers, both individually and in groups about their experience of teacher education and their sense of preparedness for teaching. One group comprised pre-service students and the other field-based ones. Briefly, the distinguishing feature of field-based programmes is the requirement that students be working (either in a paid or voluntary capacity) in an early childhood centre while concurrently undertaking teacher education. Each group attended a different teacher education institution. Data generation took place from the end of their teacher education programme through to the end of their first eighteen months as newly qualified teachers. This thesis, however, substantially relates to the time engaged in teacher education. I also interviewed the early childhood programme directors of each teacher education institution to understand how each programme conceptualised the process of learning to teach, including notions of preparedness, in order to locate newly qualified teacher accounts.

This thesis rests on a dual claim; that while student/newly qualified teacher participants described the phenomenon of preparedness as ‘*being* knowledgeable’, they primarily understood the process of learning to teach (‘*being prepared*’) as one of *becoming* knowledgeable teachers. Both ‘*being*’ and ‘*becoming knowledgeable*’ were expressed as deeply phenomenological experiences. The significant data story I present in this thesis is about *how* participants accessed the knowledge, rather than *what* that knowledge consisted of.

Overview of thesis

This study is presented in eight chapters. Chapters 1 through to 4 contextualise the study. In this opening chapter I have outlined the focus and purpose of the study and have situated the study by discussing its genesis and my positioning as researcher.

Chapter 2 begins with a brief background to the development of early childhood teacher education in this country. The substantial focus of the chapter, however, is the way in which early childhood teacher education is represented at official and institutional levels. In Chapter 3 I review research that has attended to students and/or newly qualified teachers' sense of preparedness and discuss how undertaking this review provided me with the methodological direction of the study. I began the study, admittedly, with a strong orientation of listening to participants describe their experience of teacher education but, it was through turning to the literature that I came to more fully frame the study. I take up methodological issues in Chapter 4 and also more thoroughly explain the design considerations and the analytic and interpretive processes.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 report the findings of this study. In Chapter 5 I focus on the phenomenon of preparedness –‘*being* knowledgeable’. I argue this is a positioning that is substantially an effect of taking part in teacher education and thus constitutes a key discursive positioning of the teacher education student at this time and in this place. In addition, I suggest newly qualified teachers came to value knowledge most when it is operationalised in relationships. Participants do not value disembodied knowledge for teaching, but they do value knowledge that is engaged and in relation to others.

The substantial argument of this thesis concerns the way in which newly qualified teachers desire to embody their knowledge as ‘knowing practice’—a term I have borrowed from Stephen Kemmis’s (2005) work on professional knowledge.

In chapters 6 and 7 I discuss how the possibilities, or not, for ‘knowing practice’ are aligned to the institutional processes of learning to teach. Chapter 6 considers the experiences of pre-service teachers while Chapter 7 focuses on the experiences of field-based teachers.

In the final chapter (Chapter 8) I bring the stories of newly qualified teachers back together again and discuss how these findings can be linked to the nature of knowledge for teaching. I suggest that whilst the findings of this thesis are at first glance unremarkable when set against the substantive body of literature that has identified the enduring problems of learning to teach (see Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005, pp. 358-389) they offer a way forward for teacher educators in that I have clarified the conditions for understanding the knowledges of teacher education for early childhood teachers. Furthermore, the data stories of this thesis connect the process of learning to teach for early childhood students within and against those of learning to

teach for primary and secondary teachers. At the outset of this study I wondered about the relationship between early childhood teacher education and that of the compulsory sector, given the very different sociopolitical histories and structural realities of each. In this chapter I identify promising lines of inquiry being explored by teacher educators/researchers that support the stories of learning teaching in this study. Thus my aim of listening to newly qualified teachers about how they made sense of their preparation as teachers not only has local resonance but aligns with those nationally and internationally who seek to implement teacher education in more powerful ways.

Chapter 2:

Policy and practice frameworks for early childhood initial teacher education

The process of learning to teach through initial teacher education essentially involves two intertwined journeys. The first is that undertaken by teacher education students as they fashion their identities as teachers from the particular programme they enrol in, but always within and against the socially inscribed and biographical self they bring to the project of becoming a qualified teacher (Britzman, 2003; Brown & McNamara, 2005; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Flores, 2001; Korthagen, 2001; Lampert & Ball, 1998; McLean, 1999; Miller Marsh, 2002).

The second journey is the one taken by teacher educators who are positioned at the nexus between students and early childhood centres and services, and the tertiary institutions in which they are located. All are influenced by government policy and ideology. What is the relationship between these two journeys and the stories they produce or co-produce? How do students' understandings of becoming a qualified teacher emerge from each? How do official bodies represent the process of 'preparing teachers'?

This chapter substantially concerns the latter question. It provides the backdrop for the two programmes involved in this study and the experiences of participants at the level of the institutional discourses.

The purpose of the chapter is to locate this study within recent policy and practice of initial teacher education and the preparation of early childhood teachers. Most newly qualified teachers in this study entered teacher education in early 2002. This was a significant year in terms of teacher qualifications for the sector. In that year the government put in place a policy goal and staged plan (Ministry of Education, 2002) to ensure *all* teachers in teacher-led services be either provisionally, or fully registered by 2012. This not only meant early childhood teachers would be required to hold, as a minimum, the benchmark qualification—at this time set at the (level 7) Diploma of Teaching (ECE)—but through the requirement to be registered teachers it ostensibly unified early childhood teachers with counterparts in primary and secondary education.

This policy was made after more than a decade of contestability regarding what should constitute the benchmark qualification and the nature of knowledge for teachers in the early childhood sector.

I begin the chapter by briefly outlining the history of teacher education in the early childhood sector leading to the decision in the mid-1980s to develop an integrated qualification, the diploma of teaching (ECE) for working with children from birth to school age within a range of early childhood settings. I then link this decision to policy changes across the tertiary education sector in the 1990s that not only undermined this decision but disputed accepted notions about the best way to prepare teachers. I shift focus in Part 2 to examine parts of the official discourse at the time the participants in this study were entering, or engaged teacher education programmes. I do so by examining two key documents that conceptualised the ‘well prepared’ teacher. Despite compelling research that concludes initial teacher education is subject to structural problems and difficulties, and how learning to teach is a complex and demanding task, rarely have these realities been at the forefront of official discourses of teacher education. In the third part of the chapter I explore the extent to which early childhood teacher education can be said to be a distinctive field with its own knowledge base. This part concludes by narrowing the focus, outlining how the two teacher education programmes at the heart of this thesis position themselves in the landscape of the preparation of early childhood teachers.

Brantlinger argues that “all disciplines are fields of struggle and arenas of interest. They are made up of sets of ‘discourse communities’ which promote knowledge and establish the conditions for who speaks and who gets heard” (Brantlinger, 1997 cited in Ball, 2004, p. 1). I open this chapter by discussing how the landscape of teacher education has shifted significantly in the past 20 years due to it being a site of struggle and an arena of interest.

Part I: Early childhood teacher education: beginnings

Institutionalised early childhood education in this country began about the same time as state funded compulsory primary education (which began in 1877). There are references to the existence of kindergartens and crèches from the late 1870s (May, 1997a). The establishment of early childhood services is a history of ‘grass-roots’ activism, mainly by women. A hallmark of the early childhood sector is the diversity of

provision, with a raft of different services each having been established to meet the particular needs and aspirations of its founding constituencies. In general, early childhood services were at the vanguard of social and political change with regards to patriarchal notions of families and the role of women in society (May, 1997a). As such their early develops took part outside the mainstream. Historian Helen May argues that:

How and why particular models of early childhood provision began, the support (or lack of it) which accompanied them, and the rationale of their eventual incorporation (or not) into government-supported services, [has] been a highly political process, centring on relations of power and powerless, acceptance and non-acceptance.

Unlike primary schools and the developing secondary education system, early childhood education services sat firmly outside the state sanctioned education sector. There is some evidence that early kindergartens sought integration with the primary school system (Nuttall, 1989 cited in May, 1997a). Unlike the kindergarten movement in the USA, kindergartens in this country never found acceptance in the school system and to this day remain independent of it. Although they did become part of the education system more broadly in 1947, through policy changes embedded within the *Report of the Consultative Committee on Preschool Education Services*, known as the Bailey Report. The Bailey Report outlined the Government's post-war commitment to early childhood education, giving qualified recognition to the value of preschool education; that is early childhood education provided by the part-day settings of kindergarten and playcentre as these forms were consistent with current ethos of the day. Whilst the recommendations of this report suggested that the state take over early childhood education, namely preschool education, this did not eventuate, in part because kindergartens themselves did not desire this move. Significantly however, the Government began paying kindergarten teachers' salaries' with the insistence that each head teacher be qualified, and also took over other funding and regulatory responsibilities. Kindergartens remained within the community-private sector; which continues to be a feature of the contemporary kindergarten movement. The recommendations of the Bailey Report provided the substantive policy direction for early childhood education for the next forty years (May, 2001).

By comparison, childcare centres (at times called preschools or crèches and more latterly includes those with distinctive philosophies such as Montessori, Steiner, and language immersion settings such as A'oga Amata (Samoan) and Ngā Kōhanga Reo

(Māori)) have a hidden past (May, 1997a), having been established very much on the margins of society (May Cook, 1985; May, 1997a). Deemed through government policy to provide ‘care’, rather than ‘education’ (a false dichotomy as there is “no meaningful distinction between ‘education’ and ‘care’” (Smith & Swain, 1988, p. 3)) they remained outside the state education sector until 1986, when all early childhood services became administered through the Department of Education (nowadays the Ministry of Education). Despite the lack of state interest and control in childcare the sector continued to grow. To illustrate the sector’s marginalisation, it was not until 1960 that any form of state regulations sought to provide a set of minimum standards and practices in childcare services. (For a comprehensive history of the establishment of early childhood services in this country see May, 1997a; 2001.)

The landscape of teacher education

An active commitment to the education (training) of adults working in institutionalised early childhood services has been a longstanding feature of the landscape of early childhood education in this country. Different forms of teacher education, or ‘training’ were linked to the development and philosophy of specific early childhood groups. These arose amid the vagaries of government policy based on ideological divisions which, until the mid-1980s favoured those services providing ‘education’ (kindergartens and playcentres) as opposed to those considered ‘care’ (services such as childcare centres, crèches, pre-schools, kōhangā reo etc).

Early kindergartens included the training of teachers in the Froebelian curriculum. Froebel trained teachers were specifically brought to Aotearoa New Zealand, or immigrated here, from the late 19th century onwards to establish and/or work in Froebel kindergartens. Many of these teachers helped establish the free kindergarten movement which began as a charitable movement working with the urban poor (May, 1997a).

Two-year teacher education was a feature of the kindergarten movement until the introduction of the 3-year integrated diploma of teaching (ECE) in the late 1980s. Initially, students in training attended classes in the afternoon and worked in kindergartens in the mornings. May (1997b) notes that the “training programme was caught between the need for a professional class of kindergarten teachers and the charitable voluntary ethic of the Associations” (p. 8). Strict allegiance to the Froebellian programme did not last long and kindergartens cautiously explored a host of ideas that

May (1997a) collectively terms the “new education”. This was a rich ‘pot-pourri’ of ideas stemming from at times disparate and also convergent (scientific) theories concerning children’s and human development and wider philosophic concerns about education (see May, 1997a, pp. 108-130). By 1947 kindergarten training became more akin to a pre-service route, still offered through kindergarten associations but by this time was partly funded by the government. This arrangement continued until 1975 when programmes moved into the teachers’ training colleges (later named colleges of education) becoming fully funded by the government. The curriculum of kindergarten training was singularly focused on the kindergarten setting and an exclusive focus on children aged 3-5 years (Carr, May, & Mitchell, 1991).

Playcentre (established in 1941), a parent-co-operative movement, and Ngā Kōhanga Reo (established in 1982), which literally means ‘language nest’ (Royal Tangaere, 1997), each established distinctive education and training programmes. Both services are distinguished by a philosophical imperative on family, or whānau as ‘teachers’; although it is important to note that assumptions underpinning these terms vary widely between the two services (Smith & Swain, 1988). With respect to playcentre, May (2001) notes “positioning the mother on a level with the trained kindergarten teacher was a bold move, dictated partly by pragmatics: there was no other source of teachers, and no money … [The approach] fused supervisor (i.e. teacher) training and parent education” (p. 24). For kōhanga reo it is cultural ownership underpinned by a commitment to whānau principles that largely determines who the kaiako/teachers are: “kohanga reo is a movement which embraces the whanau, extended whanau, hapu, and te iwi Māori. It is on this foundation that the kaupapa of kohanga reo was built” (Royal Tangaere, 1997, p. 42). Since 1992 Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust has provided a three-year programme of teacher education (Tino Rangitiratanga Whakapakari) that is equivalent to the diploma of teaching (May, 2001) and other education provision for kaiawhina and whānau. More recently, teacher education programmes for those wishing to teach in Māori medium early childhood programmes not directly aligned with Te Kōhanga Reo have also been developed (see Ministry of Education, 2006a).

Services based on Montessori and Steiner philosophies were established in the 1970s and each movement continues to the present. Each draws on their parent philosophies and teacher education curricula as ideal teacher education for teachers in those services. It is possible nowadays to undertake an approved Bachelor of Education

(ECT) teaching qualification with an endorsement in either Montessori or Steiner teaching (see Ministry of Education, 2006a).

Initiatives to establish various Pasifika early childhood language nests in the 1980s were accompanied by a desire for culturally specific ‘training’ (May, 2001). Early programmes were set up in the same way as for other services; as ‘do it yourself’ initiatives. Aligned with these initiatives, the New Zealand Childcare Association established a network of Pasifika area training supervisors in field-based teacher education in 1988 to support Pasifika teacher education trainees. Other initiatives also took place to support the education of teachers to ensure Pasifika centres could not only continue with their desire for culturally specific early childhood education, but also to access government funding for their continued operation (see May, 2001, pp. 194-199). For example, an A’oga Amata Training Centre in Wellington was set up in 1987 and by 1993 had trained almost 300 women (Meade et al., 1998). More recently diploma programmes for those teaching, or desiring to teach, in “Pasifika-focused” (Ministry of Education, 2006a, p. 14) early childhood settings have been established by a small number of teacher education institutions (see Ministry of Education, 2006a).

Childcare, “an amorphous group of services defined in regulation as everything that was not a free kindergarten or a playcentre” (Carr et al., 1991, p. 2), did not have a collective vision until the formation of the New Zealand Association of Child Care Centres (NZACCC) in 1963 (later called the New Zealand Childcare Association - NZCA). One of the Association’s enduring political goals was to secure qualifications for staff already working in childcare centres. Thus NZACCC/NZCA has been largely identified with field-based teacher education; a project advanced simultaneously on two fronts. First, through political activism to get childcare recognised as an acceptable and integral form of early childhood service, and second, through their own initiatives, in the absence of government support, to set up qualifications. The first of these was an arrangement brokered by NZACCC for childcare workers to undertake the Royal Society of Health Certificate of Childcare from London (May, 2001).

Ultimately NZACCC developed a one-year full-time field-based programme which most students completed within three years (New Zealand Working Party on Childcare Training, 1986). Because of a lack of government funding (and regulations) covering qualifications for childcare workers this “began on a shoestring budget, with volunteer tutors” (May, 2001, p. 169). Initially it was reported many of those working in childcare centres desired to access “training for their own satisfaction” (von Sturmer & Carpenter,

1981, p. 15), although changing regulatory conditions and later the establishment of award rates based on qualifications meant there were external inducements too.

In 1975, as the result of lobbying government, a one-year (pre-service) course for prospective childcare workers was established at Wellington Polytechnic. This attracted enrolments from the length and breadth of the country. The programme was relocated to Wellington Teachers College in 1984 when the (Labour) government ordered the establishment of one-year (childcare) certificate programmes in four of the six colleges of education (Carr et al., 1991). In 1977, the Auckland Technical Institute set up a 36 week course and a correspondence course was offered through Massey University (von Sturmer & Carpenter, 1981).

In addition to the graduates of these programmes, qualified primary and kindergarten teachers worked in childcare centres, as did those with playcentre and other qualifications. A host of qualifications were deemed suitable for centres to apply for an ‘A’ license under the first licensing regulations that were instituted in 1985.

Teacher education policy on the move

While government involvement in early childhood teacher education prior to 1988 was narrow, two reports indicate important shifts in thinking. In 1951, the ‘Campbell Report’ (New Zealand Consultative Committee on the Recruitment Education and Training of Teachers, 1951) recommended kindergarten training (the province of the autonomous kindergarten associations) be located in the teachers’ colleges alongside primary teacher training. Failing to come to fruition at that time, the recommendation resurfaced two decades later in the *Report of the Consultative Committee of Inquiry into Pre-School Education* (also known as the Hill Report, Hill, 1971). When kindergarten teacher education did move to the training colleges in 1975, an effect of this shift was that the cohesion of the former kindergarten programmes was lost (May, 1997b). While in May’s view the shift brought long term benefits, in the short term the “disadvantage was a programme in which large sections were structured around school subjects with adaptations from primary [subjects] down to early childhood” (p. 19). The Hill Report also recommended both kindergarten teachers and those working in the childcare sector undergo a 3-year teacher education qualification bringing them into line with primary teachers. This did not eventuate until 1988 with the introduction of the (integrated) diploma of teaching (ECE)—a qualification designed to enable graduates to work across the recently amalgamated early childhood sector.

The election of a Labour government in 1984, and again 1987, with a focus on social equity and a commitment to early childhood education in its broad sense (May Cook, 1985; May, 2007; Meade, 1997, 2000), enabled each shift to ultimately be achieved. The location of all early childhood services under the one government department (Education) and the establishment of the 3-year (integrated) diploma of teaching were significant policy shifts (May, 2001). May (2007) notes how the movement of the childcare sector from outside education to inside, a shift that was a world ‘first’, was effectively the result of 20 years of “activism and persuasion by women and early childhood organization (p. 136). This was a prolonged campaign within childcare (mostly through the NZACCC), and the union and women’s movements throughout the 1970s and 1980s to transfer childcare services from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education. Proponents sought to divest early childhood services of welfare ideology and laissez-faire policies in which they were enmeshed (May, 2001, 2007).

The decision to develop an integrated diploma of teaching (ECE) (Dip.Tch ECE) “placed New Zealand at the forefront of progressive thinking on tertiary early childhood training” (May, 1997b, p. 23). While other jurisdictions have since achieved similar outcomes, the pervasive and intransigent structural divisions between ‘care’ and ‘education’ remain in place in many countries with a concomitant hierarchy of qualifications and status for those working in the early childhood sector (Moss, 2000, 2006).

These shifts in policy were achieved due to “an evolving network of people” (Meade, 1999 cited in May, 2001, p. 122) who moved the agenda and its associated discourses forward, both within and against changing government policy directions. The shift from a bifurcated early childhood sector divided along artificial care and education lines (Smith & Swain, 1988) to an integrated sector came to be premised on the notion of all children having equal rights to quality early childhood education, which included suitably qualified teachers irrespective of the service children attended. However, it encompassed and was framed around a much broader set of discourses such as the interests and rights of women and the unionisation of those working in childcare. These can be linked to the campaign to integrate the sector and the drive for an integrated teaching qualification (Meade, 2000). Concomitantly, the neo-liberal rhetoric of quality was building, as was evidence about the importance of qualified staff in terms of quality early childhood.

Much of the dialogue of the time, both political and scholarly, coalesced in the recommendations of the report of the Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group *Education to Be More* (1988) (known as the Meade Report). Many of the recommendations were subsequently picked up in the government policy document *Before Five* (Lange, 1988; May, 1999; Meade, 1997), which endorsed the diploma of teaching and included the registration of teachers on the same basis as teachers in other sectors of education. As an important aside, May (2001) considers interest in early childhood education in the 1980s as part of a longer term, broader government policy agenda in education as contributing to economic goals. This is a focus, which was rearticulated and reinforced through the policy document *Pathways to the Future: Nga Huarahi Arataki, the 10-year Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Education* (Ministry of Education, 2002; Nuttall, 2005).

The diploma of teaching (ECE)

The core content and general parameters of the three-year (pre-service) integrated diploma of teaching (Dip.Tch (ECE)) were mapped out through two working groups (kindergarten and childcare). The report of the *New Zealand Working Party on Kindergarten Training* (1986) recommended that the existing 2 year qualification be extended to 3 years. It was the *New Zealand Working Party on Childcare Training* (1986) that recommended an integrated diploma be developed. A subsequent working party was set up to examine the establishment of field-based delivery of the diploma (New Zealand Working Party on Field-Based Training, 1988). Field-based diploma programmes were developed and instigated once the pre-service programmes were up and running. The (pre-service) diploma was ‘rolled out’ in a staged manner through the colleges of education beginning with the first two institutions in 1988. (See Carr, May & Mitchell, 1991 who provided an insight into the programme development process at one college of education/university). The field-based qualification offered through NZCA (now renamed Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/NZ Childcare Association) remained in the interim. When it became possible, in the early 1990s, for institutions other than colleges of education to offer the diploma of teaching (ECE) this organisation subsequently developed a field-based diploma programme.

The diploma was designed to enable graduates to work with children from birth to school age across the sector, and to work (teach) in a manner that preserved the

philosophic diversity of programmes and services graduates would ultimately be employed in. All other training and education programmes stayed in place (such as playcentre supervisor training).

The *Report of the Working Party on Childcare Training* (1986) recommended the diploma programme consist of four general areas: education studies; curriculum studies; selected (personal, liberal) studies; and, practical teaching experience. Cutting across each of these areas were five themes: cultural diversity; inclusion (especially infants under two and children with special needs); language studies (including acquisition of first language, English as a second language, and to develop fluency in a second language preferably te reo); parents in education; and, personal growth (Report of the Working Party on Childcare Training, 1986). The report emphasised how “practical experience is an integral and important part of training. ...Upgrading training does not mean making courses entirely theoretical: theory should relate to practice, and that practice should occur within the context of high quality centres” (p. 20). Furthermore, it was suggested that “integration between theory and practical should be encouraged in all courses” (p. 20).

The Diploma of Teaching (ECE) subsequently became the benchmark qualification for services wanting to access increased levels of government funding through being chartered and licensed (see Meade, 1997). Initially, this meant that at the least the supervisor (as in most childcare services) or head teacher (as in kindergarten) was required to hold the diploma (kindergarten teachers with the 2-year kindergarten diploma were grand-parented to the 3-year diploma). For other services however, being licensed and chartered meant conforming to a set of regulations that arguably had the potential to erode their special character (Royal Tangaere, 1997); a situation that has recently been found to be impacting on Montessori centres with the 100% qualified teacher rule (see Dalli, 2010). A phasing-in process was put in place whereby all ‘persons responsible’ (the person who is responsible for ensuring that licensing and chartering requirements are being met in each centre or service) were required by 1995 to hold the diploma, or its equivalent (see below). At that time it was envisaged by the year 2000 *all* adults working in licensed and chartered services would be required to hold as a minimum the Diploma of Teaching (ECE).

An upgrading pathway, known as “equivalence to the diploma” was provided for those with prior qualifications. The diploma was deemed as equal to 120 points and ‘lesser’ qualifications and courses were assigned point values which individuals could

amalgamate towards a qualification called ‘Equivalence to the diploma’. A newly established body, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), oversaw this system (May, 2001).

This situation was short lived however. In late 1990 a change of government brought with it a change of view and policy regarding the ‘need’ for fully qualified teachers and the 120 point diploma. New regulations (the Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations, 1990) were gazetted which no longer required the “person responsible” to hold a diploma (or equivalence to the diploma) but to hold 120 points. The decade of the 1990s saw an erosion of the notion of an integrated diploma of teaching as the benchmark qualification. However, by the end of the decade the diploma was reinstated. I will return to this discussion shortly.

Positioning the early childhood ‘worker’ as ‘teacher’

It is worth pausing to ask how early childhood ‘workers’ came to be constructed as ‘teachers’, and why there would be a single benchmark qualification (Diploma of Teaching) at a level consistent with primary teachers. This is especially curious in light of the diversity of the early childhood sector. In the 1980s the only early childhood service where ‘teachers’ worked was kindergarten. I suggest the key to these two questions lies, in large part, with the determination to locate those services termed ‘childcare’ *within* the education sector, rather than a restructuring of the sector and its services, as took place in Denmark (see Moss, 2006). The overall aim of integration was to preserve the diversity of existing services, as each had evolved to meet a social need and collectively constituted a rich provision of services, but to administratively locate them within the education sector.

Prior to integration, different official linguistic terms were associated with the divide between care and education with *childcare* and preschool *education* (Meade, 1997 - italics added). Smith and Swain (1988) note how American early childhood scholar Dr Bettye Caldwell coined the term ‘*educare*’ “to suggest the inseparability of the two terms” (p. 3) ‘care’ and ‘education’. Meade (1997), whose contributions significantly shaped the early childhood field, notes how these terms were replaced first by “early childhood care and education” (p. 36), and subsequently shortened to “early childhood education” (p. 36). Meade notes how linguistic shifts were important because of the

significance first, on the term ‘education’ coupled with early childhood *teachers*. I will return to Meade’s reasoning shortly.

The term ‘teacher’, like all symbols, does not hold any inherent meaning but meanings are inscribed on it. The shift to the signifier ‘teacher’ as part of the linguistic (discursive) landscape was considered problematic by some. This was a concern based principally on the notion that ‘teacher’ might not carry sufficient expectations about the need to also ‘care’ for children; as reflected in a 1978 NZCA submission (related to the registration of teachers) as reported by von Sturmer and Carpenter (1981):

in a full time childcare centre there is no division between nurturing and educating. No one person is responsible for educating while others do the caring. ... Teaching and learning happen naturally all the time in the midst of caring and sharing life together. We aim for the development of the whole child, not only education or intellectual development, important though these are. Therefore, childcare staff do not usually class themselves as teachers. (p. 28)

Concerns about the discursive construction of the teacher are also reflected in the then Department of Education briefing to the teachers colleges (later termed colleges of education) with respect to the introduction of the 3-year integrated diploma:

We want to train people to work with children within the family. We are going beyond a centre based focus and into the context of the family and culture. We are partners with other significant adults in the child’s life as well as partners with other professionals. Therefore training must be conscious of the role all these people play. ...We want to train the sort of person who will use training as a springboard to many diverse situations. We are looking to ways of encompassing a wider range of people. (Renwick, 1988 cited in Carr, May, & Mitchell, 1991, p. 379)

My reading of Renwick’s statement is that the colleges were being encouraged to expand the discursive construction (“role”) of the teacher when developing the diploma, while concomitantly ‘training’ a more diverse population than they had traditionally worked with.

Similarly, the *Report of the Working Party on Field-Based Training* (1988) suggests how members of that group had reservations about the ability of the teachers’ colleges to meet the needs of those who would be engaged in field-based teacher education. In ‘taking on’ field-based teacher education the report stated how this form of training:

will enable teachers colleges to provide appropriate opportunities for many people who may not otherwise have been able to undertake training. It is a real opportunity for colleges to recognise the plural nature of society, the diversity of people and languages that exists in New Zealand and to develop a non-racist curriculum which honours the promises of the Treaty of Waitangi to Māori people and which reflects and responds to the aspirations of the many people that make up New Zealand society. (p. 15)

There are hints in this text suggesting the colleges were more familiar with homogenous population, and how offering training to non-traditional groups of students might be a challenge for them. The implication is, unless the college image of the teacher shifted this might disadvantage the field-based student. So, while reservations were expressed in terms of how colleges might embrace the new diversity of potential applicants there were also concerns about expanding the discursive construction of the teacher. In other words, could the colleges not only accommodate diversity, including candidates who were already education ‘workers’, but produce graduates in response to an increasingly diverse community; whether they have been ‘workers’ or not?

Returning to Meade’s (1997) analysis of the importance of the linguistic shifts, she argues how, at the time, she and others had a vision of a reconceptualised worker/teacher in contrast to prevailing discursive constructions. Using the notion of webs of influence, Meade notes that prior to the integration of early childhood services in 1986 “those in the political web [had] been clear for years that the discourse about policies must be focused on *educational* purposes and benefits. Children have gained from this” (p. 36 -italics in original).

For Meade (1997), political webs were woven through the coming together at conferences to discuss the shape of an integrated early childhood education sector. These included, but were not confined to educational forums. As a member of the web of scholars, Meade and others had a vision whereby what took place in early childhood services could be framed around more powerful theories and pedagogical tools that incorporated a vision for the early childhood teacher. This shift in the notion of what constituted a teacher was aligned to the central goal of integration—a focus in the rights of children and parents to high quality early childhood services. These teachers would reject prevailing developmental and/or behavioural explanations and significantly encompass affective and socio-cultural elements of teaching. This is in contrast to the dichotomy assumed whereby the synthesis of nurturing and education does not constitute ‘teaching’ in the minds of some as evidenced previously in the von Sturmer and Carpenter (1981) derived quotation “childcare staff do not usually class themselves as teachers” (p. 24).

May (2007) argues how the introduction of the diploma of teaching (ECE) was the starting point of the shift from worker to teacher: “Thus began the creation and emergence of early childhood teachers who would not necessarily teach in kindergartens but get employment as a ‘worker’ in a childcare centre” (p. 136).

While the early childhood workforce in this country is no longer linguistically split between ‘teachers’ and ‘workers’ this shift appears to have taken place relatively silently as few commentators appear to have discussed it; although the debate about qualifications for those working in the sector is an argument about the discursive construction of that worker. From my exploration of the literature it is not clear when the term ‘worker’ was no longer in use by those in childcare centres, or conversely when adoption of the term ‘teacher’ took hold. The amalgamation of the Early Childhood Workers Union with the Kindergarten Teachers Association in 1990 to form the Combined Early Childhood Union of Aotearoa was arguably instrumental in this shift. As was the subsequent amalgamation of the combined union with the primary teachers’ union (The New Zealand Educational Institute—Te Riu Roa) in 1993.

The development (including the draft process (see Te One, 2003)) of the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki: Early childhood curriculum. He Whāriki Mātauranga mo nga Mokopuna o Aotearoa* (Ministry of Education, 1996) (hereafter *Te Whāriki*) was another milestone. Inherent in this document is the notion of teachers who understand its theoretical and applied complexity (May, 2007). Implementation of *Te Whāriki* remains a key goal of educational policy (Ministry of Education, 2002). Taylor (2007) argues how *Te Whāriki*, along with other networked documents and practices have now “woven together to form regimes of truth” (p. 157) that influence the way teachers in this country carry out their work.

With the introduction of the 10-year strategic plan (Ministry of Education) for early childhood education in 2002, consolidation of the role and identity of the teacher took place with the designation of ‘teacher-led’ services (in contrast to those that are parent-led such as playcentre, playgroups and some kōhanga reo) and the associated goal of a workforce that would be 100% fully qualified as registered teachers.

Consolidation of the term ‘teacher’ is significant. Moss (2000) argues the ways in which the early childhood worker (or teacher) is conceptualised and constructed lead to different expectations of the role and identity of this worker. Currently early childhood teachers are being positioned within a discourse of professionalism (Dalli, 2006; Ministry of Education, 2006b; New Zealand Teachers Council, 2007). Like all discourses, the discourse of professionalism is highly contested (Manning-Morton, 2006; Moss, 2006; Osgood, 2006). Paraphrasing Gibbons (2007a), who gets to play the game of deciding which discursive construction of the teacher and professionalism is on offer to prospective teachers is vitally important, as each of these has implications for

‘preparedness’, since differing expectations lead to the question of preparedness *for what?*

In the next section I consider how the changes in early childhood teacher education that began in the 1990s, and continue to today, were interwoven with policy and practice frameworks across the education sector.

Undermining the diploma: educational policy in the 1990s

By the late 1990s there had been further major discursive shifts in the early childhood field. Substantial reforms of the education sector (Codd, 1999; Lauder, Middleton, Boston, & Wylie, 1988; Peters, Marshall, & Massey, 1994) corresponding with the neo-liberal notion of ‘quality’ and set within a broad political agenda of economic rationalism (Codd, 1997) came to frame education significantly in economic and market driven terms (Alcorn, 1999; Boston, 1991; Jesson, 2000). The allied deregulation of teacher education made provision contestable. Furthermore, the student was positioned as a consumer in the education market place and a plethora of courses opened up for potential students to choose from. By 1994, 36 different early childhood courses had been approved by NZQA (Farquhar, 1994) and by 1996 there were 65 different providers with 50 different qualifications on offer (Education Review, May 8, 1996). Tertiary education became destabilised so that the power of professional autonomy was decentred in favour of the user, the consumer of education.

The mission of the recently formed government body, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) was consistent with this shift, through signalling a move from knowledge as process to knowledge as product. The proposed framework for qualifications in the tertiary sector was based on a narrowly instrumentalist view of learning (Codd, 1997) and an allied shift to the language of learning outcomes and competencies. “Understanding is replaced by competence; insight is replaced by effectiveness; and rigor of interactive argument is replaced by communication skills” (Barnett, 1994, cited in Codd, 1997, p. 137).

NZQA played a significant role with respect to early childhood teacher qualifications supported by policies of the newly elected National (conservative) government in 1990. First, a number of new early childhood courses were registered by private training providers keen to take advantage of the deregulated environment. Second, two standards-based national qualifications, one at level 3 on the qualifications

framework and one at level 5, were established. The level 5 qualification was deemed to carry 40 points, thus allowing it to be used for ‘points’ purposes. (The diploma of teaching was sited at level 7.) And third, the points value of the diploma of teaching was dropped from 120 to 100. Thus people began gathering points in order to be licensed and not towards a coherent qualification. Moss (2000) asserts the designation of 100 points was a compromise position between the Ministry of Education recommendation of a continuation of the 120 points and the New Zealand Treasury position of 80 points—the equivalent to a two year qualification. These changes arguably mark ideological battles that continue in terms of retaining the benchmark qualification for all regulated teachers in early childhood services.

These new directions were met with opposition by many educationalists (Carr & May, 1993; Codd, 1997; Dalli, 1993) who feared this would lead teacher education programmes down the skilled technician line at the expense of the more predominant formulation of the reflective practitioner working within a context-orientated view of knowledge. As it turned out, the universities and colleges of education managed to largely avoid the ideology of the NZQA. But for the early childhood sector this change in focus, including a change in locus of control over teacher qualifications, was potentially damaging.

May (1996) argued that while the imposition of standards might remove the very low quality courses she believed had crept in under the new conditions she was concerned that “much of the innovation and high academic levels” (p. 68) of the diploma of teaching might be erased given the conformity inherent in the standards model. Carr (1993 cited in May, 1996) compared this as a choice between the competency model and the teacher change model. She argued the former model was promoted by NZQA and the latter by those programmes offered by the colleges of education and/or the universities.

In this debate about the nature of knowledge for teaching and of the identity of the early childhood adult are shades of the worker/carer (technicist /competency based) teacher (professional/change) dichotomy. This issue continues to be present with Gibbons (2007) recently returning to the dichotomy between care and education, albeit in a more nuanced revisiting. Gibbons argues that notions of care and who cares have been subsumed into an educational model whereby the ‘care’ factor “is predominantly regarded as an inferior practice to education” (p. 125). In the binary of care and education, within our current political climate of economic rationalisation and

surveillance, care is considered the lesser of the two and as such Gibbons argues its worth has been diminished. Additionally, nowadays the child is a subject to be “constructed to contribute to an information society” (p. 127) and Gibbons argues that teachers are largely unaware of their complicity in this project of education.

Gibbons (2007), furthermore, suggests that had an exploration of what it means to care and to educate been undertaken, using ideas advanced by scholars such as Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault, then notions of care *as* education may have eventuated. Underlying Gibbons’ critique is a concern that those who have traditionally cared for children have been ‘othered’ by contemporary discourses of education. Gibbons suggests keeping this conversation about care and education open, given both are social constructions and to constantly problematise these terms. His critique is pertinent as a 2005 Ministry of Education publication *Discover Early Childhood Teaching* (Ministry of Education, 2005a) positions the teacher towards an instrumentalist bias (as I argue shortly).

In 1998 “the government sought to tidy up the chaos” (May, 2001, p. 250) of early childhood teacher qualifications. It was not until a change of government in 1999 that a way forward was proposed however. By this time just 35% of the paid staff in early childhood services held the diploma of teaching (ECE) or its equivalent, 20% had no qualification and 50% had lower level qualifications (May, 2001). It was decided the requirement of the diploma of teaching (ECE) for ‘persons responsible’ be extended to 2005. It was then announced that all teachers would be required to hold the benchmark qualification of the diploma by 2012. (As mentioned previously this target has since been amended and the target is now for 80% of teachers to be fully qualified by 2012. Although in kindergartens covered by the Education Act 1989 the requirement is for 100% registered (qualified) teachers.) Those ‘caught’ with lower level qualifications were offered a system of free recognition of prior learning through approved teacher education providers to help them upgrade to the diploma of teaching (or a teaching degree).

Summary

So far I have broadly outlined early childhood education, and in particular teacher qualifications as a site where different interests have vied for discursive dominance. By the time I began this study qualifications for those working in most early childhood services were firmly linked to ‘teaching’ and the designation of a teacher-led service. I turn in the next part to examine ways in which two bodies that exert a powerful

influence on the content and direction of initial teacher education in this country conceptualise the well prepared teacher. These are the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Teachers Council, an autonomous Crown Entity set up in 2002, whose purpose is to be the professional and regulatory body for all registered teachers.

Part II: Being “as well prepared as possible”: official discourses

Students’ experiences of teacher education, and indeed any socially and culturally situated experience, do not occur in a vacuum. Although the content and underlying assumptions of key documents are contestable, officially sanctioned documents represent the dominant discourse regarding teacher education institutions (Moore, 2004). As Novinger and O’Brien (2003) suggest, “regulations and accreditation standards function to construct a particular kind of early childhood teacher with particular kinds of knowledge and skills” (p. 12). In this regard, a critical consideration of the documents, their language and the possible discourses that they draw from and (re)produce, can provide useful insights about the dominant understandings of, and influences on, teacher education (Burr, 2003; Moore, 2004).

I have used a Foucauldian understanding of discourse theory and analysis as a theoretical tool for examining the understandings of, and approaches to, initial teacher education within relevant, key documents and policies (Burr, 2003; Davies, 1994; Moore, 2004). Alex Moore (2004) uses the term ‘discourse’ to:

denote the constructed parameters within which our perception(s) of the social world and our actions within it are framed – parameters essentially produced and sustained by language and ‘knowledge’ and (at least in the case of what I am calling ‘dominant discourses’) controlled and patrolled by ideologies that generally serve the interests of the already powerful at the expense of the already disempowered. (p.28)

Moore (2004, pp. 28-30) describes four key characteristics of ‘discourse’ from a Foucauldian perspective. These characteristics are ‘naturalisation and concealment’, ‘social construction’, ‘authority and legitimacy’, and an ‘inhibiting and delimiting effect’. With these as conceptual tools, documents can be closely analysed. In this section I use these four characteristics of discourse to interpret two initial teacher education documents: the Teachnz publication *Discover Early Childhood Teaching: Teacher education qualifications for 2005* (Ministry of Education, 2005a) and the Teachers Council document *Standards for Qualifications that Lead to Teacher Registration: Guidelines for the approval of teacher education programmes* (New

Zealand Teachers Council, 2002). These documents were analysed in order to understand what ‘being prepared’ means to official bodies and what discursive construction or image of the “particular kind of teacher” (Novinger & O’Brien, 2003, p. 12) is promulgated through these texts.

Ministry of Education construction of the early childhood teacher

This booklet, *Discover Early Childhood Teaching* published by the Ministry of Education (2005a), provides information about working in early childhood education and the range of approved teacher qualifications. I am concerned here with the framing of the early childhood teacher as conveyed through written text in the first part of the document—the Ministry preamble to teacher education provider content. The booklet describes the teacher as someone who develops both “professional skills” and “personal qualities” (Ministry of Education, 2005a, p. 4).

Professional skills include the teacher as “working closely with young children and their families” (Ministry of Education, 2005a, p. 4); “understand[ing] the vital importance of the first five years of children’s development” (p. 4); someone who can “really make a difference to young children’s lives” (p. 4); and as “meet[ing] the same professional teacher standards [as other teachers]” (p. 7) with “the only difference [between early childhood and primary teachers] is that early childhood teachers teach children aged from birth to five years” (p. 4).

The personal qualities and related outcomes of choosing teaching as a profession include: “a chance to make the most of your passion for working closely with young children and their families” (Ministry of Education, 2005a, p. 4) “lov[ing] working with children” (p. 4); “teaching builds flexible and portable skills and offers a choice of careers paths” (p. 4).

Overall, the image communicated is of the teacher as nested in traditional discourses of the ‘good teacher’; a caring and competent “crafts person” (Moore, 2004, p. 75) who meets standards. Teachers’ work is described as “helping [to] put the building blocks in place that set young children on a pathway to a successful education” (Ministry of Education, 2005a) that will “set them up for life” (p. 4). These notions communicate a narrow individual, instrumentalist and future-focused view of the teacher and teaching. I suggest it is a view of teachers as experts who act *on* children who are assumed as passive recipients of pre-determined knowledge and skills (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence,

2007; Fleer, 2005). While the teacher is busy preparing the child for the future, they too are working towards their own future through developing or acquiring “flexible and portable skills” (Ministry of Education, 2005a, p. 4).

A further image of the teacher is of someone who has strong affective ties to her/his work with children and families. While this image is not in dispute, the statement that the early childhood teacher chooses her/his profession because “they love working with young children” (Ministry of Education, 2005a, p. 4) can be problematic as this framing can tap into discourses of maternalism (Ailwood, 2007). These discourses consider teaching to be woman’s role, and align it with ‘mothering’ (Dalli, 2006; May, 2001; McBride & Grieshaber, 2001) thus constraining images of the teacher as having a formal knowledge base on which to premise her/his work (as opposed to mothering) and concomitantly as an appropriately remunerated professional (see also Smith & Swain’s, 1988, pp. 140-144 discussion re mothering and teaching).

A question raised by the conflation of early childhood teachers and teaching with primary teachers is, ‘what image of the teacher does this statement bring to mind, sanction and perhaps legitimate for prospective early childhood teachers? Nuttall’s (2004) research shows how working in groups, as early childhood teachers in this country do, is a significant structural and interpersonal feature of their working lives. On a minute by minute, and on a daily basis, early childhood teachers negotiate curriculum decision making in a context quite unlike that of the traditional image of primary teachers.

Working collaboratively alongside other teachers is therefore an important image to project to prospective teachers and one that may not be conjured up by the image of the primary teacher. Prospective teachers are alerted through the booklet to how “working with young children is challenging—yet very rewarding” (Ministry of Education, 2005a, p. 4). However, much research points to how working in teaching teams is the more challenging part of teaching in early childhood, especially for the newly qualified teacher (Aitken, 2005; Mahmood, 2000; Nuttall, 2006; Sumsion, 2004).

An instrumental image of the future-focused teacher, and of the teaching and learning process, does not sit well with the image communicated within the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996). *Te Whāriki* emphasises learning and teaching as contextualised, intersubjective, and as grounded in ethically based pedagogy involving working to facilitate children, family and community ‘belonging’, ‘participation’, ‘inclusion’ and ‘contribution’. Although knowledge of

child development is arguably contained in *Te Whāriki*, anyone suggesting that *Te Whāriki* describes teaching as focusing primarily on setting children up for their future by putting “building blocks in place that set young children on a pathway to a successful education” (Ministry of Education, 2005a, p. 3) would be on extremely shaky ground (Fleer, 2003a).

The emphasis on these pre-requisites raises questions about what alternative constructions may have been included in such a document. Images such as those that alert prospective teachers, for example, to the reflective thinking and practices that constitutes working in, and contributing to, quality early childhood care and education settings (Dahlberg et al., 2007; Moss & Petrie, 2002), or to an image of the teacher working biculturally (Ritchie, 2003). The teacher as an intellectual is missing in this account, as is the person who is knowledgeable about supporting and responding to children’s curiosity and working theories, and who can act as a co-constructor or collaborator in children’s investigations (Hedges & Cullen, 2005). Moreover, images of the teacher as an advocate for children’s rights (May, 2003; Meade, 1988; Te One, 2005) and active participant in a just and democratic society (Rinaldi, 2006) are also missing, as are messages about prospective teachers gaining membership of a vibrant, critically conscious, and ethical teaching profession (Code of Ethics National Working Group, 1995; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005)

Sumsion (2003) has argued the case for expanding the range of discursive constructions available to the early childhood teacher so they have tools available to understand the social and politically grounded nature of the job. She raises important questions about reframing images of the early childhood teacher in order to attract prospective teachers more aligned to the realities of the job and to what we know reflect current motivations for being involved in early childhood education (May, 2001; Middleton & May, 1997). The future-focused orientation in this document mirrors that of the Strategic Plan (Ministry of Education, 2002) where children are positioned in the foreword by the Minister of Education, as the “social, educational and economic health” (Mallard, 2002, p. 1) of this country. The rhetoric of the future (and a linear view) dominates the discursive construction of both the teacher and the child.

O’Neill (2005) suggests that in documents such as *Discover Early Childhood Teaching* “[t]ypically such images focus on the knowledge, skills, qualities and dispositions that the ‘ideal’ teacher should possess” (p. 116). Yet, as argued, this construction is at odds with that promulgated through the early childhood curriculum *Te*

Whāriki. My analysis suggests that these two ‘arms’ of government discourse are at odds. The discursive construction of the teacher in the document *Discover Early Childhood Teaching* (Ministry of Education, 2005a) is broadly instrumentalist and is thus not well aligned to the image of the teacher as an interpretive pedagogue as required by *Te Whāriki* (Nuttall, 2003). In a number of respects I suggest discursive constructions of the teacher within *Discover Early Childhood Teaching* sit outside important constructions of the teacher that more closely represent sector requirements of the well prepared teacher.

In the next section I take account of The New Zealand Teachers Council (NZTC) requirements for the approval of teacher education programmes current at the time newly qualified teachers in this study entered teacher education. The NZTC largely adopted the process of approving and monitoring initial teacher education programmes (ITE) that the former Teacher Registration Board put in place. The approval process has since been updated (see www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz).

New Zealand Teachers Council requirements for well prepared teachers

The purpose of the policy document *Standards for Qualifications that lead to Teacher Registration* (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002) is to articulate to initial teacher education providers the programme approval process. The prospective teacher is mainly visible because all programmes must “ensure that it prepares teachers to meet the *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions*” (STDs) (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002, p. 4). Programmes must also ensure prospective teachers meet the *Fit to be a Teacher Criteria* (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002, p. 5). The STDs “form a basis for a teacher’s work with learners, future professional development and continued registration [as a teacher]” (p. 4). There are few other references to ‘the teacher’.

The *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions* (STDs) (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002) constitute a range of generic dimensions (Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2007), or content standards applicable across the education sector relating to four areas: ‘professional knowledge’, ‘professional practice’, ‘professional relationships’ and ‘professional leadership’. The curriculum of teacher education must be designed so the STDs for each of these four areas will have been met by teacher education students as a measure of their preparedness. For the newly qualified teacher, the STDs form the

standards that teachers are required to meet in order to become registered (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002, p. 9) and as such are deemed to form the “foundation to be built upon throughout a teacher’s career” (p. 4). Expressed as competencies, the teacher is a ‘doer’ who “creates”, “establishes”, “manages”, “uses”, “provides”, “demonstrates”, “maintains”, “communicates”, “displays”, a host of knowledge and skills. Overall, the teacher is positioned more towards the competent craftsperson (Moore, 2004) and rational individual (Atkinson, 2004) and less towards an image as an interactive, reflexive, interpreting and contextualised individual (Edwards & Protheroe, 2003; Rinaldi, 2006).

As a policy document for the approval of teacher education programmes it ‘smoothes out’ the process of learning to teach. No mention is made of the well known and acknowledged complexities and challenges of learning to teach (Brown & Danaher, 2008; Lampert & Ball, 1998; Sumsion, 1998). Just one mention is given in the STDs to the possibility of teaching as an interpretive practice (Britzman, 2003; Edwards et al., 2002; Nuttal, 2004): “[teacher] reflects on teaching with a view to improvement” (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002, p. 19). This characterisation of reflection as a tool for improvement rests on the notion of a transcendent individual for whom self improvement is relatively unproblematic. It conceals the difficulties of change (Korthagen, 2001) and of being positioned within discursive constructions (or beliefs) such as those brought to teacher education and that are often very difficult to break free of (Wideen, Mayer-Smith & Moon, 1998).

The *Standards for Qualifications* (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002) make it clear that it is the responsibility of the teacher education institution to ensure they have developed a “high quality programme of teacher preparation” (p. 4) to support students to meet the standards embedded in the STDs. Details about what a “high quality programme” might look like are not provided beyond the need to draw from the STDs and a requirement that each teacher education programme be based on the institution’s beliefs, values and philosophical framework.

What seems to be missing or concealed is a vision and expression of common principles and values that constitute a high quality teacher education system and the implications of this for teacher education providers. This is possibly because of the Teachers Council’s very recent inception and problematic status of finding a balance between supporting the profession and meeting government and community demands for accountability (Alcorn, 2004). It is teacher education programmes themselves that

ultimately articulate the shape of the well prepared teacher within the generic parameters outlined by the Teachers Council. For this reason, part of the data generated for this thesis involves interviews with early childhood teacher education providers, focused on the notion of ‘preparation’.

As part of Teachers Council initial scoping of the field of teacher education in this country it embarked, in tandem with the Ministry of Education, on a series of reviews designed to provide an overview of the state of ITE (see Rivers, 2006). In one such project, Kane (2005) undertook a systematic review of teacher education provider documentation. The resulting report, *Initial Teacher Education Policy and Practice* (Kane, 2005), provides a synthesis of this documentation. Its purpose is to ascertain the distinguishing characteristics of qualifications, modes of delivery, and the processes in place to ensure “quality implementation” (p. 7) within providers of ITE in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2004.

In the next part of the chapter I draw on Kane’s analysis to provide an overview and ‘flavour’ of early childhood programmes in this country as described in provider documentation. Following this I profile the two programmes that are at the centre of this study.

Part III: Early childhood teacher qualifications

In reflecting back over one hundred years of early childhood teacher education in this country May (1997b) noted one of the key tasks had been to “shape and structure a cohesive and distinctive field of early childhood teacher education within academic settings that is parallel but not an appendage of primary [teacher education]” (p. 3). A second task May identified was to “broaden the traditional academic field of early childhood beyond the study of child development to include the political, historical, and sociological” (p. 3). With these issues in mind, I now turn to explore how ‘the teacher’ and early childhood teacher education is currently constructed.

The early childhood qualification landscape

In 2005, the landscape of early childhood teacher qualifications was described by Kane (2005) as both complex and diverse:

Qualifications offered range from three-year diplomas of teaching to three or four-year degrees, through to post graduate diplomas for graduates of other teaching or academic qualifications which extend the latter to include the early childhood

sector. The age groups with which students are learning to work are usually from birth to age five ... However, a few institutions offer qualifications for working with the birth to age eight range ... Flexibility is available to students in many forms: the mode of delivery may be full or part time, on campus, field-based or extramural via the computer; qualifications may be full immersion in Māori or Pasifika languages or bilingual; there may be several exit points with differing levels that staircase to higher qualifications; and qualification elements might allow for choice of study in philosophies such as Steiner or Montessori. (p. 17)

At the time participants in this study entered teacher education there were 35 early childhood qualifications offered by 20 different providers. Qualifications were dominated by three-year undergraduate diploma or degree qualifications, with the diploma the most common qualification. Of note, however, is how the Teachers Council (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002) “requires that all teaching qualifications meet the standards for a three year degree ...there will be no difference in the Teachers Council approval requirements for a teaching diploma or a teaching degree” (p. 9). Kane (2005) noted the difference between early childhood diplomas and degrees appeared to be “a stronger focus on theory at degree level” (p. 92) but did not qualify what she meant by ‘theory’.

Conceptual frameworks

As part of teacher education programme approval processes the Teachers Council requires providers to submit a conceptual framework. This is a statement of the philosophical and theoretical foundations from which each programme is designed (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2002). An examination of the frameworks provides a window on what is deemed important to early childhood teacher education programmes in their preparation of teachers. Kane (2005) suggests that an exemplary conceptual framework is one that includes statements about the ways in which institutions understand “‘teaching and learning within the sector’, ‘how best one learns to be a teacher’, and ‘the contexts for which and within which teachers are prepared’” (p. 81), and one that makes explicit “the nature of teaching and how best to learn about it” (p. 51). She also suggests that conceptual frameworks make explicit “the nature of teaching and how best to learn it” (p. 51). The requirement for teacher education programmes to develop a conceptual framework has its roots in a shift away from a content and structure approach to teacher education to one that takes more account of the learning to teach process and the assumptions and research basis that underpins the design of

programmes. Kane asserts that the articulation of a conceptual framework is linked to programme quality.

In analysing the content of the conceptual frameworks of all 35 early childhood qualifications Kane (2005) grouped these according to three themes: the nature of learning and the child as learner in ECE; being/becoming a teacher in ECE; and broader purposes and contexts of ECE. Missing from most frameworks, however, was an articulation of the learning to teach process.

The nature of learning and the child as learner

Conceptualisations of the nature of learning and/or the child as a learner were present in 20 frameworks. These were captured by three sub-themes: early childhood years as a foundation for lifelong learning; children as powerful and competent learners; and, relationships as the cornerstone of learning. The second and third sub-themes closely reflect the discourse of the early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki* and attest to the widespread acceptance of *Te Whāriki* within the early childhood sector since its inception in its draft form (see Murrow, 1995) and its support through teacher education programmes.

Being/becoming a teacher in ECE

Kane (2005) noted that within conceptual frameworks was “prominent attention to beliefs and understandings regarding being and becoming a teacher in early childhood settings” (Kane, 2005, p. 54). This was reflected in eight sub-themes: early childhood teachers as knowledgeable professionals; teachers as reflective practitioners; research informed ITE that acknowledges the interaction of theory and practice; demonstrating an ethic of care and social justice; advocacy for children and families; early childhood as a community of learners in partnerships with parents and whānau; teachers’ work in political, historical, social and cultural contexts; and, the importance of bilingual teachers.

In terms of becoming and being a teacher a dominant positioning is the notion of the early childhood teacher as a knowledgeable professional. One who works across a range of contexts and is expected to have a wide range of knowledge. This was clearly articulated in all but three frameworks (Kane, 2005). The wide range of knowledge included “knowledge of content, curriculum, pedagogy, educational theory and the fundamental purposes and goals of education” (p. 55).

While not all frameworks were explicit about teaching being underpinned by research, Kane (2005) suggests most frameworks included reference to teachers

understanding theory and practice aspects of being teachers, or what she termed as being able to “theorise practice and practice theory” (p. 56).

The notion of teachers and student teachers as ‘reflective practitioners’ was also widely subscribed to by institutions, with a range of conceptualisations being offered. For many, reflection was linked to teacher improvement as signalled in the STDs as mentioned earlier. For others, the purpose of reflection was to enable students to become more critical as teachers.

The positioning of early childhood within a sociological focus was also reflected in most frameworks. Thirty frameworks noted the importance of understanding “teachers’ work in political, historical, social and cultural contexts” (Kane, 2005, p. 58). About half included demonstrating an ethic of care and social justice as central to being and becoming an early childhood teacher. Acting as an advocate for children and families was evident in two-thirds of the frameworks.

Most conceptual frameworks emphasised the importance of teachers working collaboratively with colleagues and with the community, and stressed the importance of this knowledge as a responsibility of teacher education programmes to pass onto students. While most frameworks referred to teachers’ responsibilities in relation to Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi, Kane (2005) noted that few however, specifically mentioned the importance of teachers being bilingual.

The broader purposes, influences and contexts of early childhood education

Within this theme Kane (2005) identified five sub-themes (from the most prevalent to least): context of social reform and valuing diversity; the central position of *Te Whāriki*; socio-cultural theory as a guiding theoretical perspective; commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and biculturalism; and, commitment to Pasifika as a multi-lingual and multi-cultural base. An acknowledgement of diversity was apparent in two thirds of frameworks. This may relate to children, teachers or the diversity of the sector. Many frameworks explicitly identified *Te Whāriki* as being influential in framing their teacher education programmes, including drawing on the principles of *Te Whāriki* to guide the development of programmes. Socio-cultural theory was stated as an influence on programmes in half of all the conceptual frameworks. An acknowledgement of Pacific nation cultures and language was mainly referred to by those programmes and qualifications that were specifically designed for people working in Pasifika language based early childhood education settings.

Early childhood conceptual frameworks discussed by Kane (2005) provide a window on teacher education institutional discourses. Early childhood teacher education programmes reflect how the early childhood sector has developed through its grassroots and political history, as described earlier in this chapter. Constructions of the teacher reflected within teacher education conceptual frameworks promoted a much broader view than either that contained in Teachers Council requirements or within the Ministry of Education (2005c) publication *Discover Early Childhood Teaching*. One of the most prominent constructions of the teacher contained in the conceptual frameworks is the teacher as ‘knowledgeable professional’. This construction is consistent with changes in teacher education based in research focused on teacher thinking that came about in the 1980s when an examination of the knowledge demands of teaching became a significant research platform (Grossman, Hammerness & MacDonald, 1999). (See Cochran-Smith & Fries (2005) for an overview of the shifts in platforms of research in teacher education).

Early childhood—a distinctive field of teacher education?

In terms of philosophical orientation and the nature of programme content as identified within provider conceptual frameworks, it appears that many teacher education programmes have responded positively to May’s (1997a) plea for a “distinctive field of early childhood teacher education” (p. 3). Evidence for this is an emphasis on a sociological focus in most programmes coupled with issues of social justice and equity and an acknowledgement of the sociopolitical situatedness of early childhood education; themes that are evident in the *Report of the Working Party on Childcare Training* (1986). However, given the implicit or adopted (Fleer, 2003b) emphasis on socio-cultural theory within *Te Whāriki*, it is surprising that just half of the conceptual frameworks mention this theoretical perspective as prominent in their programmes. This is potentially significant given how the architects of the integration of early childhood services and the introduction of the integrated diploma, mentioned previously, had a vision of the teacher as positioned within socio-cultural perspectives and away from the sector’s traditional allegiance to child development (Cannella, 1997); a positioning that has been, and continues to be subject to considerable critique (Fleer, 2005) (see for example Lubeck, 1996 for an early critique).

The notion of the reflective teacher present in most frameworks signals the adoption of a discursive positioning that is nowadays widespread in teacher education (Moore, 2004). As there are many orientations to reflection in teaching it is only on close examination that a concept such as this can be understood as part of the learning to teach process however. Moreover, the absence of reference to processes of learning to teach in most provider conceptual frameworks (Kane, 2005) makes it difficult to make any determination of how this process is currently being carried out. A focus on the experiences of teacher education students is one way of determining the lived experience of ‘being prepared’ as a teacher however.

Conclusion

Early childhood services in this country are characterised by diversity, as are teacher education programmes (Kane, 2005). Shifting societal and political discourses associated with women and children have in various ways brought early childhood education closer to the mainstream and higher up political policy agendas so that in the 2000s early childhood education is a major policy area, not only in this country but around the Western world (Moss & Petrie, 2002). Locally, we now have a ‘teacher-led’ service, the roots of which can be attributed to coordinated action by political ‘movers and shakers’ within the early childhood education community and beyond (Meade, 1997). The ‘teacher’ in early childhood is a discursive construction and not a ‘given’ (May, 2007). Indeed, there are significant indications that not all adults working in teacher-led services will be required to be ‘teachers’ given recent policy shifts (see Dalli, 2010). The benchmark qualification for early childhood teachers is currently set at a 3-year diploma level, although 3-year undergraduate teaching degrees are becoming more common. It is into this discursive milieu that participants in this study elected to undertake teacher education.

Teacher education is offered in Aotearoa New Zealand through a number of different institutional types: colleges of education/universities, private training establishments, polytechnics, and wānanga (a tertiary education institution that provides education in a Māori cultural context). Nowadays the type of institution does not infer a particular programme pathway or qualification.

In the next chapter I review research that has specifically addressed teachers’ sense of preparedness.

Chapter 3:

A review of preparedness literature

In the previous chapter I explored what being ‘prepared’ means to official bodies and early childhood teacher education institutions. In this chapter I turn to the research literature to orientate this study. An examination of the literature enabled me to explore others’ rationales for a focus on the construct of preparedness. I was also able to ascertain definitions of preparedness that have been used, or are being used and operationalised in research. It also enabled me to discern the research questions that have guided this inquiry; and, to examine what methodological approaches and methods are employed in studies. I was interested in research antecedents to preparation studies as these would allow me to contextualise this research platform through understanding its theoretical and conceptual roots. They would also suggest possible lines of critique (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005).

To examine these questions and related issues I have organised this chapter into four parts: orientating to and defining preparedness research; early childhood preparation studies; the paradox of being well prepared; and, implications of the review and setting methodological direction.

Part 1: Orientating to and defining preparedness research

Widespread use of the term ‘prepare’ and its variants meant that any search of the extant literature needed to be finely tuned. This is because, as Cameron and Baker (2004) note, most of the research on beginning teachers “attempts to assess, in indirect ways, the preparedness of beginning teachers” (p. 61).

For the purposes of this study I have focused on research that explicitly seek to understand the synergies between what is addressed (the content or knowledge) and learned through initial teacher education and the experiences of graduates in their first years of teaching. Because studies differ in how they operationalise the construct of preparedness, different perspectives on the synergy is reported in the literature. One of the major differences is between studies that seek to locate preparedness against external constructs, for example, standards of effective teaching, and those that use

constructs associated with the particular programme graduates attended. This latter group of studies is based on the assumption that any judgement about graduates' sense of preparedness must be set within and against what their teacher education 'prepared' them to know and do. This is a position I have taken in this thesis. Notwithstanding different ideological and theoretical bases and assumptions, preparedness research is located in the effort to understand and improve the effectiveness of teacher education through taking account of the perspectives of prospective and/or newly qualified teachers.

Search strategy and Inclusion criteria

To identify relevant literature I began with a computer assisted search of several education related data bases such as Web of Science, EBSCO, ERIC (Educational Resources Information Centre), and Google scholar using the following key words (truncated) and phrases: 'early childhood' 'experience', 'evaluation' 'perception', 'prepare' (and variants), student teachers (and variants), 'transition' 'teacher education' (and variants or data base specific terms). Subsequent to this I used the citation function of search engines of specific journal data bases and also searched by following references listed at the end of articles. In addition, I searched the records of research papers presented at local conferences of the Teacher Education Forum of Aotearoa New Zealand (TEFANZ) and the New Zealand Association for Research in Education (NZARE) and its allied association the Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE). I also searched the National Library of New Zealand database Te Puna as this lists holdings in university libraries.

Cameron and Baker's (2004) recent *Research on initial teacher education in New Zealand: 1993-2004. Literature review and annotated bibliography* was a timely publication that supported my initial hunch about the scarcity of local research in early childhood teacher education. Of the 127 studies Cameron and Baker reviewed 18 (or 14.2%) were situated in the early childhood field. Just one early childhood study, Renwick and Boyd (1995) was what I term in this thesis a 'preparedness' study. Mahmood's (1996, 2000) masterate study (also a 'preparedness' study) documenting the experiences of beginning early childhood teachers, including their experiences of teacher education, was not, however, cited by Cameron and Baker.

The literature included in the review was framed by two criteria. First, with the exception of Veenman (1984), I included only those compulsory sector (primary and secondary education) studies published after 1990. I did not, however, limit the dates for early childhood studies because of the possibility that there were very few. Two local studies—Mahmood (1996) and Lang (1996) (early childhood and primary respectively)—provided insight into the relevance and applicability of the broad range of preparedness literature up to the early 1990s. (Mahmood subsequently went on to undertake a study focusing on the professional preparation and employment of older women in early childhood settings (see Mahmood, 2006). Her concern in this later study was to understand how older women (over 50 years of age) were positioned by the mandated requirement to have a level 7 diploma of teaching qualification in order to remain in teaching. She argues that this requirement is a form of credentialism that impacts particularly on older women working in early childhood education.)

The second criterion required studies to include students and/or recent graduates as the subjects/participants of data generation of experiences in initial teacher education programmes and the first year or so of teaching. In such studies students and/or newly qualified teachers may be the sole participants or they may be among a range of subjects/informants in the study (e.g. Grudnoff & Tuck, 2002, 2003).

Applying the first criterion netted a large range of studies. These included large-scale studies focused on ascertaining levels of preparedness across a population of newly qualified teachers using generalised measures of preparedness. Applying the second additional criteria yielded 25 studies. Two of these (Mahmood, 1996; 2000; Renwick & Boyd, 1995) were local studies focused specifically on early childhood. A more recent study (Aitken, 2005) investigated participants' identity shift from teacher education student to newly qualified teacher included reflections on initial teacher education and therefore is also included in this review.

A further seven studies were local (Brooker & Millar, 1997; Cameron, 1995; Gray & Renwick, 1998; Grudnoff & Tuck, 2002, 2003; Kane & Russell, 2003; Lang, 1996, 1999; Renwick & Vize, 1990, 1991), although Kane and Russell (2003) is a cross-national study between Aotearoa New Zealand and Canada.

Through engaging with this literature I became more focused on studying perceptions of preparedness by graduates of specific programmes of teacher education, rather than on global measures of preparedness.

This review does not analyse in detail studies in the schools sector because of the significant structural and pedagogical differences between the nature of that sector teaching and that of early childhood education (Keesing-Styles, 2003a; Stratigos & Patterson, 2002). I appreciate however, there are significant empirically based understandings in the compulsory sector about processes involved in learning to teach including the first years in the classroom that have, as yet, few parallels in early childhood teacher education research. These understandings have been invaluable to support my thinking generally and more specifically lend support to my claims and discussion in chapters 5-8.

Why so few early childhood studies?

It is only in the past 15 or so years that research about teaching in early childhood has begun to gain any prominence (Genishi et al., 2001; Wood, 2004). Reflecting on research in this area Ryan and Goffin (2008), editors of a themed edition on teaching in early childhood, were “disappointed by the lack of well-formed studies on the preparation of preservice and inservice teachers” (p. 387). Previously (in Chapter 1) I noted how most research in early childhood has been focused on children and their learning. Locally, however, there is a developing body of early childhood teacher education research (e.g. Hedges, 2001; Hedges & Gibbs, 2005; Haynes, 2000; Howie & Hagan, 2009; Keesing-Styles, 2003b; Mahmood, 1996, 2000; Meade & Bruce, 1995; Mitchell, 2002; Ritchie, 1994, 2001, 2003; Turnbull, 2002, 2005) and teacher learning (e.g. Carr, Hatherly, Lee & Ramsey, 2003; Haggerty, 2003; Jordan, 2003; Taylor, 2007). The number of studies concerning teaching in early childhood is growing, particularly now a strong research culture is developing in this country (Cullen, 2003; May, 1997a).

The key focus of this review is on what early childhood graduates say about their teacher education relative to the construct of preparedness as operationalised within each study. Early childhood research, however, does not happen in a vacuum and links with this broader field can be seen in the early childhood studies I discuss. Before moving specifically to early childhood studies it is pertinent to outline some key features of the wider body of preparedness research.

Orientating to preparedness research

At the time I framed the research problem there was an upsurge in large scale studies seeking to understand graduates' levels, or senses of preparedness (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2000; Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Ingvarson, Beavis, & Kleinhenz,

2005), meta-analyses (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001) and commentary (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Invariably these focus on primary and secondary education. Of note is the paucity of research that specifically explores newly qualified early childhood teachers' sense of preparedness to teach. As time has progressed, further studies continue to be published (e.g., Good, McCaslin, Tsang, Zang et al., 2006; Hobson, Malderez, Tracey, & Kerr, 2005; Malderez, Hobson, Tracey, & Kerr, 2007). These studies derive from an intense political, policy and professional focus on the quality of teacher education throughout the 1980s and into the present day. The key questions addressed are summed up by Darling-Hammond et al. (2002): "Does teacher education influence what teachers feel prepared to do when they enter the classroom", "are there differences in teachers' experiences of classroom teaching when they enter through different pathways", and, moreover, "do these differences matter?" (p. 286).

Nowadays, it is clearly established that teacher education does make a difference to graduates' sense of preparedness and to the ability to teach effectively (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Grossman, 1990), and that graduates' sense of preparedness depends on the programmes they have been involved in (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002). Furthermore, studies report moderate to high levels of preparedness by respondents (Aitken et al., 2008; Anthony et al., 2008; Bennett, Katz, & Beneke, 2005; Cameron & Baker, 2004; Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Grudnoff & Tuck, 2002; Lang, 1996; Maloney & Barblett, 2002; Renwick & Boyd, 1995; Renwick & Vize, 1990; Ryan, Ackerman, & Song, 2005). Darling-Hammond et al. (2002) suggest that beginning teachers' ratings of preparedness have increased over the last 20 years due to improved practices in teacher education. No programme in their study had graduates who rated themselves as less than adequately prepared. Large scale and methodologically sophisticated studies such as Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, Michelli, and Wycoff (2006) point to how complex it is to design studies that take account of the multiple variables that influence teachers' sense of preparedness. Boyd et al. set themselves six questions. They report how:

The questions for this study address a complex set of interactions. Our central question concerns the effects that pathway characteristics have on student outcomes and on teacher labor market dynamics. However, to assess accurately such effects, we also need to understand something about how teacher background characteristics affect the selection of pathways, how individual characteristics of teachers of teachers influence student outcomes, how pathways influence prospective teachers' opportunities to learn, how pathways influence teachers' matching to schools, and how characteristics of teachers and their pathways interact with features of school context to influence student outcomes. (p. 158)

Boyd et al. provide a sense of how the study of preparedness is not simply a measure of how effective teacher education programmes are relative to graduates' perceptions of these, although the latter is a necessary and valuable source of empirical knowledge.

Global measures of preparedness can obscure the more intimate process of learning to teach while teaching. A paradox exists in participants' reporting being well prepared for teaching, despite the reality that many graduate teachers face challenges to the ongoing construction of their identities as teachers (Grudnoff & Tuck, 2002, 2003). Possibly this paradox reflects the limited body of empirical research that links students or newly qualified teachers' experiences of teaching with the goals, content, and processes of their particular teacher education programme (i.e. preparedness research).

It was a surprise to me this body of research was scarce. I had assumed there would be more research in this area because of the spotlight on the quality of graduates from teacher education programmes and allied notions of teacher education being a weak intervention (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Lampert & Ball, 1998). In addition, I expected increased knowledge about how prospective teachers learn to teach (Bransford, Darling-Hammond, & LePage, 2005; Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005; Wideen et al., 1998) and interest in exemplary programmes (Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2006a) would have highlighted interest in this form of preparedness research.

In carrying out the literature search, I felt compelled to read studies about the compulsory sector as at the outset it was not clear to me how relevant these would be for early childhood teacher education. For the most part, however, I largely restrict this chapter to early childhood studies for the reason previously described.

Early preparedness research

Early preparedness studies were premised on the 'problems' (Veenman, 1984) of beginning teachers, and allied notions of 'reality shock' and 'survival'. They were essentially directed to identifying gaps between the content of the teacher education curriculum and the experiences of beginning teachers with a view to closing the gaps by offering appropriate content. This platform of research was largely carried out when teacher education was considered a 'training issue' (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005).

As research in teacher education evolved and the 'training' of teachers came to be reconceptualised as an issue of learning (see Banks et al., 2005; Clarke, 2001; Zeichner,

1999) preparedness studies became more focused on the nuances of teachers' learning. In considering teacher education as a 'learning problem' (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005), learning to teach is understood to be more complex, contradictory, and personally framed than previous conceptions of teacher education had allowed for. As such, it is framed as an interactional encounter rather than a transmissive process and technical activity. As for all interactions, it is incumbent on conversational partners to take responsibility in listening to each other. Hence teacher educators have become interested in listening to students and their experiences of learning to teach (Sumsion, 1996).

Measures of preparedness

The construct of preparedness is defined and operationalised differently across studies. In some it is participant defined. Lang (1996), for example, asked final year (primary) students to comment on the following matters: "areas in which I feel the School of Education has prepared me well" and areas for which they "could have prepared me better" (p. 39). Mahmood (1996) took a similar approach.

By contrast, other studies use predefined scales considered by the researcher(s) to be items that exemplify preparedness. For example, Housego (1999) developed a tool designed to measure the degree to which student teachers felt prepared to perform a set of tasks specified in a particular course—'Principles of Teaching—and later adapted this scale for research on graduates' feelings of preparedness (Housego, 1994; Housego & Badali, 1996). Kane and Fontaine (2008) also used scales, some of which were replicated from international research and others which were created from the range of standards that were active in Aotearoa New Zealand at the time. Ingvarson et al. (2005) developed their survey instrument using the professional standards developed by the Victorian Institute of Teachers for use with local graduates.

The construct of efficacy as a measure of preparedness has also been used (Anthony & Kane, 2008; Brooker & Millar, 1997; Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Mifsud, 1996). Research evidence suggests teachers' sense of efficacy is a powerful predictor of teacher effectiveness, commitment and behaviour, as well as being linked to student achievement and other measures (see Darling-Hammond, 2006b). In what appears to be a unique approach Housego and Badali (1996) asked their participants about the

potential contribution of either teacher education or “other life experience” (p. 381) to items relating to teaching knowledge, skills and understandings.

As can be deduced from the range described above methodological orientation of preparedness studies spans the quantitative—qualitative divide. Whilst some studies used a mixed method design most utilised participant self-reports on the assumption that teachers’ perceptions are valid sources of data for assessing both their own feelings of preparedness or effectiveness as teachers, and of their ability to judge retrospectively the contribution of their teacher education programme in supporting them to teach. This may well be a weakness of this body of research as perceptions may, or may not, be related to their actual teaching effectiveness (Zeichner & Conklin, 2008). Darling-Hammond et al. (2002) assert there is a relationship between perceptions of sense of preparedness and sense of efficacy, but suggest that more research is needed to better understand this.

Few studies use ethnographic methods and, in particular, observation of teaching. Kuzmic’s (1995) ethnographic case study has been well cited because of this feature. In her study of early childhood special education teachers Giovacco-Johnson (2005) observed participants as a means to generate discussion in subsequent interviews. Others, such as Grudnoff and Tuck (2002, 2003) and Anthony and Kane (2008), used de facto observational data with people such as principals and tutor teachers being asked for their judgments about the levels of preparedness of beginning teachers in their schools. Such approaches mirror the emphasis on textual data located in the teacher thinking movement and a reliance in teacher education research on phenomenological, interpretive approaches (Luke, Luke, & Mayer, 2000).

Finally, timing of data collection also varies. Ingvarson et al. (2005) surveyed participants at the beginning of their second year of teaching, whereas others such as Lang (1996) and Anthony and Kane (2008) surveyed participants at the end of their programme, and then again when teachers were in the workplace. Brouwer and Korthagen (2005) argue that beginning teachers experience a “latency period” (p. 212) in the first year of teaching where the effects of teacher education are largely ‘put on hold’ while they “develop more of the instructional and educative competence they need to put their ideals into practice” (p. 213). Their study revealed how the stress of the first year of teaching meant that beginning teachers (from an integrative teacher education programme) initially expressed scepticism about the relevancy of their teacher

education programme. However, having successfully come through their first year the effects of teacher education became more apparent (see also Grudnoff & Tuck, 2003).

This is an important finding in terms of studying ‘preparedness’ as it shows how longitudinal designs are methodologically justified in order to capture the development of beginning teachers’ competence and thus sense of preparedness. The broad landscape of preparedness as a research construct provides a background to the remainder of the chapter—a focus on the experiences of early childhood teachers’ sense of preparedness.

Part II: Preparedness and early childhood teaching

Overview

In this part of the chapter I draw on five studies to closely understand what being prepared means to newly qualified early childhood teachers. Two studies, Mahmood (1996) and Giovacco-Johnson (2005), include participants from a single teacher education institution, whilst Renwick and Boyd (1995), Aitken (2005), and Ryan, Ackerman and Song (2005) involve participants from a range of teacher education institutions. Three are local studies (Aitken, Mahmood, and Renwick & Boyd), while the remaining two are North American (Giovacco-Johnson and Ryan et al.).

With the exception of Renwick and Boyd’s (1995) study that has a mixed design (survey and group discussions), each works solely with interview data. Giovacco-Johnson (2005), however, also observed her participants gaining a sense of what they were experiencing as special education teachers, and thus referred to in subsequent interviews. Mahmood (1996), Aitken (2005) and Giovacco-Johnson worked with small groups of participants, whereas Renwick and Boyd, and Ryan et al. each had much larger samples as reflected in surveys as the primary methodological tool. While Mahmood’s study is a rich source of data extracts, it is a ‘one shot’ study undertaken early in participants’ first months of teaching. Accordingly, the intensity of data extracts and of Mahmood’s analysis is reflective of this. Although Mahmood originally set out to explore both practice that teacher education “equip[ped] them well for and “any difficulties” (p. 187) participants had experienced since beginning teaching, she ultimately focuses exclusively on their difficulties.

As noted above, sense of preparedness is a dynamic phenomenon whereby feelings of competence usually increase in proportion to teaching experience. Giovacco-Johnson (2005), Aitken (2005), and Renwick and Boyd (1995) each incorporate longitudinal

designs and thus capture participants' shifting sense of preparedness. In all three studies participants experience adjustment issues, particularly in relation to connecting the knowledge brought with them from teacher education, including the discursive construction of the teacher, to the settings where they begin teaching. When set alongside these studies Mahmood's findings are enhanced within the broader picture as discussed below.

While studies by Renwick and Boyd (1995) and Aitken (2005) each incorporate the notion of being prepared this was not the sole purpose of each study. More broadly, Renwick and Boyd were concerned to track the anticipated and actual employment preferences of (pre-service) diploma of teaching students and graduates in each of the newly introduced diploma of teaching programmes.

Aitken's (2005) study incorporates pre-service and field-based graduates and, as mentioned previously, was interested in how newly qualified teachers experienced the transition from teacher education student to newly qualified teacher viewed through the lens of a community of practice. When she analysed her data, Aitken noted how participants' stories of becoming members of their centre community of practice began with their sense of preparedness. This was significantly tempered by widely differing workplace contextual factors for which they were unprepared.

In some respects Ryan et al.'s (2005) study is an outlier. Their primary concern was to ascertain the effects of specific teacher education course content on respondents' work as teachers. In contrast, the other studies gave participants more discretion over the topics they raised in the research process. Of relevance is that Ryan et al. were working in a context not unlike the one we currently have in this country where many early childhood teachers are having to upgrade their qualifications.

From my analysis of this literature I have discerned three highly interrelated themes. These are: the reality of first year teaching; the 'sanitised' curriculum of teacher education; and the discontinuity between the knowledges of teacher education and those of teaching. With the exception of the sanitised curriculum, the other two themes are consistent with those reported in the wider preparedness literature. I will now discuss each theme and then bring their threads together to suggest how collectively they indicate the long-standing tension between the bifurcation of theory and practice in teacher education.

The reality of the first year of teaching

A common theme in preparedness studies is on how the actual experience of teaching is more complex and challenging than newly qualified teachers' expressed expectations. The storyline that is used to refer to this situation draws on the dichotomy between the real and the ideal whereby teacher education is said to present or explore the ideal, whereas newly qualified teachers' experience the actual 'reality'—there is a 'gap' between these. It is into this gap that newly qualified teachers are said to 'fall'. It is the nature and size of the gap that is of interest to researchers wanting to understand issues of preparedness, and thus processes of learning to teach.

Mahmood's (1996) study both explicitly and implicitly refers to the ideal-reality dichotomy. While Mahmood noted how participants' experienced teacher education as "empower[ing]" (p. 80), she said they found the "reality [of teaching] particularly harsh" (p. 80). This was especially so for the younger teachers who "experienced a greater degree of discomfort or reality shock" (p. 79) than older participants in the study. The 'reality shock' most commonly mentioned was 'working with staff'. Text examples point to how complex the situation was, particularly for those in childcare centres for whom their differences in teaching knowledge was very much at odds with colleagues and with centre practices. This situation was also noted by Aitken (2005).

Aitken (2005) described how "the day-to-day realities of teaching were frequently portrayed to be more difficult and problematic than the idealistic or perceived 'reality' held during teacher education" (p. 76). The 'realities' related to working alongside other teachers, the varying quality of these people's work (according to participants' accounts), and working in a profession of low status. It was the interpersonal and relational context of the centre that provided the most significant challenges for participants who cited conflict between staff as a key preparedness issue. One participant asserted; "it (teacher education) doesn't really prepare you for the different way teachers interact with each other, as a student you're not part of that [...] like how to deal with bad moods" (p. 76). Another believed "teacher education didn't prepare me for all the bad teachers [...] everything I've worked for in the last four years [in teacher education], it didn't prepare me for that" (p. 76).

Arguably, someone's concept of a "bad" teacher rests on their conception of what a "good" teacher is. The latter, I suggest, is based on the discursive construction of the teacher this participant graduated with. In Aitken's study, according to participants, it

appeared that ‘good teachers’ principally worked in community-based settings such as kindergartens and community education and care centres. Furthermore, community-based settings were largely the ‘reality’ that Aitken’s teachers felt prepared for.

Also, making the experience of the ‘real’ difficult was how to engage with the complexities of working within a pluralist (multicultural) society, and working with parents (Aitken, 2005; Giovacco-Johnson, 2005; Mahmood, 1996) Participants in Mahmood’s (1996) study who had prior experience working with parents, such as being a nanny or related life experiences, were less likely, however, to articulate such concerns. This finding is reflected in Housego and Badali’s (1996) study who report respondents rated the strength of life experiences as more powerful than their teacher education on 21 of 30 items in relation to sense of preparedness. Mahmood noted participants were aware of the need to have positive relationships with parents, thus suggesting a focus on working with parents was present in their teacher education programme. Similarly, it was clear from data extracts that as students, Mahmood’s participants had also encountered ideas about cultural difference in teacher education, yet their comments reflected a sense of uncertainty in knowing how to negotiate the intensities they subsequently experienced.

Aitken (2005) also mentioned how participants referred to aspects of their jobs they believed teacher education *could not* have prepared them for. Ironically, these were aspects related to the interpersonal dimensions of their work, the very aspects that they felt unprepared for. One participant appeared resigned to the problem, reporting in relation to parents: “I feel comfortable with my teacher education programme with what I learnt, I think just in practice it doesn’t always work” (p. 75). Another stated that “at teachers’ college you do things in, a sort of, perfect situation” (p. 75). This latter comment reflects the notion that what happens in teacher education takes place in the ideal that doesn’t necessarily reflect the ‘reality’ of teaching.

There is roughly 10 years between Mahmood’s (1996) and Aitken’s (2005) studies and yet it appears that working with parents, a key positioning of the early childhood teacher as outlined in the *Report of the Working Party on Childcare Training* (1986) remains a preparedness issue. Working in partnership with parents is a foundational principle of *Te Whāriki* and arguably a strong tenet of socio-cultural learning theory. This theme is one of the theoretical foundations underpinning the vision promulgated by the scholarly webs (Meade, 1997) whose insights guided the integration of the early childhood sector (see chapter 2). I suggest such comments point to longstanding issues

in the pedagogy of teacher education related to the theory to practice dichotomy, and what Kennedy (1999) has identified as the problem of enactment persists.

Renwick and Boyd (1995) did not, however, report such intensely dissonant situations as Mahmood (1996) and Aitken (2005). Overall, Renwick and Boyd's participants were positive about their teacher education and their sense of preparedness. The authors note, however, that graduates from two particular colleges of education were more likely than others to express dissatisfaction with their teacher education than other graduates; a finding that accords with how sense of preparedness can be variable across different institutions (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Ingvarson et al., 2005).

The sense of preparedness reported by Renwick and Boyd (1995) may reflect the nature of the data collection – a postal survey inviting respondents to make written comments rather than verbal ones. However it may also reflect the fact that the data was gathered after nearly a year of teaching, when arguably any difficulties of the first few months were well behind respondents. Aitken (2005), for example, found that most of her participants were settled into their centres (communities of practice) by the end of the first year and were feeling more confident. It is significant however, that of the eight participants in the study four had changed places of employment in this time.

In a finding that concurs with Aitken (2005), Renwick and Boyd (1995) commented how “most of the negative comments” (p. 34) about the experience of beginning teachers were from those who worked in childcare (education and care) settings, rather than those teaching in kindergartens. Childcare settings provided realities respondents were less prepared for, with the majority of comments relating to working conditions “particularly long hours and low pay, and the stress of the job” (p. 34). These might not be teacher education issues per se, but they do represent contextual factors that may contribute to feelings of competence and preparedness. Aitken’s participants also raised issues concerning status, with participants believing that kindergarten teaching provided more status than did that in education and care centres.

In reporting how participants in education and care centres experienced the reality differently to those in kindergartens, Aitken (2005) noted how “participants had a qualification to teach young children and expected their practice would centrally involve this” (p. 109). In ‘reality’ most in education and care centres found there was a range of non-child focused tasks they were expected to engage in as teachers—many of which took place concurrently while working with children. Because of the differences in sense of preparedness between those in kindergarten and childcare (education and

care centres) Mahmood (1996) recommended this feature as an urgent area of study in order to “provide more effective preservice training” (p. 161). These differences appeared to provide a discontinuity between the focus of the teacher in teacher education and the focus of actual teaching with regards to the construction of the teacher in differing workplace settings. Data about this feature is limited. The dichotomy between the seemingly ‘sanitised’ curriculum of teacher education, compared with the ‘reality’ of teaching in early childhood is of interest to me. This was a strong feature of Mahmood’s (1996) accounts too. It is to the sanitised curriculum that I now turn.

The ‘sanitised’ curriculum of teacher education

As I engaged with other literature of learning to teach I came to reassess each of the early childhood preparedness studies in terms of McLean’s (1993) question: “Have teacher educators been guilty of presenting an overly sanitized version of teaching to students—one that has been stripped of its complexity and perplexity that are part of the real-life teaching experience?” (p. 266). McLean argues that “teaching is a very complex human activity characterized by paradox and uncertainty” (p. 266). Formal knowledge, Mclean suggests, is often stripped of its complexity or situatedness effectively sanitising it. In each of the studies cited there was very much a sense that while as students, participants had been introduced to (formal) knowledge such as working with parents, teaching in teams, and cultural difference the reality was highly confronting.

Mahmood (1996), a teacher educator, conveys a strong sense of being shocked by the stories her participants told. This explains her analytic decision to focus solely on what she terms their “negative experiences” (p. 74). I, too, was struck by the participants’ sense of being ‘ill-prepared’ for the complexity of both the role and identity of the early childhood teacher. Drawing on the discourse of the day Mahmood (1996) characterised this situation in terms of ‘reality shock’. However, I came to wonder about how the curriculum of teacher education emphasises ‘tidy’ or formal knowledge for teachers (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000). Aitken’s (2005) participants discussed problems with both children and colleagues in terms of conflict. I noted how many of the areas of difficulty reported by Mahmood and Aitken mirror those documented in the wider literature such as working with parents (Anthony & Kane, 2008; Hedges & Gibbs, 2005; Lang, 1996; Sumsion, 1999); cultural difference

(Anthony & Kane, 2008; Banks et al., 2005); managing children (Lang, 1996); and “organizational literacy” (Kuzmic, 1994), or what Kelchtermans & Ballet (2002) term the micropolitics of teaching. In each of these areas there is a significant element of the interplay between deeply held beliefs and professional knowledge, and what Hargreaves (2001) has referred to as the emotional politics of teaching. This is not ‘tidy’ knowledge whereby if one follows the general rules, or procedural knowledge, ‘real’ situations will necessarily ‘work out’.

A notable strand in the learning to teach literature explores the relationship between student teachers’ beliefs and processes of learning to teach (Pajares, 1992; Wideen et al., 1998). It is widely accepted that beliefs (or discourses from a post-structural frame) can filter what is learned in teacher education. This can mean that topics such as ‘working with parents’ might seem ‘logical’ when addressed in the teacher education classroom, yet when that (formal) knowledge needs to inform practice teachers are confronted with their beliefs about parents simultaneously with their teaching beliefs. When this happens the ‘tidy’ context-free knowledge of teacher education might not ‘work’. This is known as the transfer problem (Lampert & Ball, 1998).

Knowing yourself in complex relationships is as significantly part of being a teacher as is knowing that these situations exist (McLean, 1993). If knowledge is presented as largely stripped of complexity, and if students are not supported to engage in a situated manner with knowledge that will inevitably challenge them, then the reality of teaching can come as a ‘culture’ or ‘reality shock’.

To illustrate this point, one of Aitken’s participants noted: “You can’t learn everything. In practice I mean. Like talking to parents, dealing with parents who come in (and ask) “why is my child only playing, not learning? Like at college, to write about [it] in an assignment that’s fine (laughs), but talking about it is a bit different” (p. 75). Here is the tension between what can be learned through an essay and what might better be learned through the building of situated knowledge—the knowledge of enactment (Kennedy, 1999). These findings beg the question—how could we better prepare teachers to understand their responses to these types of complexities (and realities) so as to work with these tensions and to consider them part of the landscape of early childhood teaching?

One of Aitken’s (2005) participants mentioned how the curriculum of teacher education is viewed through “rose coloured glasses [but] when you get out there and think ‘Ohh!'” (p. 75). Believing teacher education ‘looked on the bright side’ was also a

strong feature of Mahmood's (1996) data. O'Neill (2003) argues that dominant discourses of teaching have constructed and maintained "enriched images of teaching that often bear only passing resemblance with the dirty, uncertain realities negotiated hour after hour, day after day by ordinary hard working people in their classrooms" (p. 3). Similarly, Robinson's (2007) study of early childhood teachers' discourses of teaching found that these reflect the physically and emotionally intense nature of the work that early childhood teaching is:

The relentless responsiveness and the intense nature of the relationships put immense demands on the psychological and emotional resources of teachers. As teachers become exhausted, the team player discourse serves to keep the teacher doing the work, responding to others. In addition, the professional discourse, whilst bringing positive elements to the work, reinforces the foregrounding of the needs of others and the subjugation of the teacher's own needs. (p. 89)

The discourses that newly qualified teachers appeared to more firmly hold in both Aitken and Mahmood's studies related to working with children, rather than other important features of being a teacher such as working with colleagues and parents. Sumsion (2002) argues we do early childhood teachers "a disservice [...] by privileging images that are inordinately difficult to sustain" (p. 10). By this, she means our allegiance to a combination of liberal humanism and child development theory does not sufficiently prepare teachers for the politicised and contested nature of teaching in early childhood.

Similarly, Manning-Morton (2006) is critical of teacher education programmes that do not address "the darker side" (p. 46) of being a teacher and working with very young children. Much of this work she argues "touches deeply held personal values and often deeply buried personal experiences, issues that are not able to be adequately addressed through standard, content focused training" (p. 46). Standard teacher education is known for knowledge accumulation but not for knowledge transformation, which is needed if one is to actually engage in a learning process.

Kane (2008) explored early childhood teachers' perceptions of teaching she recommended that we "not disguise the complexity and challenges early childhood teachers face daily" (p. 4). While this is a recommendation relating to the recruitment of new teachers, it is based on stories of practicing teachers. As noted in Chapter 2, research points to the challenging nature of working in groups, a feature that prompted Sumsion (2003) to argue how it is timely to expand images and the identity of the early childhood teacher. The reviewed studies suggest that teacher education needs to explore

these complexities in a transparent manner taking account of what is known about how teacher education can be a weak intervention (Lampert & Ball, 1998) if formal knowledge is not supported through to enactment (Kennedy, 1999).

Reading the data discursively, participants the studies of Aitken (2005), Mahmood (1996) and Renwick and Boyd (1995) are negotiating the different discourse communities of the academy and the sector, particularly in relation to the teacher and teaching education and care (childcare) settings. In Aitken's (2005) study this is most explicit with respect to those participants who found the discursive context of education and care centres at odds with the construction of the teacher they brought there. Genishi et al. (2001) point out how "research concerning the learning and development of young children—not the practices of teachers—has been taken as the starting point for framing EC methods and programs" (p. 1179). The experiences of Aitken's participants support Genishi et al.'s assertion as they appear to have been better prepared in terms of the learning and development of children than they were with the interpersonal complexities and practices of teachers. It was not possible to interpret this feature in terms of whether the teacher education programmes promulgated this view or not, but suffice to say Mahmood and Aitken's studies, whilst nearly ten years apart touch on a very similar issue; the gap between discursive constructions of the teacher across diverse settings.

Discontinuity between the knowledges of teacher education and those of teaching

In Aitken (2005) and Mahmood's (1996) studies I recognised what Grudnoff and Tuck (2002, 2003) have called the discontinuity problem in teacher education. In their terms this is the tension between craft knowledge and/or formal knowledge in teacher education. In arguing the purpose of teacher education is not solely one of socialising or acculturating prospective teachers into their role as teachers, they contend it must also focus on creating critically reflective teachers. To be critically reflective requires teachers to have a broad base of formal knowledge within which, and against, they are able to reflect or engage with experience. Being critically reflective affords graduates the capacity to learn from experience—a central purpose of teacher education (Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985). Grudnoff and Tuck (2002) recognise there is a tension that if too much attention is paid to formal knowledge "the ability of the beginning

teacher to be innovative and critical will be inhibited” (p. 4). Accordingly, they suggest “in an ideal world students would learn significant elements of craft knowledge before graduating” (p. 2). In this sense craft knowledge constitutes the core tasks of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001).

Earlier I noted how there was clear indication in Mahmood’s (1996) study that as students, participants had engaged in knowledge about working with parents, yet they found it difficult to put this knowledge into practice (in the reality). Many were critical of their pre-service programme in this area. Participants also had difficulty coping with the diversity of parents with whom they were trying to communicate, reflected in comments such as “parents who don’t speak much English” (p. 84), and “their questioning you. [...] College has to realise some things like that, it’s not just saying ‘hello’ to the parents or greeting the parents, there is more to it” (p. 88).

While these comments surely oversimplify the content of teacher education course work, each reveals a difficultly working with parents. Having formal knowledge per se is not the sole basis of our teaching decisions and interactions, we require a degree of familiarity and competence carrying out the core tasks of teaching. In an early childhood setting being a member of a teaching team and engaging with parents are both important core tasks.

The lack of opportunities for learning about craft knowledge was the most significant feature of Giovacco-Johnson’s (2005) study. In talking about partnerships with families, for example, she notes how:

the teachers referred to how their graduate course work prepared them philosophically for their work with families. Families, however, were absent from most aspects of their practical experiences, limiting opportunities to link their knowledge to their practice prior to entering the field. (p. 104)

Giovacco-Johnson argues that while participants valued course work (formal knowledge) “they felt they lacked specific skills and knowledge” (p. 104). In other words, in Grudnoff and Tuck’s (2002, 2003) terms, they lacked craft knowledge. A serious discontinuity for Giovacco-Johnson was the lack of practical experience woven into the teacher education programme (a one-year masters level course for teachers working in special education settings).

Giovacco-Johnson’s (2005) main finding was that beginning teachers in her study were largely prepared on a theoretical basis. It was the actuality of putting their knowledge into action that was the challenge and struggle to beginning teachers. She noted that “it was common for teachers to state, “I didn’t know what to expect”” (p.

103) due to how many of the contextual factors of teaching environments and the children they worked with were previously unknown to participants prior to encountering them as beginning teachers. This was a structural feature of the programme as opportunities for working in the field, as on practicum, were limited. Giovacco-Johnson noted how the ‘missing piece’ for teachers in her study was sufficient opportunities “to apply their knowledge and skills to the problems of practice” (p. 109) while they were students.

Aitken’s (2005) participants experienced similar discontinuities to those of Mahmood (1996). Aitken noted how discussion comparing kindergarten with care and education centres was frequent amongst participants. Consensus was that being in a kindergarten was more beneficial in terms of being a newly qualified teacher than it was for those in care and education centres. Extracts of data from a focus group show how five teachers considered kindergarten to be their preferred workplace. Comments such as “I did a practicum in a kindy and it was just, for me, it was so well run [...] you could see the support between staff”, “like in a kindergarten, they totally spoke about work and are professional [...] totally immersed in the job, and children, and what they are there for..”, “I think kindergarten have got that over day care centres. [...] you’ve all been trained, everyone’s there for the same reason” (p. 115).

These teachers spoke about a sense of being able to teach children, while those in care and education centres felt as though they did almost everything *but* work with children: “I can go a whole day or go to lunch and actually haven’t sat down with a child and done anything” (p. 109). Issues such as these present significant challenges in preparing teachers for the diversity of the sector. Notwithstanding Aitken’s (2006) point that many education and care settings constitute novice orientated cultures that do not have the means to support the transition needs of newly qualified teachers, my reading of her study suggests that teachers were ill-prepared for many of the demands of the context (Roy, 2003).

In this country, knowledge related to working with parents, biculturalism, equity and so on, has long been part of the discursive landscape of early childhood teacher education, as outlined in the previous chapter. Yet it was these knowledges that participants in studies by Aitken (2005), Mahmood (1996) and Giovacco-Johnson (2005) felt less prepared for. These studies fall short however, of making it clear how it is that newly qualified early childhood teachers frequently experience discontinuity

between what is learned in teacher education and the ‘reality’ of teaching in education and care centres.

In the next section I turn to the wider literature to briefly examine how teacher education has been critiqued in terms of the themes I identified in the early childhood studies reviewed above.

Learning to teach: theory to practice or a process of enactment?

A number of highly informative syntheses draw together research-based evidence that points to evidence for the “lack of impact” (Lampert & Ball, 1998, p. 24) of initial teacher education (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; Darling-Hammond, 2006b; Hammerness et al., 2005; Korthagen, 2001; Lampert & Ball, 1998). The lack of impact is often referred to as the theory-practice gap whereby what is learned in teacher education does not necessarily transfer into knowledge in action (Korthagen, 2001; Lampert & Ball, 1998). When this happens, prospective and newly qualified teachers can attribute failure to a gap between the real world (of teaching) and the supposed theoretical world (of teacher education); thus discounting any explanatory power that propositional knowledge might hold. Korthagen (2001) contends when teacher education students have difficulty applying theory, even when they rationally understand its importance, the “only way out of the feeling of always falling short is to adapt to the common habit of teachers to consider teacher education too theoretical and useless” (p. 5). One outcome of this situation is the myth that teaching is best learned through experience (Britzman, 2003).

Kennedy (1999) has put forward a compelling argument for learning to teach as a process of enactment. She suggests that many of the ideas and conceptual tools introduced in teacher education are already familiar to students who import preconceived interpretations of these to the process of learning to teach. Consequently, they tend to over-assimilate and incorporate concepts into existing schema. The problem of enactment suggests that unless students are given carefully structured learning experiences (such as cases) to apply and engage with ideas they will not necessarily learn about them in terms of *being* teaching tools and practices.

Kennedy contends that learning to teach requires prospective teachers not only to “shift their thinking” (p. 56) but to change the way they interpret and respond to situations. This is not an easy task, as research on teacher change has demonstrated

(Richardson & Placier, 2001 cited in Hammerness et al., 2005; Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007). Kennedy (1999) suggests that a way forward is to provide students with situations in which to enact these ideas as it is in the enactment that understanding is demonstrated. This is situated knowledge “meaning knowledge that is understood through specific situations rather than, or in addition to, knowledge that is understood abstractly” (p. 71). Hammerness et al. (2005) frame this as being “prepared for action” (p. 373).

Often, when newly qualified teachers contend their teacher education was overly ideal they may be saying they did not learn to situate their knowledge, to try it out in the immediacy and complexity of the ‘real’ before graduating. As Kennedy (1999) suggests, topics such as working with parents or being part of a teaching team, do not immediately alert students to how they might react when putting this knowledge into action.

Similarly, Lampert and Ball (1998) argue that prospective teachers need opportunities for knowing in action whereby “a ‘subject’ learns an ‘object’ in relation to multiple aspects of the context in which the learner operates” (p. 30). When this form of knowing is absent this leads to the theory to practice problem. Furthermore, comments such as those quoted previously from newly qualified teachers that suggest teacher education centres on an ideal world are possibly based on a common myth that it is practice that makes perfect (Britzman, 2003). This down-plays the interpretive nature of teacher decision making or does not understand that practice is always already theoretical (Britzman, 2003; Lenz Taguchi, 2007; Segall, 2001).

Part III: The paradox of being well prepared

Teaching is inevitably an uncertain enterprise; we can’t know everything in advance, and much of which we know as teachers is contestable. Furthermore, the view that teaching is an ethical practice as opposed to a technical one has led some, such as Korthagen (2001), to assert that rather than conceptual knowledge being at the heart of teacher knowledge, it is perceptual knowledge that is of most worth. This is a situation that has arguably led beginning teachers to suggest they would benefit from more practical experience within their teacher education studies (despite saying in some cases they felt well prepared—see Grudnoff & Tuck, 2002, 2003).

Continuing to learn as a newly qualified teacher often pivots on the relationships that are possible with more experienced colleagues (Aitken, 2005; Kane & Russell, 2003). When beginning teachers ‘step foot’ into the educational setting they are confronted with enacting not only the knowledge they gained through teacher education but in effect all prior knowledge they bring to the encounter. It is indeed a gestalt moment (Korthagen, 2001).

Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) suggest three identities are at play in learning to teach and becoming a teacher and not the single unified identity of humanism. These identities are: 1) that which is brought to teacher education; 2) that which is mobilised through teacher education (called the fictive identity); and, 3) the ‘lived’ identity which is formed during the act of teaching. These identities do not exist in isolation but interrelate. Sumara and Luce-Kapler suggest however, the way teacher education is structured means these identities are often treated as separate. It is usually through practice that dissonance between the identities comes to the fore. I suggest this gives rise to the paradox for newly qualified teachers. Britzman’s (1991, 2003) work speaks powerfully of the struggles of learning to teach and the identities that are confronted in this experience.

One response to the discontinuity between teacher education and the experiences of newly qualified teachers is found in teacher induction processes (which is outside the scope of this thesis). This is an area where there has been a ferment of research in recent years (Cameron, 2007). The focus on induction aligns with Feiman-Nemser’s (2001) notion of a continuum of teacher learning with the workplace providing a further space for teacher learning. Feiman-Nemser suggests no matter how effective teacher education is, there are aspects of teaching that might only be learned ‘on the job’ in a supportive learning context that helps the beginning/newly qualified teacher to connect the *text* of their teacher education to the *contexts* of their classroom (or centre). Some workplaces, however, are not always conducive to beginning teachers’ attempts to teach in the manner inspired by the pedagogy of their teacher education programme (see Aitken, 2005; Sumsion, 2002). Early childhood teaching teams are complex systems that can have a negative influence of the stories we might need to tell in order to better understand ourselves as teachers (Nuttall, 2006).

It is important not to pathologise teacher education, but the lack of preparedness studies is a concern given how many assert that the first year of teaching (as a qualified teacher) is among the most crucial of a teacher’s professional life (Battersby, 1986;

Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1992; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Loughran, Brown, & Doeke, 2001; McCormack, Gore, & Thomas, 2006; Scherff, 2008). This is because the first year can be such an intense and formative period of learning for teachers (Battersby, 1986; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Sumsion, 2002; Watzke, 2007).

Bransford, Darling-Hammond, and LePage (2005) assert that the goal of teacher education “is to provide teachers with the core ideas and broad understanding of teaching and learning that gives them traction of their later learning” (p. 3). As evidenced above, teachers have felt overwhelmed by their later learning and often express how the realities of the early childhood settings were far more complex than they felt prepared for. Some appeared to lack the knowledge that might have given them ‘traction’ while others had the knowledge but operationalising it was difficult.

The bulk of preparedness inquiry generally has been premised on the concern to close the gap between what is learned in teacher education and the so-called ‘realities’ of the beginning/newly qualified teacher’s experiences. Closing the gap holds out the promise of being well prepared. But how possible is this? What image of teacher learning, and preparedness, is this notion premised on? Writers such as Feiman-Nemser (2001), Hammerness, Darling-Hammond et al., (2005); Loughran, Brown, and Doeke (2001), and Grudnoff and Tuck (2002, 2003) take a more sanguine position accepting that some degree of discontinuity between teacher education and the first year(s) of teaching is inevitable. They argue that it is not possible to ‘fully’ prepare teachers simply because nothing can replicate the complex set of conditions and exigencies that beginning teachers find themselves. Because of this, teacher education may inevitably be found to be inadequate (Northfield & Gunstone, 1997). Surely this is paradoxical given widespread use of the term preparedness.

Part IV: Setting direction: the research problem

The significant storyline I identified in the literature is how newly qualified teachers were not sufficiently prepared for the ‘reality’ of teaching within the diversity of the early childhood sector. Accompanying this claim was a concomitant recourse by participants to openly attribute this to their teacher education programme (Aitken, 2005; Giovacco-Johnson, 2005; Mahmood, 1996; Renwick & Boyd, 1995). In local studies this was a significant issue for those beginning teaching in the education and care (childcare) sector.

It was through reading Mahmood's (1996) study that I effectively determined the focus and direction of my study. Significant discontinuity existed between what the participants in that study understood they had been 'prepared' for, and what they encountered as newly qualified teachers. I began to question the linkages between the role and identity of the teacher promulgated in teacher education and the subsequent identities demanded of newly qualified teachers once working in early childhood settings. I was unaware of Aitken's (2005) study until the end of 2005, by which time I had set direction. However, her study confirmed my focus.

The predominant methodological approach of preparedness studies broadly is the provision of outcome measures (predefined aspects of good or effective teaching) against which respondents report how well prepared they believe they are relative to each of the items listed. In contrast, studies by Lang (1996) and Mahmood (1996) invited participants into the problem space to define, or articulate, what 'being prepared' meant to them.

Loughran et al. (2001) argue that students "seek to establish the relevance and value of what they are doing" (p. 14) in teacher education. That is, they want to understand the very process that seeks to 'turn them into teachers'. With this viewpoint in mind I began to play with the idea of asking participants how they made sense of their teacher education. Therefore, not only did I seek to understand newly qualified teachers' sense of preparedness but I was also interested in how they understood the process that turned them into qualified teachers.

In addition, I became concerned to build on what had begun in this country (Aitken, 2005; Mahmood, 1996; Renwick & Boyd, 1995). These studies, coupled with Cameron and Baker's (2004) review revealing the lack of early childhood teacher education research were also influential. Additionally, there was sufficient discussion in the broader literature that contributed to my decision to put the notion of preparedness under erasure whilst simultaneously exploring it.

For McWilliam (1994), much teacher education research is positioned within positivist epistemologies and assumptions that have marginalised the "knowability" (p. 59) of those being researched. This has positioned the teacher education student as not capable of thinking theoretically. Through exploring student teachers' needs, their talk can be viewed not as impoverished understandings of someone else's theory or expertise but as insights into their attempts to construct themselves as teachers (McWilliam, 1994). McWilliam suggests that "pre-service texts

can now be read as real critiques of teacher education needs talk, not the products of false consciousness” (p. 67). This is an interesting and provocative way of thinking about preparedness texts and of considering the perceptions of students and graduating teachers as stakeholders in their own construction and constitution as teachers. A position I have adopted in this thesis.

Conclusion

Through this review I have positioned this study in the broader field of preparedness studies and also within the wider body of knowledge about learning to teach. The search of relevant literature highlighted the paucity of studies that focus on the learning to teach process in early childhood education, and specifically on students and/or newly qualified teachers sense of preparedness.

Three interwoven themes were identified in the early childhood studies that were reviewed. These are the dichotomy between the real and the ideal, the sanitised curriculum of teacher education, and the discontinuity between the knowledges of teacher education and those of the early childhood teaching. I have suggested that collectively these point to the possibility of lack of impact of early childhood teacher education on learning teaching and being prepared.

I briefly introduced Kennedy’s (1999) argument about the need for situated knowledge, as opposed to an over reliance on theoretical knowledge, to account for the types of findings that suggest tensions between the knowledge of teacher education and sense of preparedness for the reality of teaching. Kennedy’s work suggests ways in which teacher education can bridge the gap between theory and practice. Drawing on Sumara and Luce-Kapler (1996) I have questioned how possible it is to be fully prepared for teaching given the inherent complexity in learning to teach and in being teachers. This is a paradoxical situation.

I came to the research space with the intention to listen to graduates and a desire to understand their perspectives on teacher education and learning to teach, relative to their sense of preparedness. The literature confirmed this direction.

As a result of turning to the research literature my substantive focus settled on the interpretations of newly qualified teachers. Accordingly, I invited participants into the research problem space and came to ask how they understood the process that sought to constitute and construct them as a ‘well prepared teacher’, and ‘what did being

‘prepared’ mean to them?’ Because of the emphasis on determining whether pathways into teaching made a difference to teachers’ sense of preparedness (Darling-Hammond et al., 2002) I made a design decision to work with graduating teachers from two very different pathways and institutions. The next chapter sets the study in its methodological context.

Chapter 4: Methodology

This chapter presents the methodological focus of the study. It discusses the philosophical and theoretical lenses I brought to the study, and outlines related design decisions, including my analytic and interpretive strategies. I initially located the study within a phenomenological perspective. However, in response to the stories I was identifying in the data, coupled with a growing awareness of the limitations of my researcher positioning, I adopted an interpretivist interactionist approach as outlined by Denzin (2001). Research methodologist Ian Baptiste (2001) points out that qualitative studies are “iterative, interactive, and non-linear” (p. 2) which accurately describes the process I engaged in during the research process.

Methodologically, two issues came to frame my thinking. First, I was beginning to question the actual construct of preparedness itself and as a result I began to focus on ‘preparedness’ as a linguistic term. Second, having undertaken an initial review of the literature I formed a position that it would be more productive to ask newly qualified teachers how *they* made sense of the actual process of teacher education, rather than present them with predefined notions of preparedness. I wanted to know how they understood the process that sought to constitute them as (well) prepared teachers. These two issues led me to frame the research question—‘how do students/newly qualified teachers make sense of their preparedness for teaching?’ The methodological focus of this study concerns how we make sense of a social reality such as teacher education, and specifically how this is understood through the construct of ‘preparedness’. The study is located in the interpretivist research tradition that stresses the intersubjective nature of sense making (Davis, 2004).

Two interlinked stories underpin this chapter. On one hand I write as a Pākehā female teacher educator, a “biographically situated researcher” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 31) whose shifting understandings of ‘making sense’, ‘meaning’, ‘understanding’ and ‘knowledge’ became an important research narrative. On the other hand, the chapter provides an account of the research process, which aimed to access, interpret and understand the meanings participants gave to their experiences of ‘being

prepared’. I was challenged in the former narrative through my cultural history to confront a strong ideological allegiance to humanist conceptions of self (and therefore to making sense and meaning) as I came to understand how “discursive subjects become persons” (Willig, 2001, p. 39).

This chapter is in two parts. I begin in Part 1 by discussing the broad principles of interpretivism and then articulate the central tenets of phenomenology, as these provide the conceptual tools and procedures for the initial design of the study. I conclude this part of the chapter by discussing my shift to interpretive interactionism. Part 2 of the chapter provides an account of the research process, including methods and procedures I used in this study.

Part I: Theoretical positioning: selecting a theoretical lens

Interpretivism: a starting point

Davis (2004) offers an etymology of the word ‘interpretivism’, suggesting it is derived from the Latin *inter-*, meaning ‘between’ or ‘among’ and the Sanskrit *prath* meaning to spread about. Davis locates the shift to an interpretive or inter-subjective (he uses these terms interchangeably) view of the construction of knowledge as a reaction to the notion that knowledge and reality (and truth) are pre-existing phenomena “out there” (p. 96), inhering in objects and waiting to be discovered through scientific inquiry. For most interpretivist positionings, knowledge and reality are ‘in here’, in people as self-interpreting beings existing in a socially constructed world of meaning. Coupled with the humanist belief that humans are sufficient in themselves to make sense of their situations (Davis, 2004, p. 96) and a rejection of idealism, interpretivist ideas began circulating within Western societies in the 1800s and 1900s as a counter to the dominant scientific paradigm of positivism (Davis, 2004; Scott & Usher, 1999; Willis, 2007). As Schwandt (1995) notes, the fact interpretivists “wrestle” (p. 119) with issues to do with objectivity and subjectivity is itself a hangover from interpretivism’s positivist roots.

The central claim of interpretivism is that studying human beings is a fundamentally different pursuit to studying physical objects in the non-human world as “the former is inherently meaningful” (Schwandt, 2003, p. 296). Some methodologists, however, argue convincingly that all research is essentially an interpretive endeavour (Gubrium & Holstein, 1995; Rabinow & Sullivan, 1987). Others, such as Scheurich and Foley (1999), delimit the term ‘interpretive social science’ to refer more specifically to all

forms of qualitative inquiry. Interpretivist theorising maintains that human behaviour (or action), rather than being governed by transcendent laws is best understood from the standpoint of the social world of the individual. Coupled with this is the belief that with the right methods of inquiry, researchers are able to grasp the meaning or reality of other's lives and, in doing so, can come to know the 'other'. This stance is repudiated by some strands of interpretivism, such as post-structuralism, on the grounds that what is possible to grasp is the system of networked ideas, or discursive fields in which subjects are constituted, and constitute themselves and their stories.

That human action is both purposive and meaningful, the focus of interpretivist inquiry then is directed to how:

meanings are created, negotiated, sustained, and modified within a specific context of human action. The means or process by which the inquirer arrives at this kind of interpretation of human action (as well as the ends or aim of the process) is called Verstehen (understanding). (Schwandt, 1994, p. 120)

Schwartz (2003) provides four ways of defining the notion of interpretive understanding. First, this is through empathic identification with the actor's definition of the situation by "grasping the subjective consciousness of the actor from the inside" (p. 296) and reproducing the meaning or intent of the actor. Second, this is by phenomenological sociology which takes as its focus the everyday, experiential, intersubjective life-world and how this is constituted through interaction and consciousness. Third, it is by attention to the language games (following Wittgenstein), through attempting to locate the linguistic interpretive act within the system of meanings in which it is located, and importantly as *used* in the real world (as opposed to the philosophic notion of ideal language). Fourth, it is through philosophical hermeneutics. Schwandt argues the first three forms of interpretivism are essentially epistemological endeavours as they assume that understanding is "an intellectual process whereby a knower (the inquirer as subject) gains knowledge about an object (the meaning of human action)" (p. 300). According to Schwandt (2003), these perspectives subscribe to a key interpretivist conviction that:

it is possible to understand the subjective meaning of action (grasping the actor's beliefs, desires, and so on) yet do so in an objective manner. The meaning that the interpreter reproduces or reconstructs is considered the original meaning of the action. So as not to misinterpret the original meaning, interpreters must employ some kind of method that allows them to step outside their historical frames of reference. Method, correctly employed, is a means that enables interpreters to claim purely theoretical attitude as observers. (p. 298)

Schwandt (2003) separates philosophical hermeneutics from the other forms of interpretive understanding because of the way in which the interpretivist researcher is openly complicit within the understandings that are the products of research. This is based on the notion that it is not possible, or desirable, to stand outside and produce an interpretation of an interpretation; understanding is interpretation and we can only understand the other through access to their context from within our own context.

Within these four positioning is a movement from the individual as the source of meaning, to making meaning as tapping into a system of signs that are essentially external to the individual and from which she/he grasps meaning as a fundamentally intersubjective act. In Schwandt's fourth form of gaining interpretive understanding the researcher hermeneutically engages with the meanings presumed to be held by participants within the research texts and actively participates in a conversational and dialogic encounter. In this process "understanding is something that is *produced* in that dialogue, not something *reproduced* by an interpreter through an analysis of that which he or she seeks to understand" (Schwandt, 2003, p. 302 -italics in original). This later position is the one I ultimately held as I came to appreciate the nature of making sense and applied it to myself as researcher as well as to participants in this study.

Differences in forms of interpretivist theorising therefore, concern how each defines meaning. With language at the core of making meaning interpretivist positions span structural and poststructural theorising (Davis, 2004). This subsequently means different strands are "seriously at odds with one another" (Schwandt, 2003, p. 293).

It is in this vein Scheurich and Foley (1999) contend some treatments of interpretivism retain many elements of positivism; and that these are elements it sought to divest itself of. They cite two areas; the position and authority of the researcher is retained, as is the naïve realist belief that we can "see/know reality and/or see/know [our]selves" (p. 127). For positivists the world *is* knowable and accordingly it is deemed possible (for the researcher) to know (categorise) the 'other' and thus capture participants' reality. I suggest when the theory of language used subscribes to a representationalist view, then knowledge and reality (and therefore 'real' meaning) is presumed to have been captured by the researcher who then feels able to assume of position of authority.

This is what Freeman (1996) has termed a "take them at their word" (p. 732) approach to research. It is a perspective that led Convery (1999) to ask "are we sitting too comfortably?" (p. 131) when we listen to teachers' stories through adopting such an

uncritical approach. When language is no longer considered a transparent medium, a ‘true’ reflection or account is no longer tenable. Instead, interpretive accounts are openly partial, laden with perspective, and tentative due to how meanings are made available through a social system of signs that are not fixed.

All reality and knowing is therefore socially constructed. Post-structural and post-modern perspectives highlight how assumptions embedded in linguistic terms pre-structure reality. Therefore, ‘Who owns meaning?’ and ‘What is the ‘real’ story?’ This contention is located in post-structuralist claims about ‘the subject’ and how “no knowable reality exists beyond the signs of language, image and discourse—that shapes subjectivity” (Garrick, 1999, p. 152). Jackson (1996) argues, this latter view often places issues of political power over issues of existential power of the experiencing subject. It was this later position that I found compelling as I framed this study.

Interpretivism remained the broad paradigm from which I sought to understand how participants made sense of their preparedness for teaching. To more closely address ‘preparedness’ as an object of inquiry I turned to phenomenology as a methodology because of its focus on describing phenomena as encountered and revealed through lived experience, coupled with its intent of getting behind socially scripted accounts of phenomena.

Phenomenology: looking for the essence

Phenomenology is considered to be a founding epistemology for qualitative inquiry (Schwandt, 2003), and yet as Schwandt notes:

it is virtually impossible to discuss the relevance for qualitative inquiry of this complex, multifaceted philosophy in general terms without reducing the notion of phenomenology to a caricature. Phenomenology means something far more complicated than a romanticized notion of seeing the world of actors “as it really is. (p. 321)

In explaining his point about the complexity of phenomenological thinking, Schwandt notes how the phenomenology of Husserl (the founder of phenomenology who lived between 1859 to 1938) influenced the work of Alfred Schutz, whose Phenomenological Sociology in turn inspired the work of ethnomethodologists and other sociologists. Husserl’s student Heidegger, is associated with philosophical hermeneutics and also deconstructionist approaches. Dreyfus’s reading of Heidegger is that he “was trying to free us from our Cartesian assumptions” (Magee, 1987, p. 275). Dreyfus suggests Heidegger’s project endures through thinkers such as Foucault and Derrida who are

“defining exactly what our Western understanding of being is, in order to help us get over it” (p. 277).

What then is phenomenology?

The word ‘phenomenon’ derives from the Greek *phaenesthai*, and means to flare up, show itself, to bring to light, to appear (Jackson, 1996, p. 53). Phenomenology’s concern is to bring to light the “description of experience as it is actually had prior to intellectual reflection” (Jackson, 1996, p. 42). The roots of this concern can be traced back to a rejection of the Western tradition of philosophy, whereby the highest human attribute was pure, impersonal reason and a concomitant valorising of a detached or ‘objective’ view of things (Matthews, 2006). Husserl claimed the breakthrough that people were not simply reacting to objects as pure perception but were engaged with them on the basis of their understanding of what things meant to them. He suggested rather than knowing the object per se, what we come to know is the product of our engagement with it. Therefore Husserl articulated a relationship between the knower and the known. However, he was a subjectivist (Bernstein, 1983, p. 11) as he claimed it is one’s consciousness that structures what is experienced and that these structures are able to be clearly established. For Husserl, phenomenology is “devoted to the systematic analysis of consciousness and its objects” (Magee, 1987, p. 254) in order to discover pure experience through bracketing out the taken-for-granted meanings of the everyday world.

Heidegger, by contrast, argued that people are not necessarily always highly aware or constantly conscious of their engagement in the world. Most of the time we are able to use what Heidegger called our ‘primordial understanding’, or everyday skilful coping to engage on an everyday practical basis. This is extended to make the claim “much if not most characteristic human activity is not guided by conscious choices, and not accompanied by aware states of mind” (Magee, 1987, p. 260). For Heidegger, we arrive in the world (are ‘thrown’) into an already-interpreted situation and take much of this as given. Heidegger thus “rehabilitates ways of being over ways of knowing, at least as knowing is interpreted in the Cartesian tradition” (Donnelly, 2006, p. 323). This is because, for Heidegger, it is the pre-reflective, pre-theoretical being that is the foundation (Donnelly, 2006, p. 317).

Heidegger, in effect, argues how “our scientific culture and its associated epistemology, which in turn, have moulded our contemporary sense of self” (Taylor, 1999, p. 31). Taylor argues this sense of self is associated with the Cartesian project of

the disengaged, disembodied mind. This has led to a tendency to “see the human agent as primarily a set of representations … a monological [subject] … in contact with an “outside” world … the subject is first of all an “inner” space, a “mind”” (p. 33). Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty are at pains to not see the person as primarily the locus of representations but as engaged in a world of practices (Taylor, 1999). It is through practices meaning is contained.

Donnelly (2006) points out how Heidegger’s notion of ‘thrownness’, the already interpreted situation we are born into, is present in the thinking of Wittgenstein in his notion of rules and the unarticulated background (see Taylor, 1999), in Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, and in Polanyi’s notion of the tacit. It is mostly when understanding breaks down, when we are in unfamiliar territory, that we begin to operate on a more conscious or cognitive level and “things ‘emerge into presence’ for us” (Donnelly, 2006, p. 317) and are made apparent through theoretical knowing as opposed to practical being. It was this notion of ‘things emerging into presence’ against a background that I was interested in exploring with newly qualified teachers. What would they say ‘preparedness’ meant to them within and against the pre-scripted meanings of the teacher education programme?

Thus it is the moment that stands out from the flow of experience that is of interest to phenomenologists who ask ‘what makes an experience that which it is?’ This is a position I adopted in this research. I was curious about which moments would stand out as being significant about ‘being prepared’.

Phenomenology recognises we are born into a world in which meanings pre-exist. These provide a “background narrative” (Feather, 2000, p. 2) from which we tap into existing meanings to make sense of our world. These ideas are expressed by the phenomenological concept of ‘horizon’:

The concept of horizon helps capture the background framing assumptions we bring with us to perception and understanding, the congealed experiences that become premises by which we strive to make sense of the world, the range of concepts and categories of description that we have at our disposal. (Alcoff , 2006 cited in Weiss, 2008, pp. 2-3)

Through the concept of horizon we can begin to understand how each person’s process of making sense is an act of interpretation. Weiss (2008) admits that working with the concept of horizon is a challenge, as human experiences are organised according to not just one horizon but many. Past horizons are fused into present horizons, “complicating but also enriching the process of interpretation” (Weiss, 2008, p. 3). Making sense is

always an inter-subjective encounter as “the self is always situated” (Weiss, 2008, p. 4) within shared interpretive horizons. Weiss draws a comparison between the concept of the horizon and what cognitive scientists call the “frame problem” (p. 12); that is, the “integral role played by contextual features of any given situation that influence how that situation is understood and responded to” (p. 12). Weiss argues how “the horizon functions as an ongoing (though changing) context from which an individual draws in constructing her own unique experiences” (p. 12).

Locating myself in the research narrative

Taking a phenomenological approach allowed me to foreground newly qualified teacher meanings against the pre-given, scripted meanings present in teacher education (including my own). The phenomenological concept of ‘horizon’ provided a conceptual tool for understanding how newly qualified teachers interpret their experiences as students within and against the meanings they bring to teacher education. The concept of horizon shifts the analytic lens away from the essential self as the originator of meaning to a thoroughly socially inscribed, inter-subjective and interpreting self. As such, making sense does not happen “arbitrarily in a contextual vacuum” (Gubrium & Holstein, 1995, p. 45).

The phenomenological method, then, held out the possibility of understanding the sense that newly qualified teachers made of their preparedness for teaching. I believed participants, having just graduated from their teacher education programme would be well and truly inscribed; but what did it mean to them to ‘be prepared’? Phenomenology, as a method, suggested it was possible to get beyond scripted meanings and reveal a more ‘personal’ meaning of ‘being prepared’. A phenomenological perspective took account of cultural historical frameworks (horizons) for making meaning but allowed me to retain a sense of the individuality, or agency of the interpreting person who I understood as attempting to pursue coherency. Thus, my early reading, located in phenomenological accounts of making sense, appeared to accord with some of the deeply held epistemological and ontological assumptions I brought to the study (Crotty, 1998; Hatch, 2002) and that permeate all facets of the research process (Baptiste, 2001).

I came to understand however, in adopting a phenomenological stance, I had limited the possibilities of the data story that I could tell in this thesis. Through the data analysis

and interpretive process I began to identify a data story that went beyond the phenomenological stance of describing phenomena. I desired to tell stories of how participants came to understand themselves and ‘be prepared’ as an effect of the institutional stories present in their texts. A phenomenological position restricts itself to the elucidation of the phenomenon in its essence (Crotty, 1998). At this point I turned to Denzin’s (2001) interpretive interactionism as providing a methodological orientation more closely aligned to the evolving research project, particularly in terms of providing analytic tools to further interpret and present research texts.

Interpretive Interactionism

Denzin (2001) explains what he means by his “rather awkward phrase” (p. xi) ‘interpretive interactionism’:

[it] signifies an attempt to join the traditional symbolic interactionist approach with the interpretive, phenomenological works of Heidegger and the tradition associated with hermeneutics. ... it also draws upon recent work in feminist social theory, postmodern theory, and the critical-biographical method formulated by C. Wright-Mills, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. (p. 34)

Interpretive interactionism as a research methodology synthesises conceptual developments in various strands of interpretivist thinking with Denzin’s home base in interactionism. Denzin’s description is resonant of the qualitative researcher as “*bricoleur*” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 5), particularly the theoretical *bricoleur* who brings together a range of theoretical perspectives in order to strengthen interpretive, analytic lenses. This mix of theoretical informants expands Denzin’s interactionist positioning to be inclusive not only of phenomenological and hermeneutic notions but also critical and poststructural insights.

Denzin (2001) argues how in making sense of others’ lives there is no privileged epistemological position but a “moral and ethical” (p. 4) commitment to understand people’s stories, within and against, wider systems of meaning that circulate in this post-modern period in which we live. Drawing on the sociologist C. Wright Mills Denzin contends that we “live in a second hand world” (p. x) where our sense making

as social constructions, [personal] stories always have a larger cultural and historical locus. Individuals are universal singulars, universalizing in their singularity the unique features of their historical moment. Narratives of the self, as temporal constructions, are anchored in local institutional cultures and their interpretive practices. These practices shape how self-narratives are fashioned. Story-tellers have agency and self-reflexivity. Their stories are temporal constructions that create the realities they describe. Stories and lives connect and define one another. (p. 59)

It is Denzin's emphasis on the notion of stories that I was keen to adopt. Denzin seeks stories of individuals as a way of highlighting how larger social systems shape people's lives and experiences, but also importantly, to place the experiencing person back into institutional narratives. It is the notion of 'sense' that "provides the link between an active reflexive subjectivity and the wider environment which structures its activity" (Feather, 2000, p. x). In making sense of our lives we do so from amongst the cacophony of calls that hail us in this postmodern world. This is no more apparent than in the learning to teach process.

For Denzin (2001), the "focus of interpretive research is on those life experiences that radically alter and shape the meanings persons give to themselves and their experiences" (p. 1). He asserts it is the "existential thrust" (p. 34) that is a key focus of analysis and of subsequent research texts. A central feature therefore is the identification of epiphanies, described as 'turning point' experiences. The epiphany as an analytic tool affords the interpreter moments of reflexive insight into each person's understanding of self and their positioning within their storied life.

Interpretive interactionism retains many of the features of a phenomenological investigation as it seeks to "gather together the lived experiences that relate to and define the phenomenon under inspection. The goal is to find the same recurring forms of conduct, experience, and meaning in all of them" (Denzin, 2001, p. 79). However, unlike most forms of phenomenology this is not the last step prior to writing up. The researcher then needs to contextualise the phenomenon "back in the natural, social world where it occurs" (p. 79) because, for Denzin (2001), interpretive interactionism is first person, lived experience focused:

Contextualization locates the phenomenon in the personal biographies and social environments of the person being studied. It isolates the meanings of the phenomenon for them. It presents the phenomenon in their terms, in their language, and in their emotions. Through contextualization, the researcher reveals how ordinary people experience the phenomenon. (p. 79)

This step was important to me because while the meaning of preparedness had universality to it in the research texts, the ways of reaching this point, of living into and making sense of being prepared were varied and it was these stories and their meanings I wanted to convey.

Under the influence of interpretive interactionism

I drew substantially on the work of Denzin (2001) as it accorded with my desire to place the sense making and interpretations of newly qualified teachers at the centre of

my research concern. Methodologically, Denzin also provides a number of analytic constructs that the researcher brings to the data as sensitising constructs, a series of steps for the interpretive process, and guidance about how to present participant accounts congruent with interpretivist research. The analytic constructs that have been used in this study are: the epiphany, the universal singular, and the project. I also borrowed the notion of reflexive positioning (Davies & Harré, 2001) and adopted the concepts of ‘positioning’ and ‘subject position’, two terms more common to discourse analysis. Each of these is described below.

To summarise, my early positioning as researcher was located in a phenomenological perspective on making sense. This substantially informed the initial design of the project (as described below). However, once in the field and beginning to work with the data I aligned myself with interpretive interactionism (Denzin, 2001).

Part II: Theoretical fieldwork: research in action

In this second part of the chapter I describe how I designed and carried out the study in response to my research focus, the research questions, and the theoretical frameworks described above. I begin by restating the key research question and supplementary questions and provide an overview of the research design. The research design stage of the project culminated with my application to gain academic and ethical approval to undertake the study in order to move into the field and I discuss key aspects of this process in the next section. I then describe the data generation tools and processes in more depth and outline the process I used for recruiting participants and introduce the research participants. Finally, I discuss how I made sense of the research texts through my data analysis and interpretive process.

Research questions

As previously stated, my principal research question is ‘How do students/newly qualified teachers make sense of their preparedness for teaching?’ Four further questions were posed that more specifically address the decision to include both pre-service and field-based graduates:

- Do newly qualified teachers’ experiences of preparedness differ when they enter through distinctive programmes and pathways and do the differences matter?
- How is ‘preparedness’ defined by participating initial teacher education institutions?

- How do the teacher education programme structure, content and processes seek to prepare students for their role as teachers? [later changed to ‘role and identity’]
- What is the relationship between students’ sense of preparedness and official discourses of preparedness?

Research design

Overview

Congruent with my research aim of listening to newly qualified teachers and taking a phenomenological stance toward newly qualified teachers’ perspectives, I adopted a research design based predominantly on interviews (both individual and group) as the major source of data generation. I also interviewed the programme leaders for each of the participating teacher education institutions. Supplementary information was gained through analysis of teacher education programme material supplied by each institution. My own field notes constituted a fourth source of data. Newly qualified teachers were invited to keep a journal to record incidents that might subsequently be discussed at interviews. These, however, were for their use and not mine. Each of these sources of data was included to enable me to obtain a multilayered text from which to understand how newly qualified teachers made sense of their preparedness for teaching. Before proceeding to describe my data generation tools and methods, it is pertinent to first explain my process for gaining academic and ethical approval in order to proceed with the study.

Gaining academic and ethical approval for the research project.

In September of 2005 I applied to the Massey University Human Ethics Research Committee (MUHEC) for approval to carry out my research. Engaging with the ethical approval process was an opportunity to visit all facets of my proposed research design in terms of ethical sensitivity. I was guided in my application by Schwandt's (2003) consideration of "how to envision and occupy the ethical space where researchers and researched... relate to one another on the sociotemporal occasion or event that is "research"" (p 311). For Schwandt, this means carefully thinking about the role, status, responsibility and obligations of the researcher during the entire research process and in how the researcher represents (and re-presents) others through research texts that are a result of research.

In preparing my application I focused closely on two issues in particular: respect for the newly qualified teacher participants; and minimisation of risk of harm to them. In interpretivist/qualitative research the participant is considered the expert in relation to his or her experiences, interpretations, and representations. Accordingly, my ethical stance as researcher was to be one of respect for each participant's worldview and what they chose to talk about.

I was mindful that although I had resigned from my former position as a teacher educator this previous position with its inherent perceived power, in conjunction with my role as researcher could place me in a position of 'power-over' the participants. I decided to position myself at all times as respecting that participants had met requirements for the teaching qualification they held. In no way, direct or indirect, would I ask them to prove their knowledge or suitability for their teaching qualification or position. In addition, any doubts they raised about their role as newly qualified teachers, perceived gaps in their knowledge, or troubles they may experience over the course of the study would be listened to respectfully. My own experiences as a beginning teacher (albeit many years ago), my more recent experiences in teacher education and teacher professional development, and my reading of the beginning teacher literature strongly suggested that newly qualified teachers would in all likelihood experience some dissonance and difficulties in their first year of teaching.

In my ethics application I suggested participation in the study could benefit this group of participants as they reflected on their teacher education process and talked about their development as teachers. This could be particularly so for those in the education and care sector where induction and/or teacher registration processes at that time were not readily available. I predicted the potential to act as a 'sounding board' for newly qualified teacher participants, if and when they experienced a teaching dilemma. Dilemmas did arise for participants in their teaching lives and I was able to provide some advice on request. For example, one pre-service participant was being actively recruited for a co-ordinator's position for a home-based care organisation and she wanted to know what I thought she should do. My advice was to stay where she was, as she was involved in a very supportive teacher registration process coupled with gaining invaluable experience in her current centre.

The second issue to which I gave considerable thought in my research design and ethics application was minimising risk of harm to participants. This was important to consider carefully as I wanted to recruit a diverse range of newly qualified teachers into

the study, including Māori and Pacific nations' people. For Māori participants I understood I was expected to respect their mana as Māori, to extend minimisation of harm to include whānau (family and community), hinengaro (emotional well-being and state of mind), wairua (spirit), and tinana (the body or physical self) (Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluations Involving Human Participants). I explained in my application that I would apply tikanga (correct procedure) related to meetings, food and hygiene practices, and would respect each person's way of entering a relationship with me as researcher. For Pacific nations participants and participants from cultural groups different from my own I committed myself to applying my existing understanding of cultural difference (including known cultural protocols) and respect for these participants.

In responding to my application the MUHEC required that I undertake consultation on cultural issues related to my study prior to entering the field. They pointed out that potential participants, especially in the centre-based teacher education programme, may work in Te Kōhanga Reo. To meet this requirement I asked two women who I knew through my teacher educator networks to be cultural advisers to me and my study. One is Tangata Whenua/Māori and the other Samoan. In discussion with each advisor both assured me that my proposed research design and processes such as recruitment process, information sheet, proposed interview method (including format and questions) were suitable. When subsequently a young Māori woman who worked in a kōhanga reo did apply for participation in the study my Māori adviser provided support by translating the participant information sheet (see Appendix A) from English into te reo Māori (see Appendix B for translated information sheet) to enable the potential participant to share this information with her kōhanga reo whānau (as all conduct in this particular kōhanga is undertaken in te reo Māori). Both cultural advisers remained available to me throughout the study. I was grateful for this advice from MUHEC and for the advice and support I subsequently received from my advisors.

Identifying participants and research sites

As noted in Chapter 2 a feature of early childhood teacher education in Aotearoa New Zealand is the wide range of teacher education providers and programmes. I made an early decision to include both pre-service and field-based participants in line with Cameron and Baker's (2004) call for more research that informs the picture on how

people are currently being prepared to teach in this country. Furthermore, Bell (2004) had recently written a candid insider account about a field-based programme operating, as she asserted, “at the margins” (p. 4) of the more traditional approaches to teacher education. She noted how there was little research into its effects even though the field-based model has been a popular and traditional route to a teaching qualification in this country. My background as a teacher educator in both forms of teacher education placed me in a good position to work with small groups of participants from each form of programme pathway and model.

Having decided to work with two groups of participants, I made the decision to work across two teacher education providers. It would have been possible to work within a single institution, recruiting from a pre-service pathway and a field-based pathway within the same institution. However, taking my lead from Bell (2004), I decided to work with one from “the margins” and the other, by virtue of its position within the academy, occupied the centre. I knew from my own experience as a teacher educator who had shifted from the centre to the margins that this move, while professionally and personally satisfying, was viewed by many colleagues as a retrograde step. As I stated in my research proposal, I wanted to listen to the voices of student teachers I would do well to listen to those from two of the most prevalent forms of teacher education and from across the traditional – alternative divide. (Although arguably, given field-based programmes long history in this country they are not alternative in the same sense that those in the USA are.) I have called the pre-service institution ‘Institution A’ and the field-based institution ‘Institution B’. This represents no particular order except for fact I began newly qualified teacher recruitment first in Institution A.

Participants

Participating initial teacher education institutions

I initially made an informal approach to the early childhood programme leaders in two teacher education institutions. One offered a field-based programme and the other a campus-based pre-service programme. As a result of talking with each programme leader and gaining their confidence the study was both timely and valuable, I sent a formal letter of approach to each seeking their involvement in this study (see Appendix C for letter of approach and Appendix D for programme leader information sheet).

Involvement included: recruiting six ‘about to graduate’ participants; an individual interview with the early childhood programme leader; access to official programme documentation such as course handbooks, publicity information, course material, and as my letter asked “in fact any documentation that will shed light on your programme’s approach to the preparation of early childhood teachers”.

Recruiting and selecting the research participants

I anticipated carrying out a similar process in both teacher institutions for recruiting newly qualified teacher participants, although at the time potential participants were still student teachers. This involved giving a brief presentation about the project, who I was, and why I was carrying out the research to potential participants, followed by an outline of the expected involvement and contribution of participants. After any questions information sheets were distributed (see Appendix A for student/newly qualified teacher Information Sheet), as were expression of interest forms (EoI forms) (refer to Appendix E for Expression of Interest forms), and a stamped addressed envelope so those who signalled their interest could contact me independently. Expression of interest forms outlined two eligibility criteria. First, in order to participate in the study each person had to be confident of successfully completing their teacher education studies and graduating that year. The second criterion was that potential participants were intending to teach in a licensed and chartered early childhood service for all of the following year (2006) and were reasonably confident of being able to attend a group interview in June 2007.

Pre-service participant recruitment

I experienced some difficulty recruiting pre-service participants. Preliminary information about the study was given to potential participants by the programme director as they assembled for their last day of the programme. The director briefly outlined the study (I was not present) and nominated a classroom where potential applicants could meet with me (the researcher) over the lunch break for further information. Unfortunately when I arrived at the designated room there was a mix-up with another group using it. As potential participants were also in that room, with the group’s permission I introduced myself and briefly outlined the purpose of the research. I handed out information sheets and expression of interest forms. I also talked informally with other groups of students in the general area and left expression of interest and information forms in most rooms where I knew potential participants would be gathered for the afternoon sessions.

From this effort I received 17 expressions of interest. Once I had contacted all of these people I found just two potential participants met my inclusion criterion for Institution A; that of being pre-service participants. Because institution A offers a range of programme pathways, those from field-based pathways also applied, and a number of those who responded whilst in the pre-service pathway were working as unqualified teachers concurrently with attending teacher education. This was possible as the programme required just two to three days of class contact each week and some of those enrolled in the pre-service programme working as unqualified teachers in the remaining days of the week.

Initially I rejected these potential participants on the grounds they did not meet the (unarticulated) pre-service criterion. An assumption I brought to the research process was that pre-service students would not be working concurrently as unqualified teachers. I was to find, however, of the six participants I eventually recruited three had done the same. A fourth participant had begun in the pre-service programme and a few months into her final year of the programme transferred into the field-based programme. In effect, in my desire to recruit pre-service participants I was operating with an assumed profile of this ‘type’ of student teacher.

To involve sufficient participants from Institution A, I continued to recruit through word of mouth. Each of the original two participants knew a class mate who was happy to be approached by me. I was also able to recruit two further participants via a large kindergarten association who agreed to distribute information about my project to newly qualified teachers who graduated from institution A in the same year as other participants. The upshot of this situation was that I recruited (and hence interviewed) four of the six Institution A participants once they had begun teaching.

The six participants from Institution A met my plan to recruit a broad range of people who were working across the early childhood sector. They are known in this thesis by their pseudonyms, which they either chose or I did in consultation with them. Two participants, Peggy and Sarona, worked in A’oga Amata in mixed age settings; a further two, Evie and Beatrix, worked in free kindergartens typically with children aged 3-5; and, two worked in education and care centres, Bonny worked with babies and toddlers; and the sixth participant, Jacinta, worked with young children (3-5yrs).

Recruitment of field-based participants

I gained permission through the programme director to meet with final year students in their last class of their diploma programme. I meet with the full class immediately

prior to a break time so that anyone who had additional queries about participation was able to meet with me informally to discuss the study. I distributed expression of interest forms and information sheets to potential participants along with stamped addressed envelopes. Because I received many more expressions of interest than I had participant places, I was able to recruit a broad range of participants. This group numbered seven, as one person particularly wanted to be involved and whilst being able to attend classes had just begun parental leave and wasn't sure when she would be returning to work.

The seven participants from Institution B represented a broad range of early childhood and life experiences. They too are known in this thesis by their pseudonyms. One participant, Piata, was a kaiako in te kōhanga reo working in a mixed age setting; two participants, Geejay and Tiale, worked with babies and toddlers in education and care centres; three, Kelsey, Denise and Toni, worked with young children (3-5yr olds) also in education and care centres; and the final participant, Mia, was a home-based educator working with babies and young children.

Interview venues

Having selected the participants I contacted each person by telephone to confirm their involvement in the research project. At this time we set up dates, times and places for the first interview. For the most part these were held either at each participant's home or in a neutral space such as a motel room. At this initial interview I explained the full research process and asked participants to sign consent and confidentiality forms (see Appendix F).

Taping and transcription

All interviews were audiotaped and later transcribed (carried out professionally). At one interview the tape recorder ceased to operate. When this was realised the interview was abandoned and resumed the following day. Once interviews had been transcribed I checked them against the interview tape and then they were sent to each participant for checking and comments (if they wished to do so). A number of participants brought changes or additions to the second interview and these were added to the transcript. All participants remained in the project for the entire length of the project and each attended all events.

Keeping in touch, keeping the momentum up

Because the data generation aspect of the project was spread over eighteen months, I determined at the outset that I would keep in touch with participants via a group newsletter format. Through this I kept participants informed of the research project

including details such as when each round of interviews would occur or when they had been completed, when they could expect the transcriptions to be sent out, reminders about upcoming interviews and so on. Because beginning teacher induction and registration processes were also topical at this time I included information about publications and events relevant to this process (for example, New Zealand Teachers Council & Ministry of Education, 2004) I considered the newsletter as an act of reciprocity and as providing a sense of community within the project (Appendix G contains a newsletter example).

Data generation tools

Interviews

The use of interviews followed from my decision to use a phenomenological approach to provide a rich description of the phenomenon of preparedness, the first aim of the study. Phenomenological studies are not necessarily based solely on interview data. Leading hermeneutic phenomenologist van Manen (1999) advises, in addition to interviews, researchers can ask participants to write about their experiences (termed protocol writing) as a source of data. Alternatively participants can be observed through “close observation” (van Manen, 1990, p. 68). Nurse researcher Patricia Benner, for example, used observation of nursing practice as part of her project to identify and describe tacit nursing knowledge as a means of documenting the “everyday skills, habits, and practices of nurses” (Benner et al., 1996, cited in Johnson, 2000, p. 137). My interest was in how newly qualified teachers articulated the phenomenon and what meanings they gave it. I preferred conversing with participants in a face to face manner as this would enable a refinement of ideas as the interviews progressed. Two sets of interviews were carried out: those with newly qualified teachers and those with ITE programme leaders.

Newly qualified teachers: individual interviews

I planned to interview each newly qualified teacher on three separate occasions at approximately six monthly intervals, beginning at the end of their teacher education programme (November/December) and twice the following year (their first year as newly qualified teachers). This design would allow me to capture the way in which sense of preparedness can change depending on length of time teaching (as discussed in the previous chapter). Furthermore, this time scale would allow a process for taking my

preliminary thematic analysis back to participants for further reflection (van Manen, 1990). Ultimately only the first two individual interviews were conducted (as explained below). (See Appendices H and I schedules for individual interviews 1 and 2 respectively)

Newly qualified teachers: group interviews

I initially planned a single group interview with each group (field-based and pre-service) in their second year post-graduation (i.e. 18 months after graduation). The purpose of this was to present my substantial interpretation of themes and to invite the newly qualified teacher participants to comment on these before the final writing up of the study. van Manen (1990) suggests holding “collaborative discussions” (p. 100) on themes in order to generate deeper insights and descriptions by laying open the research text “to strengthen what is weak” (p. 101) about the phenomenological description.

In actuality I held two group interviews as I substituted the third, and last, individual interview with a group interview. This is because I sensed at the second individual interview (six months post-graduation) that participants in each group might benefit from being brought together to discuss their experiences of teaching. In each of the first and second interviews I was positioned as a conduit for participants to get a sense of how others in their group (unknown to each other at this stage) were experiencing their particular teaching situations. In this manner the interviews were acting as inter-subjective moments for participants to reframe horizons of significance through linking to others’ stories.

At the second individual interview, some in the pre-service group expressed being overwhelmed by the complexity of teaching and would have liked to meet other participants to share experiences. Within the field-based group a different dynamic was present. During the second (individual) interview most field-based participants expressed a feeling of ‘flatness’. A number mentioned missing the ‘cut and thrust’ of their engagement in a robust learning community brought about by the familiarity of three years together as a cohort group in teacher education.

I was keen to make this change to the research design because I felt that a group situation would, as van Manen (1990) suggests, generate deeper descriptions as participants would be talking with others in similar situations. Additionally, because I was becoming less wedded to a strictly phenomenological approach to the study and was moving to the social as the more significant site of meaning making, this change was methodologically timely. The first group interviews were held between October

and November 2006 and the second in mid-2007 as planned. (Refer Appendices J and K for group interview schedules.)

Interviews with programme directors

I interviewed key individuals responsible for the overview and implementation of each teacher education programme. The purpose of these interviews was to gather information about the programme structure, its philosophical and theoretical foundations, the influence of official bodies, and whether notions of preparedness had been a consideration in framing each programme. Interviews were held between the first and second individual interviews with newly qualified teachers. This timing enabled me to also clarify any terms that may have arisen in individual interviews and to check out any assumptions I may have made about aspects such as programme organisation. As these interviews were primarily about gathering this type of information, they did not have a phenomenological focus. (Appendix L contains the programme director interview schedule.)

Programme documentation

Through the programme directors I was able to access relevant programme documentation such as course outlines and student handbooks. I used these to get a sense of how the institution positioned itself in official documentation. I had access to a wider selection of programme material than I subsequently drew on once analysis began and the data stories and storylines were identified.

Field notes

Consistent with the emergent and dialogic nature of qualitative research, I kept extensive field notes. Field notes are important for acknowledging the subjectivity and reflexivity of the researcher. After each interview I found a quiet spot and wrote my reflections, ideas, hunches, and any other comments that seemed prudent to record at the time. A number of times I entered my reflections onto the small hand held digital voice recorder I took to interviews. These audio files were then stored electronically and became a source of stimulus as I clarified my presuppositions (Janesick, 2000).

Constructing and asking ‘phenomenological’ questions

Framing the preparedness question

Phenomenological interview questions “are meaning questions. They ask for the meaning and significance of certain phenomena” (van Manen, 1990, p. 23). What is the

meaning of this experience? In my case ‘what is the meaning of preparedness?’ I framed the ‘preparedness question’ as the experience of having learned something important about being a teacher (for field-based participants this was framed as being a qualified teacher). I based this on the notion that the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions (STDs) are the Teachers Council standards for what is important to that organisation about being a well prepared teacher. The question I put to newly qualified teachers was framed the following way:

- So, thinking about your time over the last three years (on the course), can you tell me about *a time or an experience* that stands out in your mind because it shows what it means to have learned something important to you about being a teacher?

I also invited participants to respond to the conceptualisation of teacher education framed as preparedness to teach, doing so later in the first interview.

The phenomenological interview

I followed van Manen’s (1990) advice that the best way to keep focused on lived experience is to be very concrete and explore the experience in ways that evoke accounts of actual experience. Asking ‘how’ questions supports this: ‘How did that feel?’, ‘How did you do that?’ ‘How did you decide that?’ When the responses were generalisations I took the participant back to the level of concrete experience (van Manen, 1990, p. 68): ‘Can you give me an example?’, ‘What was that like?’ The aim of the interview is disclosure of information rather an attempt at control. I tried to achieve a “conversational relation” (van Manen, 1990, p. 66) around the experience of ‘being prepared’ by asking questions to elicit personal life stories (anecdotes, stories, experiences, incidents etc) to reveal the phenomenon. These points are consistent with Denzin’s (2001) approach to interviewing—noting while there is “give-and-take” (p. 66) the interviewer is also an active listener.

As a teacher educator the problem is “not that we know too little about the phenomenon we wish to investigate, but that we know too much” (van Manen, 1990, p. 46). An unintentional outcome of carrying out the interviews in a phenomenological manner was how this method also disrupted my discourses by supporting me to listen closely to participants and keeping them in the experienced moment.

The first interview was arranged according to three broad themes: (1) choosing teaching and the decision to undertake teacher education, (2) the phenomenon of

preparedness, and (3) experiences of the teacher education programme. I began by asking each person about how they became oriented to the personal project of teacher education. This enabled their story to unfold temporally (Denzin, 2001). Having asked about preparedness in section two of the interview, including instances of not feeling prepared, we moved into a discussion about how the process of learning to teach made sense to each participant. I carried out the interview as an encounter that recalls or reconstructs lived experience, aware as Seidman (1998) advises, reconstruction is “based partially on memory and partially on what the participant now senses as important about the past event” (pp. 72-74).

The second interview (six months post-graduation) focused almost exclusively on participants’ experience of teaching. The ‘preparedness’ aspect of this interview asked participants to describe a time (or times) as newly qualified teachers where they felt well prepared. By this point in the research process, participants were significantly cued to the notion of teacher education as preparedness. One participant gave feedback at the end of the second interview that the preparedness question be framed around ‘what’s been going well’ for them and ‘what hasn’t’. She suggested these are both indicative of being well prepared or not. I was grateful for her suggestion and accordingly wove it into subsequent interviews. A back up question to each of these was how their teacher education programme contributed, or not, to these experiences. (Refer Appendix H interview schedules for individual interviews 1 and 2).

Group Interviews

As noted above, I originally planned just one group interview which would allow a discussion with participants about the developing thematic analysis of each data set (field-based and pre-service). McLachlan (2005) suggests that focus groups utilise the dynamics of the group as people bounce ideas off each other which, in turn, can open up ways of thinking about the topic that individuals may not have given thought to. The first group interview/conversation coalesced around four interrelated topics: the purpose of teacher education; the content and process of teacher education programmes (relative to being a teacher); ongoing learning as a teacher; and, current feelings about being a teacher. (Refer Appendix J interview for first group interview schedule.) The first two topics related to how teacher education supported (or not) their sense of preparedness for teaching over their first year as newly qualified teachers. The third topic expressly addressed the ways in which they were continuing to learn as teachers—linked to the notion of teacher learning as best conceptualised as taking place along a continuum (see

Feiman-Nemser, 2001). The last topic provided an opportunity to talk about how, after nine months of teaching they were each feeling about being a teacher. This topic was introduced as a response to the feelings of being overwhelmed I identified in pre-service participants at the second individual interview and what I have previously described as a sense of feeling ‘flat’ that I noted in field-based participants at the same interview. In actual fact, participants expressed their feelings about being teachers throughout the interview.

I used an “I’m wondering …” approach. For example, for ‘the purpose of teacher education’ I framed the question as ‘I know this might sound like a really dumb question, but what do you think your teacher education course was for? What was its purpose? What are these courses trying to achieve?’ Later I asked ‘Looking back, what advice would you give people who design these courses?’

Both group meetings began with an informal period where group members caught up with each other. For pre-service people this meant locating each other in the broader early childhood programme as participants were drawn from the graduate diploma pathway, the Bachelor of Education and the Diploma of Teaching programmes. Whereas the field-based group had mostly spent three years together in a cohort group progressing through the programme together. Two took parental leave from the programme during their course of study, but all ended their final year in the same cohort group. Each group interview was a lively occasion with all set questions being put to each group.

The second group interview was held as originally planned (eighteen months post-graduation). For each group, I used this as an opportunity to try out ideas, test hypotheses, and test themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) as identified within the interview data and had begun to write about. For pre-service participants themes related to preparedness were: ‘going into the unknown’; ‘feeling/being lost’; ‘wanting the real’; ‘learning lots’; ‘still more to learn’, and, ‘no longer lost’. Themes that arose from the second individual interviews were: ‘teaching as complexity/working with dilemmas’; ‘being a professional’; ‘doing (child) profiles’. For field-based participants the themes relating to preparedness were: ‘learning lots’; ‘feeling more confident’; ‘being validated/being recognised’; ‘being professional’; ‘learning while teaching’. A second theme that arose from interview 2 was: ‘teaching as working with complexity’. (Refer Appendix K for second group interview schedule.)

For each group I placed a number of microphones at strategic points in order to capture each person's contribution to the discussion. I began by asking participants to introduce themselves so that the transcriber was able to pick up a sense of who each voice belonged to. I subsequently listened to each transcription to further determine speakers and to tease out their individual contributions when people became excited and talked over one another. I considered my role as researcher to facilitate each discussion. To do this I guided the participants through the interview schedule while taking advantage of the spontaneity that arose in each group. I suggested to participants that people in each group may well have different viewpoints and that it is helpful for all views to be expressed. I modelled uncertainty when asking questions so that participants felt that their response was genuinely wanted. Consistent with the phenomenological focus of the study I supported participants to stay as close to the level of actual experience as possible and not to theorise. Data analysis was carried out as a thematic analysis as outlined below.

Data analysis and interpretive process

My original research proposal suggested I would follow van Manen's (1990) process of thematic analysis but noted that I would also be exploring other methods as described in the literature. van Manen's process is designed to facilitate a "reflective grasp of the phenomenological structure of the lived meaning" (p. 77) of the phenomenon in question. While this "is a difficult and laborious task" (p. 77) the aim is to arrive at different ways of looking at a phenomenon or to reveal dimensions of meaning that had not previously been considered due to preconceptions and prejudices researchers might hold. This analysis is set within a philosophical and methodological project of hermeneutic phenomenology. van Manen rejects what he terms as a "mechanical" (p. 78) process of deciding on themes and codes. Instead he suggests that:

Making something of a text or of a lived experience by interpreting its meaning is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure-grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule bound process but a free act of "seeing" meaning. (p. 79)

In identifying themes, the researcher is looking for essential structures that suggest the informant themselves is trying to make sense of the phenomenon. This is a highly interpretive process and early themes are taken back to participants for discussion: 'Did I get it right?' 'Does this speak to your experience?' This is not a closing down, a ring

fencing of meaning, but an open dialogue that is again taken back to the participant for reflection and discussion. In this way, the process is hermeneutic, a search for meaning beyond the original text. From the themes, a description that expresses the fundamental or overall meaning of the text is constructed that grasps the essence of the experience under reflection. van Manen (1990) says the final description is a judgment call on the part of the researcher (as it is for other forms of interpretive analysis) and that other interpretations are always possible. The strength of a phenomenological interpretation is in its resonance it has for others.

van Manen (1990) provides detailed guidance for how to arrive at themes, but in order to fully understand thematic analysis one must still attempt to do it before one can describe it to others. The language van Manen and other phenomenologists use can be very esoteric (e.g. themes are “more like knots in the webs of our experiences” van Manen, 1990, p. 90). In some ways, however, the process is not unlike other descriptions of the interpretive process (see for example Hatch, 2002 on interpretive analysis). There is a certain intuiting in many (qualitative) data analysis processes which underpins the interpretive dimension of the analysis but must ultimately be borne out by the data.

My process of data analysis and interpretation, took many forms across a systematic sequence. First, I read the transcripts as they were returned to me by the transcriber. I did this in tandem with listening to the audio tapes. This was a process of listening to the tonal quality of what was said, to the silences (van Manen, 1990) and for repeated phrases, words, concepts, while noting any ‘hunches’. Where necessary, I corrected the transcriber’s work. Once the transcripts were checked, I sent a copy to each participant for their own use and for checking. On a couple of occasions I asked participants to clarify inaudible words or details.

Second, I manually worked through each interview, question by question, transferring pertinent details to large sheets of paper where I could compare and contrast responses in each group question by question. The interview questions represented constructs that I brought to the field. Examples were: preparedness, change, making sense, deciding to become qualified. In this way I was making myself more familiar with each interview and across the interviews.

Third, I focused on patterns of responses to the central analytic question ‘How do newly qualified teachers describe their preparedness and what meanings do they attach to their descriptions?’ I read the transcriptions again to identify “essential recurring

features” (Denzin, 2001, p. 76) or themes, marking these and eventually manually cutting and placing sections of transcripts in piles for each person. This was an inductive process (Hatch, 2002) where I was noting key terms and their relationship to the whole. Data does not speak for itself and themes do not miraculously ‘emerge’ from the data. Atkinson and Housley (2003) assert that there is a constant interplay between the analyst’s own experience and ideas that they bring to the interpretive process.

Following Denzin (2001), however, I was also wary of my preconceptions and “confronted the subject matter, as much as possible, on its own terms” (p. 76). Having carried out this thematic analysis, I reflected on what the experience of being prepared meant to each person in order to identify the storyline(s) each was using to represent their experience. I named each story by making connections between the themes in each person’s account, asking ‘what is behind this story’. For example, Kelsey talked about ‘being blind’, ‘being naïve’, ‘knowing nothing prior to teacher education’, ‘a focus on (official) documents’. What was this about? How could I represent Kelsey’s account through a series of abstractions that would allow me to make links between the themes I had identified in her data, in order to understand conceptually what each account was about.

About this point I began to see links between stories. This was the interpretive hermeneutic dimension of the analysis. A principal link that I was beginning to ‘see’ was about knowledge and participants’ positioning in relation to knowledge—this seemed to be at the centre of accounts of ‘being prepared’—and I began to understand ‘being prepared’ as ‘being knowledgeable’. I also identified the stories were often about the *process* of becoming knowledgeable.

To understand each story further I wrote a narrative for each person using the storyline I had identified and incorporated relevant data. Staying as close as possible (Giddings & Wood, 2002) to how each teacher described the phenomenon and following Denzin (2001), I aimed for a “concept free mode of discourse and expression ... that is locked into *the first order, primary lived concepts of everyday life*” (p. 46, italics in original).

As I was doing this I noted similarities between accounts, which led to a series of narrative accounts that were exemplary of the ways in which groups of participants described ‘becoming knowledgeable’. These were: ‘*Journeying*’ as an expression of a sense of having travelled a distance with knowledge; ‘*Being lost*’ as an expression of not understanding; ‘*The good and proper way*’ as an expression of ascribing expert

status to the knowledge of the academy; '*I've just nibbled*' as an expression of how becoming knowledgeable is an unending process; and, '*Opening my eyes/shining the light*' as an expression of how the process of teacher education enabled me to see differently. The reader will be able to discern how these accounts have been woven into the following findings chapters.

Hatch (2002) advises asking the following questions of the data: 'What is going on here for these participants?' 'What sense can be made of these events?' 'What meaning do these activities have for the players in the social setting?' Denzin (2001) recommends an exploration of the crises and epiphanies of the lives of persons being studied. For example, Bonny, an Institution A participant who graduated with a degree level qualification and who had previously been to university, conveyed a sense of panic about not knowing how the programme fitted together. She described being 'lost'. I wondered why would this be so. Identifying an epiphany in her data gave me a clue, as did locating her story within the wider data set. Denzin also suggests a "semiotic reading" (p. 77) of the texts, attending to oppositions, key words, and terms that organise the text. All of these strategies were applied to understand the research texts as parts and as wholes, thereby engaging in the 'hermeneutic circle' of meaning-making.

While a significant storyline in most accounts was about accessing the knowledge of the academy, I was yet to settle on the central story of the thesis. I felt I hadn't quite 'put my finger on' something important in the data. As I was becoming increasingly interested in language as constitutive of our experience, and thus our representations of that experience, I decided to explore the data using a form of Foucauldian discourse analysis (see Willig, 2001). Feather (2000), following Foucault, asserts the force of institutional discourses and their "objectifying power" (p. 8) significantly shapes our subjectivity and thus our identities. An example of this assertion was the way I tried to rid myself of a strongly wedded connection to a humanist discourse of the essential self, in order to identify meanings that sat outside of those circulating in the social. I was also coming to appreciate and understand the performative aspects of language (Convery, 1999; MacLure, 1993). For example, in some instances I was interested in why participants would be telling me particular accounts. My analytic question became 'How do newly qualified teachers speak about themselves as subjects who are (well) prepared or (well) qualified and what discourses do they draw on?' Following Willig, this allowed me to ask about the ways in which the discursive object (sense of preparedness) was constructed through language.

It was this analysis that provided an interpretive breakthrough. I noted more specifically the way in which participants spoke about accessing the knowledge of teacher education was largely aligned to the structural form of the programme they attended. I was also able to note the discursive constructions they tapped into to talk about their new-found knowledge. But it was the way they talked about their positioning in relation to this knowledge that provided the breakthrough I needed. I came to understand that, while I had identified the phenomenon of preparedness as *being* knowledgeable (as is discussed in Chapter 5), that it was the process of *becoming* knowledgeable that constituted the more significant data story of the thesis. I called this process ‘the discourse of the real’ (Ord, 2007).

It took some further interpretive work however to understand how the discourse of the real played out in the contrasting data sets. I was grateful to one of my supervisors who suggested I withdraw from the process on an intellectual level and allow the phenomena to ‘speak to me’ on a more intuitive level. After a few days, two metaphors came to mind. For pre-service participants, accessing the knowledge was akin to *cracking a code*; for field-based it was akin to *lifting a veil*. Once I had identified these, I was able to understand the data story and navigate a way through the telling.

For Denzin (2001) this is an act of re-constructing the phenomenon, the goal of which is to “re-create experience in terms of its constituent, analytic elements” (p. 78). This is done in and against the context, a process identified by Denzin as contextualising the phenomenon. In this case, contextualising was carried out in and against the personal biographies of the participants, the meanings the phenomenon had for them and the social environment (i.e. the teacher education programme) in which the phenomenon was experienced.

Another analytic tool I used was Davies and Harré’s (2001) notion of reflexive positioning. The way in which they employ the notion of reflexive positioning accorded with Denzin’s (2001) focus on epiphanies as an analytic hook that links the personal (biographical) with the public (the sociohistorical) in interpretive research. Davies and Harré use the concept of positioning to contend and demonstrate how the person/subject is “momentarily called by the discourses and the world she/he inhabits” (Smith, 1998 in Davies & Harré, 2001, p. 264). Positions are:

identified in part by extracting the autobiographical aspects of a conversation in which it becomes possible to find out how each conversant conceives of themselves and of the other participants by seeing what position they take up and in what story, and how they are then positioned. (Davies & Harré, 2001, p. 264)

Davies and Harré (2001) consider two forms of positioning. The first, interactive positioning, occurs when the person within a conversation positions the other through what they say. The second form, reflexive positioning, is a moment in which the person positions themselves, often in the form of an anecdote that draws on images and metaphors. Neither form is necessarily intentional. Like Denzin's (2001) epiphany, anecdotes provide a glimpse of the "cumulative fragments of a lived autobiography" (Davies & Harré, 2001, p. 265) and contains the threads of one or more storylines.

Anecdotes containing what I interpreted to be an epiphany (situated within the total data set) became a powerful analytic tool for disclosing exemplary significance (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003) and also source of understanding about how each person positioned themselves, consciously of not, or were positioned in relation to institutional knowledge. In chapter 5 I use the notion of reflexive positioning to illustrate how participants, or others, positioned themselves as 'knowers'. Each anecdote was chosen as having universal significance across the data set (Denzin, 2001).

Conclusion

In this chapter I have sought to convey the "choreography" (Janesick, 2000) of my research design process; a process that began ahead of the data generation phase of the project but that substantially carried on throughout this phase and into the writing up of this thesis.

The inherently subjective nature of all human experience and meaning making is 'grist to the mill' for those who adopt a phenomenological-hermeneutic stance to understanding others, even as it is acknowledged that we can never fully understand the other. This, however, is not a subjectivity whereby an inner and essentially individual world asserts itself on an outer world. The subjectivity that is of concern in this study is one where individual actors (persons) make sense of their world in ontological and intersubjective ways, and one where "discursive subjects become persons" (Willig, 1999, p. 39). I have been concerned to present rich descriptions in order that the reader can also engage hermeneutically with this study.

The following three chapters present the findings and claims of this thesis resulting from the analytic process described above. I begin in Chapter 5 by orientating to the phenomenon of preparedness: 'being knowledgeable'. This chapter combines the experiences of both pre-service and field-based participants. Following this, in Chapters

6 and 7, I explore the experiences of pre-service and field-based participants respectively as discrete stories.

Chapter 5:

Knowledge and Preparedness

Introduction

As I listened to and engaged with the stories that the interviews as interactional moments produced, and through “linger[ing] over the particularity of the other” (Sullivan & McCarthy, 2005, p. 626) via data analysis, interpretation, and reflection I came to identify a single, overarching storyline that exemplified and connected the experiences of newly qualified teachers in each of the two groups: pre-service and field-based. This story equated ‘being prepared’ with the acquisition of “knowledge for teachers” (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000, p. 90). More specifically it was about participants’ positioning, and being positioned, in relation to that knowledge. From a phenomenological perspective this was about being and feeling knowledgeable teachers. I called this data story *‘being knowledgeable’*:

You know it all kind of came together and, consequently now when I’m teaching or when I’m talking to parents, I’ve got that knowledge - you know? And I can say ‘well this is why we have primary care giving’ and I can go and get a reading from home about attachment theory, or whatever and I’ve got all of that there whereas I wouldn’t have had that, if I hadn’t have done that study and I can talk knowledgeably about it, the why we do things, or different things. And I’m still learning a lot. I mean I don’t know everything but, and I never will, but I definitely feel that through the amount of content that I read and the amount of work that I processed during that study. I mean it must. It’s just so bizarre, I just can’t think of particular things that I felt prepared... like I feel prepared. [Bonny, Int. 2, p. 19]

Bonny, like others in this study, considered the key to her sense of preparedness was the knowledge she gained about teaching and being a teacher. By saying “I’ve got that knowledge” she hints at having a store of knowledge. She is keenly aware as a newly qualified teacher her learning is on-going. Through saying “it all came together” Bonny alludes to how the seemingly discrete courses that made up her 3-year, pre-service bachelor of education programme coalesced into a coherent whole so she was able to fashion her teacher self and identity around the knowledges she appropriated there. In this way she, and others in this study, felt prepared.

This chapter illustrates the phenomenon of preparedness—*being knowledgeable*. The acquisition of a store of knowledge was a storyline most participants openly

brought to the process of teacher education, and thus to their project of becoming qualified teachers. While this is a common positioning of teacher education students generally (Lampert & Ball, 1998) it is my contention it significantly arose from, and was an effect of the institutional processes of ‘being prepared’. In this sense the stories of newly qualified teachers and the official stories knitted together; both residing within the social and historical milieu that currently positions teacher education as the transmitter of knowledge for teaching and its task, the production of knowledgeable teachers (Connelly, Clandinin, & He, 1997). I begin by taking a wide-angle view describing how ‘*being* knowledgeable’ was expressed holistically as an existential state, as a deeply held sense of having acquired something important about *being* a (qualified) teacher. (I signal this by the way in which ‘*being*’ is italicised.) In the second part of the chapter I take a step back to explore my contention that whilst both pre-service and field-based participants alike came to teacher education expecting to acquire a store of knowledge, acquiring this was a significant structural feature of their learning to teach process. In the final part of the chapter I sharpen my focus to explore the ways in which participants, when talking about ‘*being* knowledgeable’ invariably did so by positioning themselves in relation to that knowledge. This exemplifies a shift from knowledge as object to knowledge as relational. In Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000) terms this is a shift from acquiring knowledge for teaching to having teacher knowledge. I conclude the chapter by outlining how my insights and claims address the substantive research question.

Part I: *Being* knowledgeable

When asked to bring to mind a time, or an experience during teacher education indicative of having learned something important about being a teacher, newly qualified teachers all talked about being and feeling knowledgeable. Denise, a field-based participant, noted how her new knowledge supported her to relate to parents:

I have more or less taken on a role of speaking to parents. I remember before I was, even during study I used to hide from certain parents because I didn’t like talking to them, or I just felt they didn’t like talking to me. And that’s something I’ve never experienced after becoming qualified. [...] just becoming more comfortable and confident and that could be because I feel I’m more knowledgeable in what I am talking about, about their child’s development and stuff [Denise, Int. 1, p.18]

Beatrix, who completed a postgraduate pre-service programme, recalled a time that gave her a distinct sense of feeling prepared:

I've just remembered one of those 'aha' moments and it took me a while to 'get it'. It's that continuum, the range of teacher interventions (Kate: strategies?) strategies yeah, and you picked the right ones at the time and you move up and down that continuum and it's so flexible. There's not, um, a magic formula is there? You've always got to be using your judgement. What you decide to do one day, you might do the complete opposite the next because it depends on knowing the child well and all the circumstances around you and that, that, was a biggie [Beatrix, Int. 1, p. 27]

Beatrix's example taps into her experience of learning about a set of well defined pedagogical strategies for use as a teacher. Other pre-service participants also mentioned the same continuum (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1995).

Identifications of '*being* knowledgeable' were also crafted in and amongst other responses as when Tiale, a field-based participant, talked about how she had changed as a teacher:

in my conversations with parents I'm a lot more confident now to actually share umm, the learning aspects of their child instead of and 'oh they had a lovely day' and I can actually pinpoint, you know, what I thought was good learning that happened with that child, yeah. [Tiale, Int. 1, p. 20]

In many cases participants talked about having 'learned lots'; thus conveying a sense of being more knowledgeable than when they entered teacher education. Sarona, a pre-service participant, was very specific about how much, and what she had learned:

I have learned a lot. For example, the way you talk to children, the way you talk to children, before I just tell children. When I was there I tell children 'don't do that' you know, 'put that back' instead of explaining. Now I know I need to explain to the child 'don't do that because this is what ... because it's not a good thing, cos it will hurt you'. I never know that before, I only just say, tell them to leave, don't do that, you'll fall ... those are the things that I learn now how to do and the other thing that I have learnt is that I learn how to teach children to you know, to extend their the development of the child like, there's lots that gain like this, the social development of the child, the physical, the emotional, you know cognitive development of the child. Those are the things that I never knew before but now, and I can apply that to my own grandchildren as well at home. I can talk to them, I can read to them and make things like that. [Sarona, Int. 1, p. 7]

Whichever way sense of '*being* knowledgeable' was expressed, participant accounts were more often than not articulated as deeply felt, subjective and relational stories in which each person's particular "life project" (Denzin, 2001, p. 34) of becoming a qualified teacher mingled with, and/or bumped up against, the possibilities and constraints of the institutional stories.

Jacinta, who came to early childhood teaching almost by default, having originally intended to enrol in a primary pre-service programme, explained how she felt once she began learning about early childhood education:

I had no idea, cos I really had no idea about early childhood even as a serious profession so I really, as far as I, it's really bad, I was concerned I was going to be playing with children. I didn't really take it that seriously because I didn't know anything about it. I felt a bit embarrassed about it after I'd been there a while-its wow! [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 6]

The felt experience of 'being knowledgeable'

Through appropriating the various knowledges/discourses around which their sense of preparedness was crafted, newly qualified teachers' conveyed a sense of phenomenologically having broken into, or penetrated something, and in doing so had moved from the outside of the teaching profession to its inside. For participants '*being* knowledgeable' was about selfhood, identity, and credentialisation –or feelings of being made legitimate as teachers. I suggest that in an holistic sense '*being* knowledgeable' was an existentially arrived at experience and state. Guided by Britzman (2003) I take existential to mean how learning to teach is experienced as a struggle for voice that "touch[es] the deepest recesses of the self" (p. 3) and the process "is far more complex, ambiguous, and paradoxical than supposed" (Britzman, 2003, p. 1) by all parties. Some participants struggled more than others. All stories however, whilst effectively told about themselves, thus revealing an inner world, simultaneously revealed each participant's reading of the outer world. Aligned with the identification of the existential quality of '*being* knowledgeable' I noticed when participants talked about accumulating the knowledge this was expressed both explicitly or implicitly in terms of being physically felt, or held by each person.

Part II: Accumulating the knowledge

It is kind of like you have nibbled at something, but oh gosh you have only nibbled. You've got yeah. I sort of feel yes it is finished but is it really finished? Is it ever finished? [Tony, Int. 1, p. 24]

Toni (above) eloquently expressed a visceral sense of accumulating pieces of the never-ending body of formal knowledge. Beatrix gave a sense of 'biting off' great chunks of knowledge: "like you've learned heaps and then you are in an environment where you had to try and put it into practice". Phenomenologically, the lived experience of teacher education was almost universally described as the acquisition of a "huge" amount of knowledge or as "heaps". Consider Evie's comment: "I still see it as a lot for me to learn but I have learnt a lot, a huge amount". Toni expressed in the negative form: "I didn't think I was going to learn heaps". This was a felt experience of having and

holding onto something akin to a physical pile or ‘store’ of knowledge where “body and mind are effectively one” (Jackson, 1989, p. 9). For most this was a feature of the tonal quality (emotional subtext) of how they talked about their knowledge or how much they had learned.

Geejay’s store was expressed as having “laid a foundation” on which to base further learning. For Geejay, a substantial and positive feature of her learning to teach process was attached to acquiring the traditions and systems of knowledge for teaching: “I have loved the information, I have loved the reading and I have loved the teaching, and I have loved the knowledge”. Others expressed similar viewpoints, and for many there was a sense of enthrallment associated with having gained access to this knowledge. Recall, for example, Sarona’s quote earlier where she confidently talked about what she learned and knew. There is a sense in her response of feeling as though she had successfully accessed a store of knowledge from which she was able to engage knowledgeably as a newly qualified teacher. Sarona’s own story was about being receptive to acquiring the knowledge of the academy:

I went in there, I didn’t really know what I was going...[to learn?] what they are going teach in there. I just went in there and just went through the course, you know? I know it was going be hard and I know it’s going be very powerful focusing on the children and um I was focusing on learning what they are going to want us to learn. [Sarona, Int. 1, p.10]

For some, new knowledge was viewed as adding onto ‘old’ knowledge. While talking about whether she had changed, or not, as an effect of teacher education Kelsey referred to having “a lot behind” her:

sometimes I am just stuck in the way I was, like just me, I haven’t changed. Sometimes.... oh, I don’t know, it depends on the situation. [...] because you still have your old personality in the way you teach but you have got a lot behind you. You might not necessarily talk about your learning all the time but you are always thinking. Like if the children do something you might think ‘ohhh... I learnt about that! I know what that is. I know that that is one step forward’.

Kate: Yeah, yeah so you feel as though...

Kelsey: I know a lot more yeah [Kelsey, Int. 1, p. 18]

For Kelsey, having a store of knowledge she can call up from ‘behind’ was important. She appeared, however, to privilege her personality over her new found pedagogical knowledge. Kelsey had worked in early childhood education for 6 years before being ‘pushed’ into getting her teaching qualification by the conditions of her employment contract. She found that the programme “was more in-depth than what I thought it would be. There was more to learn than what I thought there would be”.

Closely aligned with the notion of being holders of a store of knowledge, and in fact giving it more interpretive credence was a strong sense in many accounts of having been ‘filled up’ by knowledge. In response to being asked how she felt at the end of her pre-service programme, Evie conveyed a sense of having been propelled through the institutional process of knowledge acquisition and accumulation:

probably a sense of huge achievement but also exhaustion (laughs). I’m glad it’s all over and looking forward to starting work and thinking ‘wow it’s really finished’. It’s actually hard to think that it was finished; you still had this feeling that there was more to come. It didn’t really sink in I don’t think for a while. [Evie, Int. 1, p. 22]

Similarly, when describing the best aspect of her field-based programme Geejay too conveyed a sense of being immersed in a milieu of ideas and information:

Okay, .. the knowledge, I think that came and the sharing of the knowledge from the lecturers. I enjoyed the lecturers. I really enjoyed the lecturers and their different quirks and the relationships with the students but the knowledge, the knowledge, the knowledge yeah. I actually will miss it in a sense, but in a sense- no -it will be nice to have some time out. [Geejay, Int. 1, p. 71]

Knowledge as object

The notion of a store of knowledge is consistent with understandings of knowledge as object whereby education can be a process of being given and/or acquiring the “knowledge object” (Northedge, 2002, p. 206) codified within a programme of study. Davis (2004) links notions of knowledge as accumulated and stored as originating in rationalist accounts of knowledge as “objectively real and out there, independent of knowers” (p. 132). While both groups of participants expressed a sense of having acquired a large store of knowledge, pre-service participants more often described a process akin to accumulating ‘bits’ of (the store of) knowledge. An effect of this was how they felt very knowledgeable in a cognitive sense; in ‘the head’. However, as pointed out by Beatrix earlier, they also wanted to understand their knowledge in practice. I return to this notion shortly.

In addition to gaining “access to the ideas that others have already constructed and worked with” (Lampert & Ball, 1998, p. 39) participants also brought an expectation of acquiring knowledge with them to teacher education.

Outsiders to the discourse: the experiences of field-based participants

Field-based participants were in a unique position to contrast pre and post teacher education experiences of working in their centres. As such, these participants provided an insight into what ‘*not* being prepared’ was like. They talked about how, without the knowledge that they subsequently gained through teacher education they were, in effect, stymied from understanding their work further. Kelsey’s comments typify this:

[I] was pretty blind to what the other teachers were doing. Like I was just there to play and [do] cleaning up duties and things like that. They did talk about *Te Whāriki* but, it just went over my head really. [Kelsey, Int. 1, p. 6]

Kelsey likened her unqualified situation as “I would have been stuck in a hole really if I didn’t know anything about *Te Whāriki* and everything else that we run under [and] all the other documents. I would have been way behind”. Tiale confirmed the situation Kelsey found herself in, saying “my experiences there taught me enough that if I just stayed there without a qualification I wasn’t going to learn much more”.

Tiale provided an insight into how she understood herself in relation to the centre as a community of practice (Wenger, 1998):

I think I just wanted more knowledge on how I should, on my interaction with the children because I was, I was told all the time how good and how natural I was and they were telling me why I tended to do the things I did and I just, you know, I sort of wanted to know that myself and how I could maybe do things a bit different. [Tiale, Int. 1, p. 6]

Geejay, who had worked in early childhood education for six and a half years prior to beginning her qualification, recounted a similar story to those of Tiale and Kelsey. I pick her story up as she begins to explain why she decided to become qualified:

I felt inadequate. Absolutely, although I knew and was constantly told that I was doing a good job I felt inadequate and I felt that I wasn’t doing justice to this position and I was ready to actually learn probably for the first time in my life and I had this opportunity, yeah but that is what I felt –inadequate. [...] In extending children’s learning. ...I certainly knew the milestones and things but getting my head around *Te Whāriki* and wanting to know what was .. you know understanding the DOPs¹ and wanting to know, how the mechanics of the whole thing worked and ...

Kate: So you knew the DOPs were there? You knew all these things were there.

¹ (DOPS refers to the *Revised Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices for Early Childhood Services* (MoE, 1996). These form part of the contractual charter agreement for government funding of early childhood services in Aotearoa New Zealand)

Geejay: Yes but none of them made sense to me. And they were just mumbo jumbo to me except *Te Whāriki*. Obviously I used *Te Whāriki* [...] when the draft [document] came through ... [Geejay, Int. 1, pp. 15-16]

For Geejay, feelings of inadequacy regarding DOPs as being “like double Dutch” resonate with Kelsey’s notion about *Te Whāriki* “going over my head”. These positions are understandable as Nuttall (2003) asserts that the definition of curriculum adopted within *Te Whāriki* is “is extremely difficult to operationalise” (p. 162) as the definition of curriculum adopted rejects a tightly prescribed curriculum (see Haggerty, 2003).

The notion that one can be a viable and valued member of the teaching team and yet be unqualified is largely a result of the socio historical, political background and context of early childhood education in this country (Manning-Morton, 2006; May, 1997a, 1997b). The current policy context is evidence of a discursive shift as it requires early childhood teachers to be qualified; this hastened a number of the field-based participants (and one pre-service participant) to undertake teacher education. This is in part why for many ‘*being* knowledgeable’ was also linked to credentialisation. Toni pointed to this shifting situation: “I felt like I was doing a lot as well, so I wanted to be qualified and recognised”. Re-entering the early childhood world having had a baby she explained how

I had started [working] and I saw the types of ladies I was working with and I was thinking “mmm now if I had the confidence I would be able to do what that supervisor’s doing”, not so much in that leadership role, but having that kind of money also. When I did decide that okay, I am going to study, I am going to carry on training, well, I want to be paid what I am worth. [Toni, Int. 1, p. 13]

Nuttall (2004) explored how the relatively recent notion of ‘curriculum’ in early childhood education was negotiated and enacted between a group of teachers in a childcare centre in Aotearoa New Zealand. She found a good deal of positioning and talking past each other on the basis of differing understandings and conceptions of the notion of ‘curriculum’. Because of structural conditions such as rostering of staff, difficulty of meeting together as a staff team, little or no non-contact time for planning and reflection the teachers were unable to “access the professionalised identities they were seeking to construct” (Nuttall, 2005, p. 25) (also see Robinson, 2007). Nuttall’s (2005) findings about the structural barriers in centres for discussing and engaging in dialogue when coupled with Fleer’s (2003) identification of the reification of (Eurocentric) concepts, and Edwards’s (2005) view that communities of practice have a tendency toward apprenticeship into existing practices rather than in generating new learning, supports claims by those working without more formal or guided access to the

knowledges of early childhood education could have difficulty penetrating their centres as discourse communities.

Given that Kelsey, Geejay and Tiale did not find the collegial context as one enabling more than the superficial learning about teaching or the appropriation of surface features of pedagogical tools (Grossman, Smagorinsky, & Valencia, 1999), it is not surprising they sought a formal context to learn more about teaching and its' knowledge base. In Geejay's terms (as quoted previously) they wanted to know "how the mechanics of the whole thing worked". Consequently, they looked to teacher education as a source of knowledge that could be retro-fitted to the discourses/practices that existed in their centres or *kōhangā*.

Knowledge as an expectation: the experiences of pre-service participants

Pre-service participants also considered a major function of teacher education to involve the accessing of knowledge for teaching. Beatrix's comment is consistent with this view "if I was going to work in that area I needed to know what I'm supposed to be doing". Sarona, a grandmother who was originally inspired to become a teacher when she took her grandchildren to their A'oga Amata explained how:

when I went there [to the A'oga Amata] and I looked at the children and I don't really know how to do that programme and all that and you know, how can I teach them if I don't have any experience or anything, so I'd rather learn. Learn how to teach the children and all that, instead of just walking in there and I can do that but, cause when I went in there and I saw, like I said one qualified teacher and all the others, I can see how that one qualified teacher can teach different strategies for children ... [Sarona, Int. 1, p. 6]

Sarona considered the knowledge held by the qualified teacher provided the basis for her more thoughtful actions as a teacher.

Evie came to early childhood education from a background as a tertiary qualified health professional and had an expectation that:

You need to learn all about the theory, need to learn about all the educational theory first. I think it's important that you understand, you need to be able to justify what you're doing [Evie, Int. 1, p. 32]

This comment implies acceptance and promotion of the notion of having to acquire and possess a body of foundational knowledge for teaching. Evie's comment about needing to justify what you are doing reflects the shift in focus from teacher training to teacher education where the teacher is "equipped to make sound decisions about their

practice..." (Cameron & Baker, 2004, p. 3). Institution A's programme leader said how in recent years the programme had "shifted a lot into that notion of teachers being articulate and being able to talk about what they do and why ..." This is an example of where the stories of the newly qualified teachers resonate with the official versions.

Bonny's desire to become a teacher was based in her expectation of getting a qualification that led to a job: "I really believed that I wanted to get a degree and a qualification or something behind me". Likewise, Jacinta wanted to "do further study that kinda ended in a career". Both participants had taken part in tertiary study prior to teacher education, although neither had completed degrees due to uncertainty about the courses they had initially undertaken. After a period away from university each decided to become teachers.

Prior experiential knowledge of early childhood education varied considerably in the group. At one extreme Jacinta metaphorically 'fell' into it, not realising at the outset those who worked in the sector were considered 'teachers'. Some, such as Bonny, had relieved in a centre, and Evie had a small amount of prior experience as a home-based caregiver. Sarona and Beatrix had engaged with early childhood services as users through grand-parenting and parenting respectively. Whereas Peggy was the only participant who had a significant work history in early childhood: first in a voluntary capacity in an A'oga Amata and then as a semi-qualified teacher (with a specialist Pacific Islands early childhood qualification) in a childcare centre for four years. Peggy's reason for becoming qualified was aligned with the increasing credentialisation of early childhood teaching. She expected to learn "whatever they will teach us". A comment that may, or may not, be partly indicative of Peggy's cultural roots possibly suggesting tacit acceptance of a transmissive educational process and the positioning of herself as the object of others transmissible knowledge (Mulcahy, 2006).

The knowledgeable teacher

That participants in both groups largely talked about '*being* knowledgeable' is perhaps unsurprising given their recent tertiary experience. Tertiary institutions are commonly understood as sites for knowledge production and transfer (Gilroy, 1998; Kennedy, 2006) and with a focus on knowledge *about* rather than as a search for meaning (Edwards, 2005, p. 50). Mulcahy (2006) asserts the pedagogy of tertiary education "positions [university] teachers as knowing subjects and students as objects of

their transmissible knowledge” (p. 57). Additionally teacher education has increasingly positioned itself over the past two decades as concerning itself with “produc[ing] knowledgeable professional teachers” (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005, p. 87), an agenda aligned to the identification and codification of a knowledge-base for teaching. These changes are said to sit within wider agendas to do with modernist reforms in teacher education (Edwards et al., 2002) and with the modernist project generally (Dahlberg et al., 2007). As discussed in Chapter 2 the image of the ‘knowledgeable teacher’ was evidenced in all but three of the 35 early childhood conceptual frameworks submitted in a nation-wide survey of teacher education institutions (Kane, 2005). This is a positioning strongly articulated within each institution’s conceptual statements. Moreover, the bodies of knowledge that were held were remarkably similar across both groups of participants.

Russell (1997, cited in Loughran, 2006) has characterised the increased focus on knowledge for teachers in teacher education as the “*content turn*” (p. 3) (italics in original). Jacinta described how the content element dominated her experience of learning to teach so that “the career just got bigger and bigger” as she was introduced to more and more knowledge. My contention is that equating a sense of preparedness with a sense of feeling and ‘*being* knowledgeable’ was an effect of the official and institutional discourses that nowadays identify the need for increased knowledge for teachers as a key feature of teacher education and as linked to the professionalisation agenda (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005; Zeichner, 2003).

Problems with coming to know

Some have argued that prospective teachers enter teacher education expecting to be told how to teach (Loughran, 2003) and how the knowledge they receive will be relatively easily transferred to their practice as teachers (Lampert & Ball, 1998). In this sense it could be inferred that knowledge is understood as an object, something passed from one person to the next “simply by giving them the ‘knowledge object’” (Wells, 2002, p. 206). However, it is well established that due in part to their over familiarity with the role of the teacher (the Lortie thesis), teacher education students can be unprepared for the sometimes troubling experience of learning to teach (Britzman, 2003; Darling-Hammond & Baratz-Snowden, 2005; Kennedy, 1999). It isn’t a matter of merely acquiring the knowledge object, but of negotiating and developing a teacher identity (Miller Marsh, 2002; Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996) within and against the discourses of teacher education. In this study a number of participants across the two

groups realised in retrospect that they came to teacher education unsure of what they might learn, but expecting whatever it was it would be easier to understand than it turned out to be. Bonny's thoughts sum up some of these expectations:

I remember thinking that it wasn't going to be that hard. [...] I don't know why but I did. And I hated maths, I am not very good at it and I remember thinking if I went into primary I would be no good, I am useless with numbers and they won't be worried about that at that level of early childhood so I will be okay. And I really did underestimate I look back now and it is not easy and it was really hard and it was challenging. And um there were times when I was like oh I was puzzled and I had said "I've had enough of that" ... [Bonny, Int. 1, p. 12]

For most, passing the academic demands of their respective courses seemed relatively unproblematic. However, for pre-service participants especially, understanding how the knowledge they gained could be taken up by their teacher 'selves' and linked to their developing identities and capabilities as teachers was more troublesome. In addition, despite the amount of knowledge they gained not all participants felt they had quite enough. For example, Beatrix, who "learned heaps" didn't feel she had a "solid enough base" by the end of her programme to give her a sense of confidence to "handle anything that came up". It was not more theoretical, or procedural knowledge (Korthagen, 2001) Beatrix desired in order to make her base solid. It was knowledge gained through what she termed "practical experience"—a concern articulated by most of her pre-service colleagues in the study.

Wells (2002) argues that one can "know" a lot, but they are often neither able nor disposed to bring what they have learned to bear in the effective and responsible solving of real problems" (p. 206). As Beatrix suggests, she wanted more practical knowledge, suggesting a sense of knowing that propositional knowledge single-handedly cannot guide the practice of teachers (Kemmis, 2005).

Loughran (2006), drawing substantially on the work of Korthagen (2001) explains why teacher education students so strongly desire knowledge of the practical:

For students of teaching, epistemic knowledge is not immediately helpful in addressing their problems of practice. This is not to demean such knowledge, rather to recognize that in the absence of teaching experience, generalizable knowledge about practice (no matter how "right" it might be) does not necessarily help neophytes see into their actions and teaching behaviours in ways that lead to constructive (at that given time) solutions. (p. 9)

Helping students of teaching to "see into their actions", as Loughran (2006, p. 9) aptly describes it, ultimately requires perceptual knowledge rather than conceptual knowledge (Korthagen, 2001) due to the essentially indeterminate nature of teaching. Perceptual knowledge enables teachers "to perceive and discriminate the relevant details. These

cannot be transmitted in some general, abstract form” (Korthagen, 2001, p. 5). While participants across both groups were keen students of the general stocks of knowledge, they also desired access to knowledge they themselves got to construct; that is knowledge constructed through practice.

Hedges (2007) has noted how to date “no comprehensive study of early childhood teachers’ knowledge has been undertaken” (p. 57). Because of this and having decided on my thesis data story I resisted an analysis in terms of the type of knowledge held by newly qualified teachers. Rather than a focus on the types, or forms of knowledge talked about, my reading of the data suggests participants’ sense of being knowledgeable was about *how* knowledge was held and understood, and what it meant *to be* knowledgeable as a result of their engagement in teacher education. In successive chapters I shift my discussion to how the knowledge was accessed.

In the next and final part of the chapter I turn to accounts consistent with the phenomenological construct of ‘*being* knowledgeable’ as a relational phenomenon. Whilst participants conveyed a sense that they had acquired and accumulated a sizable body of knowledge I noted in the research texts how participants’ talk about their knowledge invariably placed it in relationship with themselves or others. Participants did not generally say “I know ‘this or that’” but stories of ‘*being* knowledgeable’ were stories of ‘knowledge-in-relation-to’. As I noted earlier, participants’ stories of being prepared whilst revealing an inner world, revealed also their reading of an outer, discursively constituted world.

Part III: Knowledge as relational

A key feature of the way in which participants talked about ‘*being* knowledgeable’ was through the use of anecdotes containing moments of reflexive positioning when they, or others, positioned them as ‘knowers’. Each reflexive moment provides a slice in time in relation to each person’s unfolding of understanding about themselves and ongoing production of the self “whoever might be responsible for its production” (Davies & Harré, 2001, p. 265) and their relationship as knowers to the knowledges of teacher education. This took place through moments of temporal collapse as participants came to describe themselves in ‘the now’ but always in relation to past and future. These are stories that could never have been foretold, but only retold in hindsight. Denzin (2001) might refer to these reflexive moments as epiphanies given their analytic

function and how they are able to cast light on a person's interpretation of experience and the meanings they gave to this. Although I have identified the following stories with individuals, to the 'person in the process' and their interpretations, I have also been alert to other voices present in these stories. Fleer (2003a) suggests "that in every utterance there are always two voices present: the voice of the speaker and the voice of the speaker's culture, belief system, and value system" (p. 259).

The following anecdotes are of three types: teacher knowledge in relation to children, teacher knowledge in relation to adults, and teacher knowledge in relation to the institution. These types are not characterised by tight boundaries but are grouped as a heuristic. The three themes of self-hood, identity and credentialism/legitimation that I identified in the data can be 'seen' throughout these. Reflexive moments highlight how for participants being knowledgeable became "a process of relations" (Rinaldi, 2006, p. 125). This is not an exhaustive treatment, but an attempt to illustrate how the phenomenon of preparedness as '*being* knowledgeable' by the end of teacher education existed in two senses; as a store of knowledge, and as a relational phenomenon. My interpretation of each is just one of many that are possible.

Knowers in relation to children

Evie's storyline: "As a teacher I think you're more tuned in..."

It would be during practicum again when you come across a child that's really interested in something and you can go in there and share their excitement and then find ways of making that better and extending their... yeah, and then you feel really good about yourself and think 'oh that was really great' or 'that was amazing, that interest so and so had about that, let's find out some more' and you see their faces lighting up and they get so into it. Yeah, yeah, that's really, really good.

Kate: Okay, that's great

Evie: Yeah, I think that's what it's all about really [...] as a teacher I think you're more tuned in to what they're actually thinking and what they're actually doing and, and knowing how to ask them questions in a certain way so you can find out where they're at and where this is going; whereas without the teacher's knowledge you might pick up on an interest, but you might not know how to extend it. You might not even think about extending it. You might just say 'oh, that's really good', you know or just leave it at that. You might not sort of take it further" [Evie, Int. 1, pp. 11-12]

The essence of being prepared for Evie was to be 'found' in the role and identity of the teacher in relation to children's learning. Working alongside children to support their interests through a mutuality of engagement, or through the forming of "positive alliances" (Brennan, 2005, p. 112) between the child and the teacher was for her "what

it's all about really". Evie's sense of 'being knowledgeable' was very much focused on pedagogical knowledge. Knowing about children's learning affords her identity as a teacher of being "more tuned in" than she was prior to teacher education. Her anecdote is replete with the types of sensitivity to children currently considered to be an important way in which early childhood teachers foster children's curiosity, thinking and knowledge building (Hedges, 2007). Evie conveys a sense of satisfaction in being able to know and work alongside children in this way.

Through providing a window on her pedagogical knowledge it is clear Evie has appropriated a range of pedagogic strategies. As a holder of this (legitimate) knowledge she not only positions herself as being more knowledgeable than she was at the beginning of her programme but also positions herself in relation to others who have ostensibly not got the same knowledge/information.

Evie's epistemological positioning in relation to children's learning was consistent with key messages and conversations of her teacher education programme as described by Institution A's programme leader:

The focus in the first year is very much about being warm and responsive and, and those kind of human interaction [skills?] and getting in touch with children in lots of ways and developing confidence and skills in terms of talking with children and interacting with children; a focus in terms of looking at individual children. The second year the focus moves more in terms of curriculum facilitation, both for individuals but also for smaller groups of children. And that's very much focused around finding something that's of interest to children and using, you know, very much that approach in terms of facilitating curriculum experiences.
[Evie, Int. 1, p. 17]

For pre-service participants, knowledge about working with children and supporting their interests is structured into the formal curriculum and also forms a focus and expectation of their second year practicum. It builds on the notion of being able to establish relationships with children, including being able to talk with them, and aligns their identity as a teacher with that of a "facilitator".

Piata's storyline: "I'm just paying attention really, just listening":

I know that now after training I look at children differently and you know it always makes me think about what they're thinking or what they're trying to um ..[I] communicate with them in a way that's not as closed, as I maybe would have been before I started studying. Like trying to get them to umm, or you know, [I'm] just paying attention really, just listening [...] just listening to them more.
[Piata, Int. 1, pp. 17-18]

Piata's use of phrases such as 'paying attention' and 'listening' have links to deep understandings and knowledge about teachers in relation to *being with* children (Rinaldi, 2006). That (teacher) self and identity are relational terms is illustrated through the way in which Piata defines her teacher self by positioning herself in relation to the child as a thinker. Through now "paying attention" and "just listening" to children Piata positions her teacher self as a way of knowing (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberg, & Tarule, 1986, p. 36). She explicitly attributes her changes to having taken part in teacher education ("after training").

Piata's sensitivity to the child reflects at least two of the key aims of the field-based programme (Student Handbook, 2004, Institution B). Through adopting a listening stance Piata becomes present for children and accords their voice equal weight to hers. Davis (2004) attributes a pedagogy of "hermeneutic listening" (p. 177) to teachers taking an ethical action stance to teaching. Davis (2004) asserts that "ethical action derives from a deep appreciation of the virtuality of one's own identity –a knowledge that one's self is a fluid, always emergent, biological-and-cultural form. Knowing, doing, and being are inseparable" (p. 176).

Bonny's storyline: "My view of children has changed"

I have definitely changed in terms of my, um understanding of young children. Obviously. Because I have learnt so much about them, and children, young children in general not because ... infants and toddlers but compared to what I did know. ... and not so much young children and their development and those sorts of things but young children and how they learn and how we as teachers can support that learning. Um, and so, perhaps my perspective of what I was about to learn and what I thought was going to be my teacher training and how I thought it was going to be easy and all of that and perhaps I undermined, sort of, children's ability and their . Like I am often saying to people now you should never underestimate children and they are really clever and someone was saying to me how they have a friend who has a baby and they talk to them just like an adult and they couldn't believe it. And I was raving on about 'well they can actually understand what you are saying'. So my view of children has changed and I really see them as competent, capable people in the right situation and I didn't not think that to begin with but I wasn't aware of just how ..capable children are. And from studying the way that children were viewed historically and treated I am able to see now that there has been a huge shift in the way that society views children and as a result I think that that is how I see children. A bit of a mouthful hey (laughing).

Kate: Yeah good! It was good!

Bonny: So do you know what I mean that respect will keep coming through in my philosophy that, that, I don't see children as any less than me or ... [Bonny, Int. 1, pp. 73-74]

Bonny also positioned herself as being pleased to have been able to reconceptualise her view of children as an effect of learning to teach. She took this a step further than most by explicitly locating this knowledge within broader systems of meaning making. As with others the language and conceptual tools of *Te Whāriki* figure in her stories through use of the terms ‘competent’ and ‘capable’ to refer to children. As noted previously, the vision statement from *Te Whāriki* has a prominent place in Institution A’s conceptual statement and graduate profile. I have interpreted Bonny to be saying as a result of the knowledge and understandings gained she now has a renewed sense of respect for children realising “just how capable children are”. Her prior knowledge about children accorded with the knowledge she engaged with in teacher education. She considered that learning about children was a core, or fundamental aspect of that programme. However her image of the teacher she brought there was challenged. It was based on a view of children as “just sponge[s] … there to absorb everything” and “they are just going to absorb everything I teach them and it’s all going to be structured and directive … whereas my whole view of this is completely opposite to that, like, we are all in this together sort of thing”. Through reconceptualising her view of children Bonny concomitantly reconceptualises her identity as a teacher. She sees “children now as growing up and developing –just like I am now and learning about the world and that I am not here to teach them what to learn but I sort of need to teach them how to learn”.

Knowers in relation to adults

Tiale’s storyline: “If I was to go into any centre I could fit in, I could easily fit in”

I was working with under twos [on practicum], it was the first time that I had worked with under twos. It was the first time ever that outside my 6 years at my centre that I had a chance to sort of establish and build on some new relationships and that was amazing. Everything I had learnt from the [ITE programme], just in the theories of attachment, you know all that sort of stuff- it just came into place and after three weeks when I left [practicum] I knew for a fact that the children had trusted me [...] I just knew, I thought ‘oh my... I now know that if I was to go into any centre I could fit in, I could easily fit in’. [Tiale, Int. 1, pp. 14-15]

Tiale expresses a sense of confidence through being able to theorise her practice so much so her practicum colleagues “recognised” this in her. She talks about experiencing a sense of social and discursive competence which supports feelings of being able to participate as a legitimate member of the discourse community of this centre (Macmillan, 2001). Tiale, who was given feedback in her ‘home-centre’ about

being “a natural teacher” said she wanted to find out for herself, seems to get the affirmation she was looking for. She can not only speak from within the discourse, but more significantly in terms of being a teacher her knowledge is implicit within her practices (Lampert & Ball, 1998). I have interpreted this event to be a significant one, possibly a turning point (Denzin, 2001) for Tiale because as one of the longest serving teachers at her centre she said “I never really felt too much on the outside” of her centre team. For Tiale practicum contributed to her sense of ‘being knowledgeable’ through providing a context in which to measure herself against ‘other’ qualified teachers; not just those who she worked with.

Toni’s storyline: “I was alright before but I feel I have more meaning to me now”

Well I am a bit crazy cos I just go mad in the centre so yeah, so that is why I was always hard to keep in a box. Now I have the confidence to just say ‘yeah, let’s do it’.

Kate: How do you feel about yourself now that you have got this Diploma? You have got a teaching qualification?

Toni: I am still coming to grips with it but all these [interview] questions are like “oh yeah- I did learn something. Oh yeah I am finished” I feel um... I was alright before but I feel like I have more meaning to me now. [Toni, Int. 1, p. 31]

Having “more meaning”, I suggest, is Toni’s way of saying she has an expanded sense of her ‘self’ as a teacher through an increased sense of knowing. Having “nibbled” at the store of knowledge for teaching she is also no longer shut out of the discursive construction of the qualified teacher. Her comment, “I was alright before,” refers to how as a semi-qualified teacher with 100 licensing points (see chapter 2) she was “considered a senior teacher” in her centre. While she believed her practice was comparable to fully qualified colleagues she lacked confidence in herself. Joining the discourse community of early childhood education gives her the confidence to say “yeah, let’s do it”. Through teacher education she accesses the background knowledge to her practices and in this way she feels she has ‘more meaning’. For example, when talking about something that was unexpected about her learning to teach process Toni replied: “That what I do, that what I was doing previously was actually good practice”.

In summary, the reflexive anecdotes of Evie, Piata, Bonny, and those of Tiale and Toni have focused on ‘being knowledgeable’ in relation to self and others (children and adults). The first cluster centred on participants’ positioning in relation to children through a *being with them*: Evie felt because of what she learned in teacher education she was now “more tuned in” than she was at the outset of teacher education. Piata

talked about becoming more attentive and listening to children and as a result feels she is not as closed as she may have been previously. Similarly, Bonny's view of children has changed too due to the knowledge she gained in teacher education. She now recognises children as equals and has a renewed sense of respect for them.

The second cluster of reflexive positionings was '*being* knowledgeable' in relation to others. This way both Tiale and Toni were able to position themselves alongside qualified teachers as legitimate members of the teaching profession.

Prominent in the data were other comparable stories. For example, Evie's notion of being 'more tuned in' resonated with other's accounts. This attests to the kinds of reasons why field-based participants, as discussed in part 2, decided to undertake teacher education; that through engaging with the formal knowledges and processes of teacher education as students they more fully understand the identity of the teacher in relation to children's learning. In Toni's terms 'they have more meaning to them now'. This is a key positioning we would reasonably expect to see in newly qualified early childhood teachers. Evie's account of attending to children's interests as a key pedagogical strategy was widespread across the two groups. These ideas seemed to strongly resonate with newly qualified teachers and arguably reflect how an interests-based curriculum and pedagogy are currently at the centre of official discourses (Anning, Cullen, & Fleer, 2009; Carr, 2001; Ministry of Education, 1996, 2005b), including featuring in each institution's official teacher education programme and curriculum.

To this point I have provided an insight into newly qualified teachers as knowers using the heuristic of the reflexive moment and the positioning inherent in it. These are moments in which they, or others, position them as knowers. I suggest they become knowers when they begin to experience how knowledge-is-relational; it only more fully exists in relation to something such as self, children, or others. Reflexive moments in the data operated on two levels. First on the methodological level, provoked by the interview as this created a space in which participants collapsed the past and present in moments of connection; explicitly illustrated in Toni's extract previously. The anecdotes provided up to this point have been of this type.

But participants also recalled and talked about reflexive moments that took place for them as students, whilst engaged in their teacher education programme; times when, as knowers, they make connections between their learning and the programme content and processes and becoming knowledgeable. In the next section, the anecdotes of Geejay

and Jacinta are examples of reflexive moments that revisit an earlier reflexive moment that took place through the processes of learning to teach. The exemplary significance of these is they represent and exemplify a shift from knowledge characterised as the accumulation of ‘bits’ of the knowledge object (of which the earlier anecdotes can be said to be examples) to knowledge as locating oneself in the broad landscape of early childhood education—its sociohistorical theoretical landscape. By this I mean it is only when the pieces of knowledge are united through the knower’s experiences and understanding of how this knowledge plays out in ‘reality’, in other words is operationalised in relationships within the field of early childhood education, they began to really feel ‘prepared’.

Reflexive moments during learning to teach

Geejay’s storyline: “I have probably gone from an ignorant state [...] to a more knowledgeable state”

...Certainly nothing is set in concrete. Um..yeah, my ability to critique my own practice has come ahead leaps and bounds. In fact I wouldn’t have thought about critiquing my own practice. So that is good and I probably am hard, but I don’t see myself as being hard on myself but I have been told I am. But to me that is fine.

Kate: Oh, okay-who told you [that]?

Geejay: Lecturers in [reflective] journals. That’s fine. I need to do that as I because I think it is important to find a middle ground. I have probably gone from an ignorant state of saying "I am doing alright" to a more knowledgeable state where I say “hey I can do that better!” [Geejay, Int. 1, pp. 53-54]

Geejay felt significantly changed as a result of taking part in teacher education. She likened it to a shifting from a state of “ignorance” to a “more knowledgeable” state. Ironically, whilst an unqualified, and in her words “ignorant” teacher, she believed she was “doing alright”. Having gained her qualification and become more knowledgeable she positioned herself as being able to “do that better”. Geejay believed it was through having been introduced to the bodies of knowledge of teacher education, coupled with the process of reflective critique, that she had been enabled to make this shift. Using her knowledge as a tool for engaging in “conversation[s] with staff in the staff room now that I would not have been able to have three years ago” she takes her place as a qualified member of her teaching team.

Geejay attributed her changes to being ready to learn for the first time in her life, but importantly also to the practice of reflection that she was introduced to via teacher education. Reflection enabled her to develop her own knowledge of teaching through a process of critique and thus knowing she “can do that better”. Geejay often referred to the idea that ‘you can’t know what you don’t know’, echoing ideas implicit within a discourse theory of understanding whereby the individual is not the source of meanings but “meanings are located in ongoing discourses” (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 66) that we may, or may not, have access to. Although, there was a sense of *deja vu* for Geejay when she was exposed to some of the new ways of thinking about things:

I actually don’t think I would have considered these issues if it weren’t for the course. I actually don’t think I would have! I mean, yeah. I was literally forced to look at issues and readings. Then obviously it was backed up by lecturers and then the outpouring of the assignments which was always (giggles) an outpouring for me it was like oowwwwt [out] it all comes it has been locked in there for so long. I have just got to say... I was just so ready that is all I can say. I can’t imagine that I would have gone ahead like this had I not [had the course] because I didn’t know what to read, I didn’t know where to go. So it gave me a guideline. I had the children’s interests but I didn’t actually seek out, I didn’t know about the other things that were affected, I didn’t know about the Bronfenbrenners or the macros or the exos. I mean I knew, as soon as I heard it, I thought "well isn’t that so!" and so I searched it out more and it all made sense with my life experience. [Geejay, Int. 1, p. 56]

Geejay’s admission she was “just so ready” seems to have its roots in feeling as though everything in her life up to the point at which she embarked on her teacher education contributed to her “outpouring” of knowing and knowledge. Like Toni, (and other field-based participants) she too felt as though many of the ideas resonated for her.

Having become knowledgeable about the broad discursive landscape of early childhood education Geejay reflects on her location in that landscape and in doing so takes up a position in this complex mélange of ideas, information and propositional knowledge. Whilst she admitted “I was literally forced to look at issues” she gained a strong sense of identity as a teacher through doing this: “I am much more aware of what is around me and the political scene and the scale of things and how to be aware about the areas of inequity and inequality [...] very much more aware”. Additionally “I know much more than I knew before about cultures, about beliefs systems, about the way people behave”. The knowledge she was exposed to, and identified with, helped her to make a discursive shift from identifying as “a caregiver” to reconceptualising herself as “a teacher”: “I was still very much in the caregiver mode ...which I have now shed”.

Like most others in the study Geejay's sense of being knowledgeable was not a static, end of the road state but: "... while I am very aware that this is *just a* foundation I have laid the foundation for further, for further reading, studying, whatever it is still absolutely solid".

Jacinta's storyline: "I think I had a lot of naive thoughts coming into it"

I was embarrassed when I did start learning how much is involved. [...] I guess I had to learn about the learning that children were getting from play which so many people don't know about. And I just feel bad saying I went into a career where I just thought I'd be playing with children. Like that's not really .. I think it's more about, which isn't a very good decision, but I don't think I was very excited about working with adults, which is now I know that is naive too because it's about relationships with parents and your teaching team and the community, so that I think I had a lot of naive thoughts coming into it. [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 9]

Jacinta identifies how the assumptions and knowledge she brought to teacher education played a significant part in her process of learning to teach. Coming to early childhood education with very limited knowledge of the sector and its diverse landscape she worked hard to understand "how much [was] involved". The one explicit assumption she, in her own words "naively" held at the outset was she would "just play with children" was disabused. She came to realise early childhood education was much more complex than this; as was her process of learning to teach. As she came to know early childhood education through the discourses of her teacher education programme she began to get a sense and understanding of what actually constituted the field; the ideas and the many relationships it is built around.

Like many others who have experienced becoming a teacher as an existential crisis Jacinta was not aware that others found it difficult too. She internalised her "naïve thoughts" not understanding these to be both a source of legitimate knowledge and engagement in the process of co-constructing her teacher-self within the formal process of teacher. She began teacher education, as did others, thinking it was about acquiring the 'bits of knowledge' that could be progressively accumulated. But soon came to understand (painfully at times) how this knowledge only exists as teacher knowledge by operationalising it in relationships.

The coming together of the constituent parts of the field, as expressed by Geejay and Jacinta, was also exemplified by Sarona, whose anecdote below illustrates a further shift in being a knowledgeable teacher. Six months into her first year of teaching Sarona begins to find her voice through a reflexive interpretation of understanding how

knowledge is relational, and we begin to see the synthesis of multiple planes of experience and knowledge.

Sarona's storyline: “...now I am slowly thinking to myself and I'm starting to do [it] my own way ...”

I feel much better that, you know, I feel that this is the way to do things and I can carry on doing that. I will look, now I can look at a [new?] way of doing things, of working with children. I mean, other teachers have a different way of working with children but especially with children that is really hard to settle down and do something [with them]. Like boys. But when I first started, it's really hard and I've been trying other ways that other teachers were doing but it didn't work. But now I am slowly you know, thinking to myself and starting to do my own way of how to do, thinking back to the course and the things that we learned from there and I think I feel better now and I think that I can, you know, I can go with whatever problems the children [have] and I have learned that we must, teachers should always concentrate on the children- You know looking after the children and make sure that no-one is hurt and all that. And see what the children likes to do and be there for them, be there for them [and] their interest in what they want to do ... [Sarona, Int. 2, p. 14]

As a newly qualified teacher Sarona feels as though she has begun to find her teacher voice through a reflexive interpretation of what teaching/being a teacher means to her (Britzman, 2003; Elbaz, 1991). This was a dialogic voice as she incorporates a number of sources of meaning to ‘speak’ her truths. As a newly qualified teacher she began, in part, by reproducing the practices of her colleagues and trying out how others in the A’oga approached some of the more difficult situations she found there (“especially with children that is really hard to settle down”). Appropriating others’ solutions didn’t work for her, so, using the knowledge of teaching she brought from teacher education and the beginnings of her own teacher knowledge she began to think things through for herself and to approach these situations in a spirit of inquiry. Earlier she had said “there is a way to put every problem, you have to think of a way to solve them”. Not content to co-exist with some of the enduring problems at the A’oga and their ‘solutions’, she began addressing these and in the process developed her professional practical knowledge (Kemmis, 2005). By incorporating key messages of her teacher education programme such as ‘teachers should always concentrate on the children’, “see what the children like to do, be there for them”, “[consider] their interest and what they want to do” etc. she set about finding, through practical reasoning (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003; Kemmis, 2005) ‘solutions’ to these situations. The child-centered knowledge/discourses from college and the positioning of teacher as a facilitator had a great impact on Sarona and as she concretises these messages she not

only acts as an empowered beginning teacher (Kuzmic, 1994; Sumsion, 1996) but she begins to get a sense of her own agency as a teacher. Animated by situations of practice that are discordant with her knowledge of teaching and which arouse her “processing capacities and sensitivities” (Cetina, 2001, p. 186) she finds in these moments of engagement opportunities to make sense of teacher education and becoming a teacher. That she is able to be this way is not only a reflection of her desire and ability to do so in accordance with the knowledge and vision she gained in teacher education and carried with her into teaching, but must also be seen as a feature of her centre context as she was given the latitude to explore different ways of addressing problems of practice.

Sarona’s positioning as a knowledgeable teacher centres on her ability to engage with teaching as an interpretive practice where theorising is not:

an isolated activity separate from the experience of teaching, or as a grand truth one attempts to impose, but rather as a lived relationship, grounded in the practical existence of persons and dependent upon the process of interpretation and change.
(Rinaldi, 2006, p. 64)

Sarona’s is a hopeful story as it is about becoming a self-authoring (Edwards et al., 2002) and connected knower. She begins teacher education wanting the knowledge of the institution - to “go and find out which is the right and the good way to teach children” and to some extent appearing as a received knower (Belenky et al., 1986). Six months into her first year as a newly qualified teacher she talks with “a sense of ownership and voice in the theorising process ... [and] a sense of participation and connectedness to one’s social practices” (Britzman, 2003, p. 65). Kemmis (2005) describes this as the ability to “‘search for saliences’: that is, search for knowledge in and through practice to correct and amend practice in the light of changing circumstances and new perspectives” (p. 421). In Kemmis’s (2005) terms Sarona has not only come to know practice, but is in the process of developing a “‘knowing practice’: a form of practice that is alert to the ways knowledge and theory develop in and through practice” (p. 421).

Conclusion

This thesis began as an exploration of the meaning of the notion of ‘preparedness’ to teach when applied to early childhood education. Basing the analysis around the question ‘how do students/newly qualified teachers describe their preparedness to teach and what meanings do they attach to this’ I have identified how newly qualified teachers

in both groups described the phenomenon (and sense) of preparedness as ‘*being knowledgeable*’.

I began (in Part 1) by suggesting that at an holistic level ‘*being knowledgeable*’ was an existential phenomenon. For each participant the process of ‘*being prepared*’ was as ontological as it was an epistemic experience. While the process of preparedness was individually experienced and interpreted this was at times a deeply affective experience. Not because each individual is the source of meaning, but because meanings are arrived at as a synthesis between our subjectivity and the world in which our subjectivity is constituted. The existential nature of the learning to teach process is further elaborated in the following two chapters.

As illustrated in Part 2, descriptions of ‘*being knowledgeable*’ drew on commonsense notions of holding a store of knowledge. I have suggested this was not only an expectation brought to teacher education by most, if not all participants, but more significantly it arose from the institutional processes. Accordingly, newly qualified teachers in this study considered accessing and acquiring a knowledge base as a fundamental task of learning to teach and of becoming qualified teachers. Whilst popular or commonsense Western conceptions of knowledge centre on knowledge as an object, something that can be picked up and possessed by the individual, by and large participants found this is a misconception. At the very least ‘picking up’ the knowledge of teacher education required participants to engage with the knowledge object through a process of interpretation. This is the relationship between the knower, the act of knowing and the known (Nuttall, 2003, p. 31). My contention, in Part 3, is how ‘*being knowledgeable*’, whilst relating to the possession of a ‘store’ of knowledge more significantly represented a discursive shift from knowledge as object to knowledge as relational and as tool—or practice. In this sense ‘to know’ is to use and thus transform knowledge.

Methodologically, newly qualified teachers’ knowledge was manifest not in observed practice but in reflexive moments within the interviews. In these instances, having employed the method and tools of phenomenological research the interviews became sites of engagement in which our conversations provoked reflections on the process of learning teaching. All participants told stories where the key storyline was consistent with the experience of having ‘learned heaps’—at times this was akin to a transmissive, filling up model. However, when they talked about what knowing meant to them as teachers, they talked about knowledge and knowing in relation to. In

discussing this point I provided a selection of exemplary anecdotes to illustrate how, when speaking about '*being* knowledgeable', participants displayed a range of relationships with the knowledge of teaching that exemplified simple through to more complex situations in which the knowledges of teacher education came to be constituted as examples of teacher's practical knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000; Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003; Fenstermacher, 1994; Kemmis, 2005; Munby, Russell, & Martin, 2001). Key relationships illustrated were with children, with self, and with others such as colleagues. The last example, Sarona's, exemplified multiple layers of experience and relationships and the identity of teacher as interpretive pedagogue—an identity that is increasingly being explored in the literature (Edwards et al., 2002; Lenz Taguchi, 2010; Rinaldi, 2006). I have suggested these are moments of connection because the interview created a space in which participants collapsed their experience temporally and the reflexive positionings are the moments at which they—or others—position them as knowing and as knowers.

This chapter has highlighted the positive space '*being* knowledgeable' is, the figure within the figure-ground relationship. In doing so it has however, largely ignored the background processes by which participants *became* knowledgeable. The process of acquiring the knowledge and becoming knowledgeable was experienced not as an unproblematic, seamless pursuit tucked in between past and future, but tied to each participant's own life project and to institutional stories that together framed the experience and making sense of learning to teach. While most participants explicitly stated their sense of preparedness was about being and feeling knowledgeable, the '*true*' force of this response was to be found woven in and amongst stories of experiences of '*being prepared*'. Despite conveying an expectation of being introduced to, and becoming familiar with, the accumulated store of disciplinary knowledge as codified in each institution's curriculum, participants in both groups expressed a strong sense of wanting to hold that knowledge not simply '*in their heads*' but as an embodied and reconstructed phenomenon. Whilst newly qualified teacher accounts identified '*being* knowledgeable' as the goal and signifier of membership of the teaching profession they largely talked about becoming knowledgeable; it is a paradox that knowledge is the object but they largely talked about knowledge in process.

The process of accessing and subsequently acquiring the knowledge appeared to be largely aligned to the structural form of each institution. With each institution positioning newly qualified teachers differently in terms of their relationship to the

knowledge for teaching, becoming and being knowledgeable were fundamentally experienced as a knowledge problem. I suggest this was a problem not only for the student of teaching but for the teacher education institution too –themes that are at the heart of this thesis. In the next two chapters I explore this contention at a more fine grained level to understand how newly qualified teachers experienced the shift from knowledge as object to knowledge as tool/practice and in doing claimed ownership of this process and the knowledge that is created.

I want to return to Bonny whose quote I chose to open the chapter. On one hand Bonny definitely felt knowledgeable (“I’ve got that knowledge”) as a newly qualified teacher, on the other hand she (contradictorily) asserted there was “just too much knowledge”. Furthermore, whilst she was achieving in the academic sense with ‘A+’ grades and a cognitive grasp of the knowledge of teaching she did not feel as though she had “come out with an ‘A+’ amount of knowledge”. The apparently ambiguous nature of these statements, including the desire for a different type of knowledge (and knowing) is a central theme of the next chapter.

Chapter 6:

‘Cracking the Code’: The experiences of pre-service students

This chapter explores how pre-service participants Bonny, Beatrix, Evie, Jacinta, Peggy and Sarona each made sense of their learning to teach process so on completion they were able to constitute themselves as being knowledgeable teachers. To *be* knowledgeable required participants, as students, to access and acquire the knowledge of the teacher education programme. I noticed the way participants talked about accessing this knowledge appeared to be largely aligned to the structural form of each programme; for pre-service participants ‘the knowledge’ was ‘out there’ as codified, reified, available if only they could ‘crack the code’.

‘Cracking the code’, as a metaphoric representation, is an attempt to convey the sense of tension, and for some the struggle, to make the knowledge of teacher education their own. Jacinta provides an insight into this process:

There were all these concepts that I was supposed to (a) understand and (b) do as a teacher. Like I was getting overwhelmed because, you know, each lecturer was enthusiastic and excited about their one teeny little bit of my job and it was just too much. [PS GroupInt.Nov06, p. 36]

It wasn’t that Jacinta, and others wanted just to know “all these concepts” through a process of steady acquisition and accumulation—this was the easy part of the learning to teach process. Rather, pre-service participants desired to understand by knowing how these concepts related to them as teachers. While it appears that Jacinta considers ‘understanding’ and ‘doing’ as separate phenomena, my interpretation suggests that for most pre-service participants ‘understanding’ and ‘doing’ were very much aligned.

This chapter works thematically and temporally through participants’ experiences of becoming knowledgeable, of ‘cracking the code’. I begin by explicating what I mean by ‘the code’ and illustrate each participant’s relationship to it. Taking my lead from Jacinta who asked, “What do you do with it?” I shift in part 2 of the chapter to discuss barriers that made it additionally difficult to know ‘what to do’ with the knowledges of the teacher education programme. I illustrate how participants found the knowledge of the institution, in varying degrees, difficult to make sense of in relation to their own

sense of becoming a teacher. Lastly, I discuss how participants described their experience of finally ‘cracking the code’ and thus becoming knowledgeable teachers.

Part I: The code

‘The code’ is a set of symbols, the meaning of which is obscured until one has ‘the key’. The key lay not in acquiring the knowledge—that was relatively straightforward, although demanding. The key was knowing what to do with the knowledge—how it related to their constitution and identity as teachers. My use of ‘the code’ is to signify how the formal knowledge of the institution, as codified and reified within the official curriculum of teacher education, was talked about by pre-service participants. Participants largely described their experience of the learning to teach process as having the stocks of knowledge (the code) of the profession passed onto them by more experienced members of the profession—the teacher educators. There were strong indications in the research texts of participants feeling and/or being positioned as receivers of knowledge. While all suggested they had learned a significant amount over the time of their particular programme pathway, which in turn contributed to making them feel, and be, knowledgeable, most expressed a strong desire to hold knowledge not as an in-the-head phenomenon but in an embodied manner. Embodying the knowledge constituted finding ‘the key’ and thus cracking the code.

In this part of the chapter I illustrate the way in which participants talked about acquiring the knowledge and what it meant to each. I do so in order to contextualise and situate the theme of the chapter within, and at times against, participants’ storylines of accessing the knowledge.

Edwards et al. (2002) assert “learning, interpreting and responding manifest themselves differently in different individuals” (p. 107), and this group of six women was no exception. Each came to teacher education with unique personal projects, investments, biographies, and idiosyncratic selves that suggested what was significant in their learning to teach process and to their project of becoming qualified teachers.

*“The right and good way to teach”:*Sarona

As a Samoan woman who last studied thirty years ago Sarona was not sure what “they are going to teach in there [...] I was focusing on learning what they are going to want us to learn”. Sarona was very receptive to learning as much of ‘the code’, the

official or legitimate knowledge, as she could. Prior to beginning teacher education Sarona's experience of visiting her grandchildren's A'oga Amata highlighted to her that significant differences existed between the one qualified teacher there and those who were not qualified:

...when I first looked at it I can see the difference, how the trained person do everything in a professional way [...] I can tell the two difference, and then, you know, I thought to myself 'I would love to be an early childhood teacher and go and find out which is the right and the good way to teach children', which I'm glad I did because that's, I learn, I learn quite a lot about, you know...
[Sarona, Int. 1, pp. 7-8]

Sarona's desire to learn the "right and good way to teach children" is itself a form of codification; collectively tagged as 'the professional way'. Confident that Institution A had the codified knowledge she was determined as a learner to acquire it:

...you have to go and learn and study to do things in a professional way instead of .. for the children's benefit and also for the staff as well to work as a team and all that. You need to learn how to work with other staff members. [...] we did learn a bit about that and we've been told that when we go out into our teaching experience we have been told to go and you know, look at that, look at, I think we had an assignment to go out and about team working, an effective team and doing that assignment I have learned a lot as well, how I communicate with another teacher in a professional way and all that, and also with partnership with parents, I have learned a lot. [Sarona, Int. 1, p. 8]

"I needed to know what I'm supposed to be doing": Beatrix

Beatrix came to teacher education after a significant time (20 years) in the workforce. She wasn't sure what the programme "would cover" and described herself as being a "blank slate" in terms of her expectations of the programme. As she had a prior degree she was able to enrol in the postgraduate diploma programme. She found this "intense":

it was probably the amount of material they were covering, like in that one day a week. It was packed, so it was compacted but also processing cause its not like – well for me because I really needed for myself to understand it so I probably did think it was preparation unlike lots of the other people. Cause I needed it to be if I was going to work in that area I needed to know what I'm supposed to be doing.
[Beatrix, Int. 1, pp. 17-18]

On reflection she wondered:

I did think that maybe it would have been good to have done the four year degree but I think there's money, and it probably wasn't practical but I think if you, you know if I'd been 20 years younger and starting my career and knew this was what I wanted to do, you know, the base degree would have built on it more.
[Beatrix, Int. 1, p. 18]

Whilst Beatrix believed she did have sufficient (formal) knowledge to graduate she would have liked “more practical experience” as “I just don’t have enough of a solid base to feel confident that I could handle anything that came up”. She found a pragmatic solution to this by choosing to work after graduating in a kindergarten, the site of her first practicum, and where she felt her continued teacher learning would be valued and supported:

I knew I wanted to go to a supportive environment cause I need to be able to say to [the head teacher] ‘this happened, what would you have done?’ I can say that to any of the staff there. I wouldn’t have felt prepared to go somewhere where it was just down to me. I need that team, probably always will cause that’s the way I like working but particularly now when I’m [new?] [Beatrix, Int. 1, p. 35]

My reading of Beatrix’s texts was that she considered the knowledge she most needed lay with others more expert than herself; first within the formal processes of teacher education and then with experienced teachers. To this extent, knowledge was very much ‘out there’ and she was focused on ‘getting it’. Beatrix’s way of knowing was not unlike Belenky et. al’s (1986) received knower. She began by accumulating the ‘bits’ of knowledge and hoped this process would carry on in a “supportive environment”, possibly until she had all ‘the bits’ or at least until she had a “solid [enough] base to feel confident”.

“Looking at more, sort of, concrete topics”: Evie

Evie’s focus for learning was very much concerned with the teacher’s relationship to children’s learning, or pedagogical knowledge (as evidenced in chapter 5). The courses she “really enjoyed” were linked to “what you are doing as a teacher”—courses in the curriculum studies strand:

Well in coursework, probably in second year, when we started getting into these papers about um, language development and communication and [...] we were actually learning, it was like the nitty gritty of what you’re doing as a teacher, what you need to know, how children develop and yeah, it was more down to the nitty gritty of actually teaching practice and the things that you need to do as a teacher [Evie, Int. 1, p. 8]

Focused on the “nitty gritty” of what teachers do, Evie desired to ground her knowledge in the day-to-day ‘reality’ of teaching. It was not until the second year of the programme she came to feel engaged:

Whereas first year it was all the theoretical stuff behind everything [...] yeah, I think it was because there were things we got in the papers in the second year, they were suddenly really, really interesting and they were more sort of meaningful to a

teaching situation yeah. Like being able to know where a child was at yeah. [...] and we were also looking at more sort of concrete topics like music and art and you know, the things you're actually doing with children, rather than the theory behind it all. [Evie, Int. 1, p. 9]

The separation between “the theoretical” and the “concrete” mentioned by Evie was shared by all pre-service participants. Evie’s splitting of the knowledges of the programme points to where she believed the key to cracking the code lay. To illustrate further, I offer Evie’s reflections on her experiences of a paper focusing on inclusion in its wider sense:

I think we could have spent a lot more time focusing on children with special needs and we really skimmed over that and I felt a lot of us came out feeling so totally inadequate, you know ‘what do we do’ and even now, I mean I know I’ve got my [health professional] background, but I mean I come into work and we have a boy whose um, is autistic and I think, you know, well I don’t really know what I’m supposed to be doing here. [...] I don’t think they gave us enough sort of information or we didn’t have the chance to talk about these things enough. [Evie, Int. 1, p. 13]

Evie’s focus on “what I am supposed to be doing” is suggestive of how she invokes the traditional binary of theoretical and practical knowledge; just as she did when learning about the “nitty gritty” “rather than the theory behind it” to actively constitute her identity as a teacher. For Evie, teaching is a practical activity, it’s about being with children and about knowing what she is supposed to be doing. Her doing was very much a mindful doing however. She wanted more information, or a chance to engage with the information she did get in relation to working with children with special needs, for example.

“I think teaching experience is the most important thing”: Peggy

By the end of her programme Peggy felt ready as a qualified teacher: “I think I’m ready, but I still like to go on learning something new, learn more about early childhood”. Areas she specifically mentioned enjoying learning about were other people’s culture, working with colleagues and parents, and *Te Whāriki*. The pedagogic space Peggy placed most value on for her learning was practicum:

Well, I enjoyed working with the teachers [on practicum] and cause I learned something new and I’m doing it now, you know at the centre where I am now

Kate: Oh what’s that?

Peggy: Cause at the kindergarten when the kids have a, you know? Getting all together, when they had a talking and the teachers, if it’s something one of the child did something wrong, they all talk about it and I find it very, I think that’s very good to you know and one teacher is saying something and the other will

support it and I find it's very helpful. [...] And I think the teaching experience is the most important thing when you are doing the course cause you learn a lot from other centres, how they do their activities, and how they handle the kids, how they talk to them. [Peggy, Int. 1, p. 29]

I have interpreted Peggy's statement about teaching practice being the "most important" space in which to learn about teaching to be closely related to others' statements about wanting to know how to do and be a teacher, that is, desiring practical knowledge. As someone with familiarity with early childhood settings, Peggy is able to 'pick out' aspects of centre life she sees as useful. Adding to her kete (basket) of practical knowledge, Peggy's approach to learning to teach appeared akin to McLean's (1999) characterisation as a "cumulative acquisition of concrete technical and organizational skills" (p. 59). McLean suggests students and teacher educators alike have adopted this approach but it is a poor substitute for understanding both the inter and intrapersonal complexities and dynamics that more closely characterise the actual learning to teach process, which I have emphasised in Chapter 5.

"There were lecturers and concepts that I was really interested in": Jacinta

Jacinta, like Sarona, gave highly detailed accounts of what she learned. These often contained reference to the 'big ideas' around which the programme was framed. She expressed intense intellectual curiosity about what she was hearing and learning about:

I was excited and there were lecturers and concepts that I was really interested in and took by and wow this is really ..[...] some lecturers were amazing and some not so amazing and some tutors were so into it and that got me really excited and passionate about it and so yeah.... [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 48]

Jacinta felt particularly well prepared about the subject content areas of maths, science and technology—courses in the curriculum studies strand:

When specific things happen at work it might remind me of all the knowledge I have got on that subject. Like we had to do a workshop [for parents] which was really scary at the end of last year. We chose maths but we had an amazing paper on maths, science and technology and I felt quite empowered by it. I learned a lot. I felt the lecturers and tutors had done that paper [well?] and I felt confident enough doing a workshop which felt pretty scary and providing parents with that amazing knowledge. Like, I'm not a maths person but, finding out all that learning just involved throughout the centre was really interesting.. Lots of topics like understanding all the reading and language learning that's going on like. Yeah I really yeah-they did a good job. [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 20]

In comparison with the learning she did in her Bachelor of Arts degree, Jacinta believed she was much more able to engage with what she was learning in teacher education:

Like I'm, I can see what they [children] are learning and let parents know and discuss it with colleagues and confidently now back-up things [...] But I feel I can discuss things with value and meaning. Yeah, like with my BA, not that you are comparing that, but I don't, I couldn't really discuss things confidently about [that] which sounds terrible which is why I needed to study coursework which had some direction and a career at the end of it. [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 21]

Teaching however had never been an aim of Jacinta's and only became a possibility as the result of an epiphany:

I saw little children [while] travelling and I don't know what, it just sparked something. There was one place in particular and their school was just a roof and four little poles. So I think I wanted to do education one day [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 3]

She often blamed her sense of "feeling far away from children", for being "naïve" about early childhood education, and for the difficulties she experienced in constituting her identity as a teacher. As a result of the knowledge she had about teaching she felt she had changed "because otherwise I'd be the same and I'd just think they were playing with water and "who cares?"" Ironically she did care—very much—about the teacher she wanted to become.

"I think that really changed me as a person": Bonny

Bonny too was articulate about how much she had learned and how this had changed the views she brought with her to teacher education:

I had a view that they were just little children.. and I always used to think or they are just sponges there to absorb everything. I don't think that now at all it is that co-constructing thing I don't know anything more than them really. I, I see children now as growing up and developing just like I am now and learning about the world and that I am not here to, um, teach them what to learn but I sort of need to teach them how to learn, you know? And I never thought that at the beginning. Like I was like oh they are just going to absorb everything I teach them and it is going to be all very structured and directive and I am going to sit there and read the book and they are going to listen and then I will tell them how to paint this picture, you know? Whereas now my whole view of this is completely opposite to that, like we are all in it together sort of thing. I think that is as a result of my training. [Bonny, Int. 1, p. 74]

Bonny parodies herself by drawing on traditional discourses and images of teachers to illustrate how much her thinking (knowledge) has changed. Bonny was highly conscious of the ways in which she had personally changed as an effect of taking part in teacher education. Her sense of self-knowledge (Elbaz, 1983) or self-understanding (Cole, 1997) was a particular feature of the meanings she attached to her sense of preparedness:

Huge changes. I mean, obviously I learnt so much over the three years and I was put into situations that were uncomfortable to do with public speaking that I didn't

used to like. And going to centres and being confident enough to walk into someone else's workplace and these children's environment that is their place. You know, I think that takes a huge amount of confidence [...] Although those situations were scary I think they helped you to develop as a person and as a teacher because you know sometimes you need to be put in those awkward situations to sort of learn from it. [...] because my knowledge has increased, my language has developed and through writing pages and pages of essays and having to really wrack my brains as much as I hated it I think that really changed me as a person. Cos again it made me step outside of my comfort zone to try and do something that was a bit challenging and then you sort of get the rewards and you think "oh I *can do* this". [Bonny, Int. 1, pp. 79-80]

Bonny's realisation she "*can do this*" [emphasis hers] came from a recurring sense that she wasn't going to "make it" through the programme. Her texts strongly suggested, as did Jacinta's, she experienced anxiety in actively constructing her teacher identity from what she was learning, and from within the actual processes of learning to teach. Being particularly astute and critical, Bonny was able to detect two theoretical shifts that took place within the official version of the programme:

By the third year it was like it was sort of okay to say well so-and-so really did seem happy. You couldn't say that unless you said "and then he smiled and it was a big smile" you know it all seemed very formal but by the end of it, it was sort of more like it was okay and then there was that sort of whole Piagetian focus and he was the theorist that drove everything that you did and then it was more that sociocultural Vygotsky [focus?] and I felt that shift in those three years even though it began happening a long time ago but the way they were teaching it and maybe it is just my warped perception. I really felt the way that the way were teaching us in that first year was sort of like that Vygotsky approach is more real and you take into account everything that is happening in the child's life and all those different levels and the whole Bronfenbrenner looking at the child as a real person, you know, not just this little time sample. [Bonny, Int. 1, pp. 33-34]

Bonny would have liked to have been able to explore these shifts as part of the classroom dialogue. Instead she said "there were probably only one or two moments like that where you weren't just regurgitating what they told you, you know, [where] you were able to give a bit of your own guts". What is clear, Bonny tried to make sense not only of what she was learning but how it was situated in the broad picture of shifting disciplinary conversations (Applebee, 1996). She is grasping how knowledge is a contested notion represented by different ways of knowing and doing. Meaningful learning, argues Britzman (2003) "begins in the scramble to make sense of the force of knowledge" (p. 9); and scramble it did seem to Bonny.

These small vignettes above serve to illustrate the way in which each participant positioned themselves in relation what they were learning, and how they each constructed themselves as a teacher within the process of learning to teach. While most

found it relatively easy to take up the knowledge for teachers, the size of the knowledge ‘jig saw’ was daunting.

Accumulating the ‘bits’: “The career just got bigger and bigger”

Bonny explained how “there was just too much knowledge [in the first year] and I think that feeling probably carried on right through to the next year as well”. She experienced the teacher education curriculum as a plethora of “so many different ideas coming at you”:

Over the three years I always felt there was just so much to know, you know? And then you do a course on dealing with special needs and you do a course on te reo and a course on different theorists and there is just so much .. I mean all of a sudden you do an assignment on this and hand it in and you get an A+ and then move into the next thing. [Bonny, Int. 1, pp. 69-70]

Bonny’s concern about the rate of assignments and the pace of the programme was picked out by Beatrix:

It’s very compacted, sometimes it felt like ‘slow down’ can’t we, let’s not move to another town yet, let’s stay here for a while. So sometimes too compacted and you’re thinking ‘oh’ your heads whirling and then you’re onto the next thing. [Beatrix, Int. 1, p. 33]

The effect of the pace of the programme was experienced by Beatrix as not having enough time for “processing [the knowledge]” and “needing to understand it”. Time for processing and understanding seemed to be what Jacinta was meaning when she said she couldn’t “enjoy them [the courses] or really get into them, you know? Do as much as you can and move onto the next one”. Like Bonny, Jacinta also mentioned the assignment load:

You would have so many assignments I couldn’t do them as well as I wanted to. I couldn’t research as much as I wanted to because you have to do the next one. So I felt like I didn’t have enough time to focus on something, although I felt that I learned much better through that system than with my other BA... [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 27]

While clearly the assignment load compromised Jacinta’s ability to achieve to her own levels of satisfaction, it was the constant relationship with enacting this knowledge that significantly added to her stress:

but I think the seriousness got bigger and I felt overwhelmed by writing all these essays and not being able to give enough time and I thought ‘how am I going to do this as a career’? [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 27]

Despite these concerns, most pre-service participants found it relatively easy to take up the knowledge for teachers as a store of ‘in the head’, or cognitive knowledge. But that

is not where most desired to know and hold the knowledge. Jacinta's concern about how she was "going to do this as a career" was uppermost in everyone's mind. But it was as though Jacinta, in particular, felt overwhelmed by the sheer volume of knowledge, bits of the code, and couldn't work out how these could be ordered:

Like they were teaching me fabulous things, but I also got overwhelmed by what was expected [...] Just like 'I can't do all this eh?' I can't remember what all the things were but I just remember "how am I supposed to do all this?" I think maybe perhaps getting introduced to..we did *Te Whāriki* quite, really well-they were really good at that, but no, there's DOPs, there's ethics, there's the -you know what's the other one? -the regulations, you know all these things that um... I don't know, I got overwhelmed by the seriousness of it and what they expected and the constant "you are never going to have enough time". Like I remember them... you have all these things to do and you are never going to have enough time. [Jacinta, Int. 1, pp. 26-27]

Jacinta recalled the struggle she had to position herself within both the role and identity of the teacher offered by Institution A:

They were like "you've got to be able to juggle things and you've got to be changing your hat and the career just got bigger and bigger and yeah I got more overwhelmed and it, not scary but well, a little bit scary like it's like "how am I supposed to do all this?". Like it's great that they are teaching me all this or introducing things like sexual abuse, like they have little things kind of all over the place and all of this is serious-this is peoples' children. Like it's not just little mini topics like you can ignore or not I almost felt like I couldn't learn everything as well, like I do take school quite seriously ... [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 27]

Jacinta expresses a deep sense of responsibility in relation to what she was being asked to learn. Her question "how am I supposed *to do* all this?" was at the heart of her, and others', engagement in and relationship with their learning to teach process and becoming knowledgeable teachers.

I suggest that understanding how to 'do this knowledge' was akin to being able to find the key and 'crack the code'. My reading of the research texts suggests this was driven by a need not just to know 'in the head' but to hold knowledge in an embodied sense of knowing; a shift from knowledge for teachers to teacher knowledge. What appeared to make Jacinta's experience so intense was she found it difficult to contextualise or assimilate (Kennedy, 1999) what she was learning. Having few points of reference she is unable to interpret or locate this new knowledge against her background understandings (Taylor, 1999). On thinking back to the time she enrolled in the programme, for example, she wondered: "I don't even know if I knew that was a teacher". She was not able to discern which bits of the knowledge "mosaic" (Martinez, 1998) or 'jig saw' she could either ignore or relegate in order to feel less overwhelmed.

She vacillated about the extent to which she ‘owned’ this problem. On one hand she felt “naïve” (“I think I had a lot of naïve thoughts coming into it”) because she had no idea about early childhood education “as a serious profession”. On the other hand, she expressed concern that her efforts to “take school [study] quite seriously” were insufficient to construct herself as a teacher. While she was “excited” and “passionate” as “they gave me some amazing knowledge” she felt stymied because “they didn’t tell me how to use it”. Jacinta was troubled by her learning to teach process, as she struggled to locate herself in the ‘onslaught’ of formal, codified knowledge.

Darling-Hammond (2000) differentiates between knowledge and understanding: “although knowledge might be viewed as the ability to produce information on tap, understanding is “the ability to think and act flexibly with what one knows”” (p. 113). I suggest that participants were building up their store of objective or propositional knowledge (Korthagen, 2001), thus they ‘knew’ a lot, but this was accompanied by a fragile sense of understanding as evidenced by accounts of their ‘ability to think *and* act’:

I think I felt pressured in first and second year by ideas of what was perhaps expected, and feeling like I didn’t have the tools to begin thinking about how I would begin to address those kinds of things but I mean, compared to third year I wasn’t, it was like different pressures. I was stressed in the first and second years and it was like I’m going to be a teacher in one more year. It wasn’t like I hadn’t learned anything but it wasn’t enough. [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 41]

Ironically, even though Jacinta said there was too much knowledge, she was worried she “hadn’t [learned] enough”. I suggest Jacinta’s need to both think and act was at the heart of this apparently contradictory comment. She had learned and thus accumulated enough formal, codified knowledge but she was of the belief that she didn’t have enough “practical knowledge” (Taylor, 1993). Taylor, drawing on Gadamer, suggests that practical knowledge “is an attempt to say what happens when we understand” (p. 60). This is mirrored in Bonny’s comments previously about not coming out (of teacher education) with an A+ amount of knowledge. I’ll return to these points shortly.

Clearly, Bonny and Jacinta’s stories were about feeling somewhat overloaded and even burdened at times. In a related sense their point mirrors Robinson’s (2007) local findings how the role and the identity of the early childhood teacher has significantly intensified in recent years due to the professionalisation agenda. For Jacinta the teacher education curriculum expanded accordingly:

Like I love theory and I love learning about [history] lectures and all that is fascinating. But for someone who has had no experience like me I wanted to know,

I needed more tools to and more knowledge about what this job was. Like, hey, I can tell you every theorist from Froebel to you know, but I didn't really get a job, didn't really understand yeah, like it was a lot of on paper stuff and I had all these ideas but until you are, it wasn't until I was working it didn't kind of fall into place. [Jacinta, Int. 1, pp. 42-43]

Understanding is considered by Lave (2004) as an open-ended process. Having to move through different courses, each ‘crammed’ with content, and accompanied by the demands of “too many assignments” (Sarona and Jacinta each used these words), the “on paper stuff” as Jacinta called it, left participants to cope with feelings of being overwhelmed. This is especially in light of how Jacinta said that “each lecturer was enthusiastic and excited about their one teeny little bit”.

“I’ve got previous professional experience” (Evie)

Each of these stories and participant’s positioning within them can be, in some respects, contrasted with Evie and Peggy. Evie believed how her former identity as a health professional provided her with valuable knowledge relevant to being a teacher:

I think because I’ve got previous professional experience, [...] I think a lot of that definitely has a lot to do with my practice now especially relating to things like ethics, because of the health professional. I mean the ethics, the ethics stuff that we did, I mean it was just like second nature to me. [...] just that being professional and how to communicate with people because I’ve dealt with very difficult situations in my previous profession and I think that has really helped me to build easy relationships with parents, whereas if you hadn’t had that previous experience it would be a lot more difficult. [Evie, Int. 2, p. 20]

Evie’s prior knowledge supported her in her practice as a newly qualified teacher. It is possible her prior experience acts as Kennedy (1999) suggests as a frame of reference within which she is able to assimilate new knowledge. Arguably, this helped her to contextualise some of the knowledge for teaching and not to feel similarly overwhelmed. In addition, Evie’s project of identifying with the “nitty gritty of what you’re doing as a teacher” also supported her to put ‘rings around’ some of the knowledge and to allow it to remain as a ‘store’.

Similarly, Peggy’s working knowledge of the early childhood sector may have enabled her to cope with the amount of knowledge being funnelled down (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000). With the benefit of her background knowledge of the early childhood sector she was able to position her teacher self more pragmatically than others:

I think everything [about the programme] was good. Oh, there was sometimes we think about paper weights (*Kate: mmm?*) Paper weights! You know, I mean the assignment, loads of assignment and lots of [them?], cause we used to say ‘oh

what's the use of these paper weights' you know, 'we don't do it when we go to work' but I think it was important (*Kate: was it?*) yeah. [Peggy, Int 1, p. 30]

In this moment Peggy reveals her positioning as the holder of 'insider', experiential knowledge of teaching. This knowledge, gained while working in early childhood prior to undertaking teacher education, and continuing as a reliever during teacher education, I suggest, enables Peggy to judge the worth, or relevance of the knowledge for teaching in a way that is not open to others in the group. Having experience in childcare and in A'oga Amata before that she (arguably) is able to determine that the assignments are as useful as "paper weights". It is as though her knowledge acts as a filter (Wideen et al., 1998) to what she was being asked to learn, evidenced by her judgment; "we don't do it when we go to work". Knowing what happens at work provides Peggy with a frame of reference to how all the knowledge fits into the overall picture of becoming and being a teacher; a picture Jacinta certainly felt she lacked. I suggest Peggy did not have to 'crack the code' in the same way as others experienced it and this helped her manage her learning to teach process (Kennedy, 1999).

Being overwhelmed by knowledge

Applebee (1996), in assessing the relationship between personal and public knowledge asks: "How then does the individual learn to participate without being overwhelmed by all there is to learn [given how] traditions of knowing and doing can be very rich and very complicated?" (p. 19). I also asked how it was that two bright and passionate young women such as Bonny and Jacinta felt so overwhelmed. Both entered teacher education having previously 'dipped their toes' successfully into tertiary education. Unlike fellow graduates, Peggy and Sarona, who had no prior experience of tertiary institutions (and whose first language and cultural milieu was Samoan, not English—the language of instruction and discursive field of knowledge for teachers) neither Bonny or Jacinta needed to 'crack the academic code' as both had already achieved that in their previous studies (as had Evie and Beatrix). Additionally, each had achieved good grades since the beginning of teacher education, which suggests they didn't struggle to know academically: [Jacinta] "I actually got very good marks [...] like I am proud to say, it's embarrassing to say that I had an 'A' average". As we saw previously Bonny pointed this out too. And while fellow participant Evie "always got really good marks on my assignments" and Beatrix, who also liked to do well academically, Bonny and Jacinta each experienced very real tensions with the amount

of knowledge that was ‘coming at them’. Both identified with many of the discourses they were being subjected to but each found it difficult to know how to constitute themselves as teachers within these.

In answering his own question Applebee (1996) suggests that the ‘answer’ lays in epistemological assumptions that underpin teaching and learning. Applebee’s argument turns on the notion that knowledge is a social construction. As such it is embedded within traditions and practices, and coming to know is best served by approaches to learning that allow learners to be active participants in knowledge construction, termed ‘knowledge-in-action’, rather than being more passive recipients of knowledge divorced from context or ‘knowledge-out-of-context’. Applebee argues when knowledge-out-of-context is the predominant curriculum organiser then students are ‘taught about’, ‘told about’ and are ‘done to’ rather than engaging in a more active process of knowing and doing by students. My reading of the research texts suggests whilst participants conveyed a strong sense of appreciating the importance of the codified knowledge of the profession that comprised the programme of study, their ability to make sense of what they were learning appeared to be largely restricted to “studying about” (Applebee, 1996, p. 126) teaching and learning in early childhood. It appears as though there was an elevation of the theoretical (codified and reified) knowledge at the expense of “practice-based knowledge” (Hager & Hyland, 2003, p. 278). Significantly for learning to teach, much practice-based knowledge is not amenable to codification and is difficult to explain (Hager & Hyland, 2003).

It is understandable, therefore, how pre-service participants construed their sense of ‘*being* knowledgeable’ with the acquisition of a store of knowledge, given their comments about the amount, and type of knowledge they were exposed to. Jacinta said it was not until she was working that this knowledge ‘fell into place’, as it did for Sarona. I have interpreted Jacinta and others to be saying they did not want to wait until their first year of teaching until it ‘fell into place’. They wanted to enter into dialogue about what they were learning about in relation to their teacher selves whilst learning to teach, and therefore to participate in ways that supported them to more fully understand the knowledge for teaching. Applebee (1996) argues: “If there is too much material to cover—and pressure for coverage is usually the villain here—dialogue is almost by necessity supplanted by monologue, in which the teacher reverts to telling students what they need to know” (p. 56). What was lacking in the research texts was a sense of

having entered a conversation whereby participants' emergent understandings were able to be socially aired and discussed.

While Bonny, Jacinta and Beatrix each experienced teacher education as a constant 'barrage' of course content more intensely than others, my reading of the research texts suggests that Evie, Sarona and Peggy also experienced this feature. However, in accordance with the different histories (Grossman et al., 1999) and thus background knowledge each brought to the process of learning to teach they interpreted or made sense of the process differentially. Being prepared is a story of how all, like Jacinta "learned lots of fabulous things". However, it was their experience that they were largely left to their own devices to work out how it all fitted together with the selves they brought to teacher education and the (teacher) selves they desired to become. This made 'cracking the code' difficult.

Feeling lost

Despite believing she "was obviously capable and competent and able to do the [course] work" Bonny simultaneously positioned herself, and felt positioned, as "sort of, quite lost in it all". I suggest invoking the notion of 'lost' relates to a sense of being disorientated. In one sense Bonny felt knowing, saying how she gained "a wealth of knowledge", yet simultaneously she felt unknowing because "I didn't know what to take of it". It is as though she could not figure out where the programme was heading relative to *her* sense of direction, or interpretation of becoming a knowledgeable teacher. Metaphorically she lacked a compass to help her find or re-set direction.

Bonny's sense of feeling/being lost can be interpreted as a "disclosure of the interdependency of body and mind, self and world" (Jackson, 1996, p. 14). Thus I have interpreted Bonny's use of "lost" to signify how she struggled to 'crack the code' and to construct and generate her 'own' teacher knowledge through using what she was learning and hearing about, coupled with her own negotiation of meaning. While it is within Bonny and Jacinta's accounts the accumulative effect of the struggles and tensions associated with 'cracking the code'—understanding how the knowledges of teacher education could be taken up and become part of their teacher selves—were most acutely exemplified, I suggest each participant encountered situations where they felt susceptible, in varying degrees, of experiencing Bonny's conundrum of feeling "lost".

But being/feeling lost wasn't the only conundrum participants faced while trying to crack the code.

Part II: A hard code to crack

Cook-Sather (2002) argues in the transition from student to teacher “many teachers describe a profound sense of dislocation and dissonance” (p. 178). Rather than this being some inherently problematic state of the student, she argues it is brought about by the dichotomies around which teacher education is structured:

the discourse practices associated with each of these polarised pairs catch preservice teachers in the middle and compel them to choose between the poles. Faced with having to choose, many preservice teachers turn away from the theoretical and toward the practical. (p. 178)

Echoes of Cook-Sather's turning away from the theoretical in favour of the practical were prominent storylines of pre-service participants (as already hinted at by Evie). In this part of the chapter I discuss two structural, but interrelated barriers to ‘cracking the code’ that I identified in the research texts. The first relates to how the programme was perceived as being constituted by a two types of courses, and the second is how participants experienced coming to know as a largely autonomous quest for understanding.

Polarising the programme

For the first two years of the teacher education programme it was difficult for some to understand how each of the different courses fitted together to form a coherent whole. Participants appeared to manage this process by conceptualising the programme as comprising two types of knowledge:

it's kind of like that strand of like practical learning, of language and technology, the kind of obvious learning and then there was like, this other one where it was theorists, so there was kind of, not real life but concrete stuff –yeah theoretical ideas, quite different things, mm .. I guess the theory ones, that was hard to.., like I found them very interesting [but?] it was not till now that I could see the end and the value in it and I think at the time I don't know what they could have done to me make go "oh yeah this is valuable" but it was kind of like-I didn't get it, I didn't get how it all fits in. [Jacinta, Int. 1, pp. 34-35]

Drawing on terms such as ‘theory’, ‘practical learning’, ‘not real but concrete stuff’ Jacinta (above) calls up traditional dichotomies to make sense of the programme. Thus she is able to classify the programme as comprising a ‘strand of practical learning’ and a ‘strand of theoretical ideas’. The (pre-service) research texts were riven with these

dichotomies. As she is engaged in the programme Jacinta could see sense in the “practical” or “obvious learning” courses, but was less sure of how the ‘theory ones’ could contribute to her developing sense of identity as a teacher; she couldn’t work out “how it all fits in”.

Evie talked in similar terms. Recall her extract about how the “first year it was all the theoretical stuff behind everything” and in the second year “it was more down to the nitty gritty of actually teaching practice and the things that you *need to do* as a teacher” (emphasis mine). For Evie these were “things that you can’t learn when you’re in a lecture theatre”. Likewise for Bonny: “if I look back at a glance the first year was all theory and the second year was all curriculum”. Evie’s pragmatic approach allowed her to put the theory ‘behind’ her and to focus on those courses that more explicitly dealt with *being* a teacher. Whereas central to both Bonny and Jacinta’s accounts was a strong desire to locate their teacher selves in the full range of knowledge offered. Bonny “remember[ed] it being like you have got so much thrown at you and nothing linked together and you didn’t know where they were going with it”.

Sarona and Peggy were less explicit in this area. My reading of Sarona’s relative silence is located within her positioning to “find out which is the right and good way”. Thus she was more accepting about what she was learning, believing that Institution A knew what they were doing; they were the experts and she was there to acquire the knowledge for teaching. Peggy’s response to the ‘theoretical’ was to match it with her ‘real’ experiences of working in childcare and the A’oga, as previously discussed. Accordingly, much knowledge especially that required to be demonstrated through assignments was dismissed by Peggy. Additionally, she, like Sarona, positioned herself relative to the curriculum of teacher education as a received knower saying “that is the way they did it, so that is the way we had to do it”.

Structurally the programme was organised according to four strands; teaching experience, cultural studies, curriculum studies, and education studies. The programme leader commented in relation to these four strands that

I think we try really hard to have a lot of connection across courses and across strands. We organise it conceptually [...] into strands. [...] and there’s a definite progression that goes through the strands, not always in terms of complexity [but] there is some increasing complexity [...] but some of it is also the new stuff.
[PS ProgLeader, Int.1, p. 14]

These strands run vertically within the programme, students however, talked about the programme in terms of year by year and/or course by course, or more often by theory

and practical. Whilst from the perspective of the programme leader the programme is organised conceptually into four strands, the experience from the ground up differs. These are not the conceptions students are working with to understand the programme and the way it is put together, and the way in which they put themselves as teachers together. It is likely students ‘import’ the theory/practice binary and this is subsequently reinforced for them once in the programme.

From Jacinta’s perspective—“each lecturer was enthusiastic and excited about their one teeny bit of *my* job”—she didn’t appear to experience lecturers as making connections between courses as suggested by the programme leader. It was as if in one course Jacinta says to herself ‘oh yes, it’s about this’, but having moved onto another course she says ‘no, it’s not, it’s about that’. I suggest for Jacinta, and for others too, she was trying desperately to work out what the role and identity of the early childhood teacher was, typified by her statement “I can’t do all this”. A key theme for Jacinta was the way in which she became almost immobilised by the overwhelming sense of what she “was supposed to understand and do as a teacher”. In this sense, not understanding how the discrete courses fitted together in terms of participants’ developing identity as a teacher was a central factor in the difficulties of ‘cracking the code’.

It is important to acknowledge that participants’ conceptualisation of the programme in terms of the practical and the theoretical was so commonsensical that with the exception of Beatrix I didn’t ask anyone what they meant by it. For example, when Beatrix said at one point that “theory and practice they need to link, they need to mesh, don’t they” I just agreed and moved on with the next question. However, I did pick up on this later. In the course of recounting a story about a parent’s response to a kindergarten policy Beatrix said “I’m not sure how much any theory can really prepare you for the real life when it’s somebody’s beloved child and you know, it’s a real life thing”. Perplexed, I asked ‘what do you mean by theory?’ Beatrix replied:

Like I said before, you can read that parents may be very defensive when concerns are raised and how important it is to have had that good relationship established with them. Well, they do emphasise it’s a lot of work but I think maybe its human nature. You think “oh yep, yeah I get that”, but then when it’s there in front of you. [Beatrix, Int. 1, p. 33]

Beatrix’s “you can read that” was her response to what she means by ‘theory’. I suspect when participants talk about ‘theory’ they are broadly meaning the content for each course whether it be located in written or spoken texts. Britzman (2003) points out how much research on teacher education has not asked those learning to teach “what,

precisely, theory means ” or “what images of theory do prospective teachers hold that make it appear so untenable” (p. 64). She also notes:

part of the problem may well be that theory is often dispensed in a language separate from the student teacher’s reality, or is encountered as an accomplished fact, unencumbered by disputation, rival theories, of the subjectivities of the theorists. Moreover theories are typically presented as abstracted from the experiences they seek to bracket. (p. 64)

Certainly there is a strong sense in participants’ stories how ‘theory’ was something abstracted from the lived experience of constituting their identities as teachers. While it was not dismissed out-right, it also was not clear how it ‘fitted’ with becoming a well prepared teacher. I understand participants to be saying it was not necessarily a problem with different forms of knowledge, but how they were asked to come to know the various bodies of knowledge constituting the teacher education curriculum. I will return to this point later in the chapter. In the meantime, importantly for Jacinta, and others too, in the end “it all came together [...] Definitely the third year was amazing actually, but the first year was a bit wishy washy..”.

Although Jacinta described the theory papers as “they were always really good with that stuff. I felt like they were real university papers,” she strongly desired to think and act flexibly with what she knew. Her characterisation of the first year as “wishy washy” belies the sense of almost panic that was building up because of not knowing “how it all fits in”. The paradox of Jacinta’s statement that theory papers were “real university papers” came about partly through juxtaposing these with ones in the curriculum studies strand. In this strand Jacinta felt as though the teaching method of those courses (primarily workshops) at times “treated us like children”. But the paradox also appeared to be fuelled by drawing on the theory-practice dichotomy in the absence of knowing how else to understand and articulate the dilemma she found herself in.

It seems to me from the very first day of a teacher education programme students are looking for the conceptual map of how the programme constitutes a coherent process relative to their own sense of becoming a teacher. Heidegger might see this as the way in which “humans are always living into and out of their possibilities, they have an investment in themselves, other things and other people” (Johnson, 2000, p. 143). In the stories I have presented thus far the notion of learning to teach as an investment should be clearly evident. It is Loughran et al.’s (2001) contention that students seek to understand the process that turns them into teachers. They are not passive about this (McWilliam, 1994; Segall, 2002).

“Does it come together for everyone?”: An autonomous quest for understanding

A second feature appeared to compound participants’ ability to locate their teacher-selves and identities within the knowledges of teacher education. This was talked about in terms of an emphasis on the autonomous individual as the locus for determining the relationship between the knower and the known, the epistemic object and the subject:

I don't think it taught me how to teach -does that sound a bit bad? (Kate: I don't know) but I don't know that sounds a bit bad. We didn't learn how to teach. I don't feel- like..I learned lots of fabulous things but I don't think they taught me about how to be a fabulous teacher. I feel like I had to go out and get that bit myself, or find it in myself out there like. They just gave me, um... some amazing knowledge but they didn't tell me how to use it. Like "here's the knowledge, go to it and its just going to come together-and it did but..It's kind of scary-does it come together for everyone? [Jacinta, Int. 1, pp. 48-49]

In desiring to be a “fabulous teacher” Jacinta (above) questions whose responsibility this was, hers or teacher education. Finding this—was it in her, or out there—was “scary” because Jacinta felt very much on her own. I suggest the process of learning to teach was largely experienced by pre-service participants as an individualised quest for understanding. The complexities of learning to teach and its (often contradictory) dilemmas were interpreted by students as their ‘problem’. In the main, participants positioned the institution as providing the knowledge and it was their task to work out how to ‘apply it’ (Lampert & Ball, 1998). This was particularly so in terms of the courses participants referred to as ‘the theory ones’, as indicated previously.

Britzman (2003) asserts that if “knowledge is viewed as out there, complete and waiting to be acquired, the process of “getting it” becomes an individual dilemma” (p. 81):

I guess I didn't tell everyone I was getting overwhelmed. Well, I probably told [*classmate] and like well “how am I going to do this job” but how was she going to reassure me [...] It just seems too much. It sort of feels like the path you are on too much at the end from where you start out. It's too much of a worry. [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 28]

Jacinta likened her experience of becoming knowledgeable to being on a journey. Her stories were replete with references, both explicit and implicit, to having (metaphorically) ‘travelled’ a distance and covered a lot of ground (“they have little things kind of all over the place”) from the time she entered, to when she left teacher education. Her accounts conveyed a sense of vulnerability, of feeling and being alone on this journey, not even seeing her classmate and friend as a possible source of reassurance. Having travelled some distance in her process (journey) of learning to

teach however, she didn't arrive at the destination that she envisaged for herself: "to be a fabulous teacher".

The sense of individual responsibility having to work things out in one's 'own head' was exemplified by Beatrix's recollection of a practicum experience "that was awful":

just that first introduction of the routines thing, how that can drive the practice. We used to have to have music while they set up morning tea, and so it meant there were lots of children in a really small space of mixed age, and there were usually half a dozen crying, even if they were really hungry or they were distressed by the noise or the separation anxiety and it was just, you sort of think to yourself, well how could they do that differently and its quite a hard question. I didn't have any instant answers popping out of my head, but you could see how that need to have routines impacted. [Beatrix, Int. 1, p. 8]

Feeling on her own, Beatrix perceived she had few channels for addressing her questions. Her associate teacher was not very available for these types of discussions as according to Beatrix she was "floating around managing a little group of [centres] but I did get on well with her, but some of the other staff weren't that friendly and it was like culture shock". Her ability to interpret the situation described above was constrained and consequently so was her ability to learn both from and in practice. She needed to pose her questions to a wider audience than herself given her understandable lack of "instant answers popping out".

While Beatrix, and others, learned a lot, in terms of being able to both construct and transform knowledge, the former seemed to be a highly individualized and isolated experience and the latter appearing less available to them while students. One area in particular where there was an emphasis on individual performance was the effect of the assignment load: described by Beatrix as "serial assignments". At the first group interview (Sarona and Peggy were unable to attend so had a separate one together) Bonny's comment she was not able to "read half my readings" sparked a discussion between her and Jacinta with Evie and Beatrix as follows:

Jacinta: Too many assignments. Four assignments per paper, you can't even do them properly.

Bonny: Yeah I was forcing my readings because, for an assignment not because I was really interested in that area. I was just too busy trying to get my assignments in.

Jacinta: It's like assignments come first, then you had to go to tuts [tutorials] but you didn't have time to do readings, um, lectures came third and you know I was a good student, like and that's just, it was an impossible time schedule. Like an unrealistic one. Like yeah, I'd love to have done my readings every week but they also wanted, you know, a certain standard for each, with your million essays.

Bonny: Yeah, they're certainly trying to prepare us I think but then I think they are doing it in a way that they're not valuing, they need to re-evaluate what's important in preparedness, like what things are important for us. [PSGroupInt.Nov06, p. 36]

In responding to the tenor of this part of the interview and the preceding conversation, but also in direct response to Bonny's comment about valuing what was important to students I asked:

Do you ever feel that you were ever invited into that conversation about what you wanted? What you thought was important? What you perceived as the big issues for you? [KatePSGroupInt.Nov06, p. 36]

The response was resounding and emphatic 'no' from everyone. Jacinta added how it was not possible for her to discuss her needs because "I had no way of knowing what I needed, I knew I didn't feel prepared but I didn't know what I didn't know". Yet Jacinta did know what she needed, she needed to "practise it". The subject of assignments also came up with Sarona and Peggy when I asked them what advice they would give someone who was about to design an early childhood teacher education programme:

Sarona: Too many assignments. Yeah. There's so many assignments, yeah. And they all come at the same time and if we do 8 papers you know and there are 4 assignments on each paper, yeah, they, it all comes at the same time. You know we find it really hard.

Peggy: Really hard.

Sarona: Yeah that was the hard thing for us, yeah. I think that's what we need the, you know, [Institution A] to have a look at. [PSGroupInt.(Peggy&Sarona)Nov06, p. 36]

The theme regarding assignments was about the pressure it put students under in relation to their process of becoming self-authoring, as it was the voice of the institution they perceived they were being asked to reproduce. This is captured by Bonny as shifting the focus from what the institution wants to "what things are important to us". There was a sense had they been more able to pursue their own questions instead of disproportionately having to respond to the questions their teacher educators posed, it is possible they may have been able to 'crack the code' earlier and more emphatically than they eventually did.

My interpretation of stories such as those above was how the structure and processes of the programme put an emphasis on individual sense making largely devoid of the social as an important site for making sense. This is not an uncommon positioning and is arguably the dominant one for teacher education in Western countries (Edwards et al., 2002). Yet structurally the programme leader said the teaching/learning ratio was 3 hours of tutorial to every 1 hour of lectures. Furthermore, the tutorials as opposed to the

lectures had a compulsory attendance requirement. Could it be tutorials were more often sites of knowledge transmission than knowledge co-construction?

“Make it your own”

Bonny recalled how they were encouraged as students to consider what they were learning about and to ‘take it up’ as their own:

There were so many different ideas coming at you and you were always being told, you know, to develop your own pedagogy. Is that the word (Kate: Yeah, probably) you know by drawing on all the different views and make it your own. But there was no way I could sort of make it my own because I was still grappling with the sort of “why am I here?” [Bonny, Int.1, p. 46]

In the discourse of preparedness Bonny took up the subject position that not understanding how it all fitted together was her private, individual dilemma; as did others. She experienced the vulnerability of forging out her teacher identity in a discourse about knowledge and teacher learning that appeared to position the individual as the receptacle of knowledge and the institution as the provider of knowledge. The message she heard was “make it your own, “develop your own pedagogy”. However, grappling with too much knowledge, too many views, and too many assignments left Bonny feeling she didn’t know how to ‘develop [her] own pedagogy’. How to take up the knowledge for teaching and make it one’s own. I suggest, this is the epitome of participants’ sense of learning to teach as being an individual quest. Bonny’s reference to grappling with why she was there is a related issue concerning how she recalled “all through our training we were always being asked "why are you doing this?" and "why are you here?":

I was always the person sitting there going... oh I remember writing on some stupid questionnaire "because I love children" and that is not why really.

Kate: Why were you there really?

Bonny: Because I figured that that was what I had found at that point in my life to be something that I enjoyed doing and I could just go to work every day and working with children and people had told me that I worked well with children. [Bonny, Int. 1, p. 8]

Bonny didn’t feel her ‘real’, and more pragmatic reason for becoming a teacher was worthy of being aired: “I never wanted to say that because they were always, like, I always thought they would think I wasn’t going to be a good teacher or something...”. It was too risky exposing her real reasons (McWilliam, 1994). I asked Bonny whether she “ever felt that whole idea of making it your own was truly available” to her:

Um. Not really, no, now that I think of it. Because we were being told all of the different ways of doing things and different approaches to teaching but then they were always encouraging us to draw on the different ideas and make it our own. So ‘yes’ and ‘no’. Mmm [Bonny, Int. 1, p. 46]

Bonny suggests as students they were ambivalently supported to make it their own. I understand Bonny to be saying while they were encouraged to participate in their own construction as teachers, the system in which they were expected to do this, from their perspective, did not sufficiently support their efforts until the final year of study. The “self-work” (Mulcahy, 2006, p. 63) needed in order to take it up and ‘make it your own’ largely took place out of sight. Whilst encouraged to take up new knowledge, they appeared less supported to transform it into their own understandings. Put another way, they ‘get it’ at the cognitive level but they struggled to understand it:

I mean all of a sudden you do an assignment on this and hand it in and you get an A+ and then move into the next thing. I wasn’t coming out with an A+ amount of knowledge. But maybe because I have been a university student before I can write a good essay that sounds like I know what I am talking about ... (laughs) [Bonny, Int. 1, pp. 69-70]

Thus, for Bonny getting top marks for her academic work (performances) ensured she had cracked the academic (or codified) knowledge, but the knowledge she really desired or needed, knowledge that would enable her to think, feel and be a teacher was largely missing. In part this returns us to Bonny’s conundrum of being lost, because as she rhetorically asked “all this knowledge, and all this theory, and all this practice, but how does it all fit together?”

The exhortation of Bonny’s teacher educators “to develop your own pedagogy” and “to make it your own” appears to reinforce an autonomous and personal sense making process. Britzman (2003) argues how experiencing learning to teach as an individual dilemma is one of a number of “contradictory realities” (p. 31) students face in learning to teach and becoming a teacher. This is because “[t]he contradiction here is that while learning to teach is individually experienced and hence may be viewed as individually determined, in actuality it is socially negotiated” (p. 31). Furthermore, Britzman argues “the vulnerable condition of being a social subject becomes “taboo” discourse when learning to teach is viewed as a private dilemma of acquiring predetermined dispositions and skills, and of taking up preexisting identities” (p. 31).

Finding a way to make sense of and locate one’s teacher-self within the array of formal knowledge played out variously within participants’ stories. By teacher-self I mean the self-authoring (Edwards et al., 2002), interpreting voice of the teacher as a

theorising agent (Britzman, 2003) This is in contrast to the teacher as a receptacle of (someone else's) knowledge. The desire to be self-authoring was present within participant accounts at both an explicit and implicit level. This was not only a feature of the institutional message as Bonny suggested, and a part of Institution A's conceptual framework and graduate profile, but importantly I have interpreted pre-service participants as knowing propositional or more formal knowledge *about* teaching would be an insufficient basis for being a teacher and 'doing' teaching. In Korthagen's (2001) terms it was perceptual knowledge they desired. This is not rejection of theoretical (or propositional knowledge) as this knowledge fascinated them, but 'what do you do with it?' Most were not content to postpone this question until they graduated.

Summary

Edwards (2005) argues that opportunities for what is known and how it is known is highly dependent on the particular system within which the learner is enmeshed. Accordingly, "learners in different systems, therefore, will have different opportunities for action" (p. 60). In this part of the chapter I have discussed how I identified two overlapping problems to 'cracking the code' in order to 'make it your own'. This was a sense participants had of not knowing how it all fitted together in terms of their developing sense of self as teacher, and a focus on the autonomous individual as the locus of making meaning.

In the next and final part of the chapter I discuss how participants were supported to "make it their own" and in doing so felt as though they had finally 'cracked the code'.

Part III: Cracking the code

It was in the final year of their programme participants believed they were explicitly supported to "make it their own". Notably, all participants discussed a particular paper—"the last paper that we did in third year" [Evie]—as providing a watershed experience in 'cracking the code':

The philosophy one, that was really good because it did bring everything together, although it was hard and it was challenging, it did bring everything together and it really made us think about our teaching practice....

Kate: How did it bring it together? What was it about it?

Evie: Because you were linking everything. You were linking theory, you were linking, um philosophy. We had to write a big essay on either wellbeing or belonging and I chose belonging and yeah, picking apart the statements in *Te Whāriki*. It just really made you think and it did help, though it was really hard and

challenging it kind of brought everything together in a nice way.
[Evie, Int. 1, p. 27]

The philosophy assignment appeared to support students to connect the texts of their courses with their own texts of becoming teachers. Whilst they were required to make links with “theory” in each of their assignments over the three years, this assignment became a standout one as participants felt as though they had (finally) found a way of constituting their teacher selves around the knowledges/discourses of teacher education. The key to this appeared to be the affordance of having to marry the knowledge of teaching with their teacher knowledge (as prescribed by the assignment).

Evie returned to the power of this course and its ability to ‘bring everything together’ when we spoke six months into her first year of teaching. Her thoughts about it were consistent with her initial recollections: “there’s all threading theory into your actual practice, it just kind of brought everything together, made you think about what you were doing”.

Beatrix and Bonny singled out this assignment for discussion too. Each of their stories were congruent with Evie’s interpretation.

One of the last papers we did was philosophy and planning and that was one of my favourite things, because the philosophy one helps you put everything together. You had to work out what values you thought were most important so you got to pool all, ’cause sometimes it felt like there was so much in my head, and that helps you narrow down and for me the most important thing, apart from- you know safety and ratios and things like that, is helping children to feel good about themselves. [Beatrix, Int. 1, pp. 18-19]

Beatrix’s feeling of having “so much in my head” epitomises the tensions in the ‘front-end loaded’ model of vocational education where the university supplies the theoretical knowledge on the assumption it can be brought into service in the workplace (Hager & Hyland, 2003). In traditional teacher education models the panacea for a ‘head full’ of knowledge has been to go out and ‘practice’ what has been learned in order to concretise it. Yet many of the stories of practice did not indicate this is what took place for students—at least not until the end of the programme.

At the group interview 18 months after graduating Evie, in referring back to how it was difficult to discern the connection across the various courses commented:

Evie: It didn’t fit until the last year I felt. [...] With early childhood education there’s this huge range of philosophies that people have about the whole thing and I think that’s the thing that’s quite hard to get your head around. There’s no sort of one where you do it this way and this is the curriculum

Beatrix: Yeah, like in primary school

Bonny: It's so holistic we don't know how to do it

Evie: You can do it this way, or you can do it that way. That's what I think.
[PSGroupInt.June07, p. 32]

The complex mélange was in Evie's words, "quite hard to get your head around" and for Bonny the early childhood curriculum is quite unlike a subject-based model of curriculum that she also found these key features of early childhood discourse difficult to understand "how to do it". Reflecting ideas expressed in the programme's conceptual framework and graduate profile the programme was heavily disposed toward "philosophies care and education". But as Bonny suggests perhaps the emphasis is on philosophies with little practical implications—until the last year of the programme. When asked what the best aspect of the course was Bonny makes it clear how the philosophy assignment provided a sorely needed life-line:

Probably developing my philosophy. [...] Yeah it really has. Because there just was not for me, I didn't see the connection. I wasn't sure how me as a person was supposed to be out there doing teaching. I didn't understand how I was supposed to do everything that I had just learnt; do you know what I mean? I couldn't see, I couldn't figure it out because I knew everything and I knew the ways it all should be done I felt like I had this wealth of knowledge but I didn't know what to take of it you know because you can't do it all, but I didn't know what was important to me until I actually stopped and really thought hard about why I do what I do and that is in every single interaction that I have with children and my conversations that I have and the way I approach parents and until I actually reflected on that and, and wrote screeds and screeds about it I just didn't. And I think if I hadn't done that I don't know where I would have been. I don't know how I would have felt and of this role now. [Bonny, Int. 1, p. 89]

For Bonny, Beatrix, and Evie this staged assignment that was spread out over the length of the course and combined a closely sequenced series of tasks in which students were required to "reflect on insights from the taught components of the course and from observed practice in centres" (Institution A course outline). An objective of the course was to support students to "articulate their own philosophy of practice/ theory of practice". The whole course appeared to provide the opportunity to consider how what they had previously learned could be brought together. It afforded an opportunity to reflect on what they valued in terms of being an early childhood teacher, and how they might enact this in their practice relative to either the concepts of 'belonging' or 'contribution' (strands of *Te Whāriki*). While Bonny, as earlier acknowledged, could write a good essay that made it sound as though she knew what she was talking about, ironically gets a high degree of satisfaction in this assignment through writing "screeds

and screeds”. It is as if this time she ‘really knows’ or understands what she is writing about.

I have interpreted talk about the philosophy assignment as affording the discursive shift they all so desired to experience—from knowledge as object to knowledge as practice/tool. The assignment was structured as the application and synthesis of knowledge for teaching with each person’s developing teacher knowledge, coupled with a one day per week placement in the ‘real’ of an early childhood centre. Arguably coming in the final year of their programme participants were well positioned to engage in this type of academic task, particularly given the epistemological structure I discerned in their texts; that is, a period of knowledge acquisition, a growing sense of disequilibrium or doubt and then being handed a way forward. As Bonny stated (above) “if I hadn’t done that I don’t know where I would have been”. She is handed the compass she so desperately needed. It was the power of this assignment, including the tonal quality of participants’ stories that makes it significant to the story of this thesis.

I have interpreted each of these participants to be saying until this assignment it felt as though the knowledge they were gaining was still ‘out there’, disconnected from who *they* were, or becoming as teachers. This assignment provided a much desired opportunity to bring the knowledge in closer, to experience knowledge as action—in terms of using and transforming knowledge (Edwards et al., 2002). In being able to do this it broke down the reified nature of much of the knowledge they had gained up to that point in time.

Wenger (1998) notes that “the codification of knowledge into reified subject matter” (p. 264) is traditionally part and parcel of educational design as it is considered to provide a bridge between practices and learners. He argues however, there is a pedagogical cost to reification which does not exist in practice as

reducing knowing to reified items, the codification of knowledge may create the illusion of a simple, direct, unproblematic relation between individual learners and subject matter. Reification seems to lift knowledge out of practice, and thus to obviate the need for (and complexities of) participation. (pp. 264-265)

I believe why this course and assignment received such prominence in the texts of participants was they experienced it as an institutionally sanctioned space to align their knowledge for teaching with their ‘own’ teacher knowledge. The assignment provided each with strong sense of confidence and competence as it positioned learners in a responsive rather than a restrictive mode (Macmillian, 2001). Both Bonny and Jacinta

used the term ‘empowering’ to describe the effect of the assignment on them. For Bonny

it was empowering because it helped me to understand why I did what I do in terms of my approach to teaching and my practice and it put together all, what we had been taught and part of who I am and, also reflecting on how I do things. But then the bit was ‘why I do what I do’. [Bonny, Int. 1, p. 45]

Taylor’s (1993) thesis (largely based on Gadamer’s work) asserts “understanding involves students in *applying* what they learn to their own practical circumstances and self understanding such that their learning, in Aristotle’s words, becomes “part of themselves” rather than merely a set of learned propositions, procedures or “behaviours”” (p. 62—italics in original). Bonny’s comment reflects this Aristotelian notion through a shift from knowledge for teachers to her ‘own’ knowledge when she said the philosophy assignment was “part of who I am”. Hermeneutically speaking she has shifted from ‘knowing’ to ‘understanding’ (Taylor, 1993). In Applebee’s (1996) terms these participants, speaking as students, have entered “into significant traditions of discourse” (p. 39) through the disciplinary conversation around teacher’s personal/professional philosophies and how these influence practice:

Kate: And yesterday you talked about how for you it was this coming together of the course content but also the coming together of you. I thought that was really interesting.

Bonny: Yeah, that was to do with, my personal feelings of how I teach children. But it sort of, by doing the philosophy it helped to like make links between what they had been teaching us and what I thought and how it all came together sort of. So you were required to not only say what you were doing in the examples but you were required to back that up and say why you did it and who said that was a good idea and what theory and... Whereas I don’t think we had really done that, I think we had but it wasn’t until that last year that we really had to start thinking of why we do what we do so that was empowering because I felt more it felt more sort of concrete like I wasn’t just all over the show and all this knowledge and all this theory and all this practice but how does it all fit together, you know? [Bonny, Int. 1, pp. 45-46]

The assignment helped bridge the gap between the knowledge of the institution (“what they had been teaching us”) and Bonny’s thinking (“what I thought”). This highly diffuse and amorphous ‘thing’ called early childhood education, “expressed by Bonny as being “so holistic we don’t know how to do it” can at last be contained and connected to each person’s identity and sense of becoming a teacher. As Britzman insists, because the meanings of words aren’t fixed, they require to be interpreted. She cites Bakhtin:

The word in language is half someone else’s. It becomes “ones own” only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention.

Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own. (Bakhtin, 1981 cited in Britzman, 2003, p. 43)

It is through taking the word and making it one's own within the affordances of the philosophy assignment that Bonny, Beatrix, Jacinta and Evie experienced a shift in subject position from being the receptacle of other's words and knowledge to listening to and articulating something that felt more like their 'own' interpretation. This appeared to be a distinct moment where they experienced a sense of agency in constituting themselves as self authoring teachers as "acting in context is a speculative move that is itself a source of new knowledge" (Lampert & Ball, 1998, p. 29).

Inherent in their sense of having to 'crack the code' pre-service participants clearly understood propositional knowledge, or the more formal knowledge *about* teaching would be an insufficient basis for being teachers and 'doing' teaching. Rather than merely being content with knowledge as an 'in the head' phenomenon (as a store), most expressed a strong sense, or desire, to contextualise more deeply that knowledge through locating it in the reality/actuality of early childhood settings. Understanding the 'reality' of the centre setting appeared to allow students a context for the interpretation of the discourses/knowledge they encountered in their teacher education, and in doing so they sought a fuller, more embodied understanding of learning to teach and of becoming a teacher. Although ironically their experience of the 'reality' as students on practicum was that they didn't always get to see this as they were often shielded from it. Participants expressed these understandings through what I have discussed elsewhere as the discourse of the real (Ord, 2007).

The discourse of the real is a term I have borrowed from Britzman (2003). Britzman uses it to refer to how associate teachers, or "significant others" (p. 175) who work with student teachers do so on the basis of not just what is considered to be 'real' in schools, but which is often set against official versions of what is 'real' for teachers. Post-structurally this term is used to signal there is no such thing as 'reality', only discourses that constitute particular versions of it. My use of the discourse of the real focuses on how newly qualified teachers (in both groups), when exemplifying learning something significant or important to them, invariably drew on instances where their accounts shifted beyond knowing as cognised, to an embodied and re-cognised moment. I contend in accessing this discourse participants actively re-constructed their teacher

subjectivity/identities in relation to (both within and against) the knowledges of the academy.

For pre-service participants the metaphoric notion of ‘cracking the code’ and the ‘discourse of the real’ were one and the same phenomenon, much like different sides of the same coin. Each points to a desire by participants to embody their knowledge through an appeal to the ‘reality’ of teaching in early childhood. The philosophy assignment, and in all likelihood the full course, provided an explicit pedagogic space and affordance in which participants for whom becoming knowledgeable was still troublesome—‘too theoretical’, not quite ‘real enough’—to contextualise the knowledge for teaching within and against their own conceptions of what was important to them about being a teacher. In this sense it represented an institutional ‘life line’, not just for Bonny but for others to ‘make it their own’.

While participants focused on the philosophy assignment as though it had finally given them the opportunity to ‘make it their own’, I suggest they sought opportunities for doing this from the beginning of their programme. It is to the discourse of the real that I now turn.

“Ah ha, I get how you can”: The discourse of the real

For Beatrix practicum provided her with an experience of shifting her knowledge as cognised to an embodied and re-cognised sense of knowing:

like on my last teaching experience I can think of a few examples, where.. once sitting reading a book with a couple of boys and it was actually a gender equity theme underneath about a boy that wanted to go to dance classes with his sister and like, asking them whether they thought the mum was right when she said boys couldn’t be dancers and then asking them again after we’d finished reading the rest of the story and just encouraging them to think about things, and its sort of like “ah ha, I get how you can”..

Kate: (interrupting) How you can what?

Beatrix: Well, introduce them to ideas without putting any pressure on them but how you can cause that little shift and also how you can change the way, sounds a bit ‘playing God’ but change the way children see themselves by giving them feedback that is specific and or, even promoting them as an expert. You know all those strategies that you read about and then seeing how they can work. [Beatrix, Int. 1, p. 23]

Having set the story up to engage the boys in its storyline Beatrix gets an embodied sense of knowing how “all those strategies that you read about [...] work”. She begins setting the situation up through knowing that there is a range of possible ways this

might be done, or strategies that she could use. But it is through the actuality of doing she gets an embodied or ‘real’ sense of what these mean and their effects.

The topic of teaching strategies caught most participants’ interest. Jacinta also referred to having learned (in an academic way) about teaching strategies. In this instance, Jacinta offers an example of how she did not feel prepared because of the lack of being able to practice her knowledge:

Well, I think that was my problem, I didn't feel prepared and, yeah, I didn't feel prepared and that's why I needed some experience because I wasn't, I knew I wasn't going to get what I needed. Like I needed to keep practising what I had learned and feel more confident, and be able to, like they say, you know [the] repertoire of strategies. You know I, like I wrote a fabulous essay on it [but?] where can I practice this continuum? Where can I? You know bloody Bredekamp [meaning the author of the document Jacinta is referring to] and whoever...

Kate: (interrupting) I know exactly the continuum

Jacinta: You know, I know it all, but where do I get to practice it? You know? I wrote an essay on how it is complex and fluid and you know, a fabulous essay, like, but it all very well writing it, but where can I practice ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’ [strategies]. We get taught that ‘direct’ is no good but actually it is good in some situations. What are those situations? I need to practice those situations? [Jacinta, Int. 1, pp. 24-25]

I have interpreted Jacinta to be saying she is frustrated because she has not had the possibility of really understanding the ideas she is being exposed to in teacher education. She is saying, much like Bonny earlier, you can talk about it all you like, even write a very good essay about it, but these do not necessarily give you a sense of what it is to truly understand. She wants to test the ‘theories’ of her teacher educators that “direct is not good” thus getting a sense of her own agency as a teacher. She knows there is a sense of discretion needed in applying these teaching strategies (in the real) and she wants to understand “those situations”.

My reading of texts such as Beatrix and Jacinta’s is that their sense of the real is about embodiment, not necessarily a dichotomy between the real (of the centre) and the unreal (of the teacher education programme). Jacinta’s grasp of the concepts needs to be enacted in the messier, more complex reality of the early childhood centre. As students, participants know teaching is inherently a situated, relational and practical activity and teacher knowing exists in relation to themselves, others, and the context (time, space, resources).

Evie accesses the discourse of the real when she describes what practicum meant to her:

that gave me a really good feeling of what it was going to be like and what hard work it was going to be as well..

Kate: Yeah? Tell me more about that

Evie: Yeah, I think probably my first panic was the number of children at the kindergarten and yeah, just the busy-ness and the noise and thinking ‘oh how am I going to be able to cope with this’ you know, it was like a huge responsibility and umm, yeah, I was just thinking ‘wow, its going to take me a long time to be able to come into this situation and be in control and have the experience to know what I’m doing and make decisions and, yeah. [Evie, Int. 1, pp. 7-8]

It is possible this experience of practicum and Evie’s interpretation of it contributed to cueing Evie to courses she called “the nitty gritty of what you are doing as a teacher”. Perhaps it is in these courses (she largely talked about courses in the curriculum studies strand) she feels as though she is more able to ‘really’ explore her subjectivity and identity as a teacher in order for her to establish a locus of control. In these courses she is able to go beyond knowledge as abstract, disembedded or even perhaps disinterested to knowledge that has an embodied aspect to it: “the things you’re actually doing with children” (emphasis added). For Evie these courses are “really interesting”, “more meaningful”, and where “we used to say to each other, ‘oh, that was really good, this is really like, what we’ll really be doing as a real teacher”. This is not the theory to practice story of learning to teach. Evie is not just making the connection between theory and practice. She actively desires to embody the knowledge so she can feel like a teacher.

Sarona valued the practical settings for learning as a teacher:

Because what we learn at the college, like when you go out or when you teach, make sure you use open ended questions and when you go out to do your practicum, you practice that with the children and that’s how I learnt from, the things that I learnt at the college. To go out when you do your practicum and practice it. Because otherwise if you just learn it in the college you might forget it before you know, after the course and you never go out and practice it. [Sarona, Int. 1, p. 22]

Sarona points to the problems of the traditional ‘front-end models’ (Hager & Hyland, 2003) pre-service course when she says “you might forget it”. Sarona relates to the learning to teach process and becoming knowledgeable as a series of postponements whereby she prepares for a place to “practice it”: “those things you learn there you have to go out and practice otherwise you lose it”. I suggest it is not just the forgetting that is at stake here, but like others, the centre was the place where students could feel and use the knowledge. This was particularly so for Sarona for whom Samoan was her first language and she had no knowledge of early childhood centres other than A’oga Amata

prior to teacher education. She developed a highly strategic approach to learning to teach whereby she noted in writing any request by teaching staff to practice her knowledge (in the real) once on practicum.

Hager and Hyland (2003) argue how the epistemological view that objectifies knowledge has led to “impoverished notions” of knowledge, which does not allow room for “non-essential emotions and conation” (p. 274). Yet these were exactly the terms with which most participants talked about knowledge valued by them. Take for example, how Bonny talked about the effect of leading a workshop for parents was for her:

[The whānau workshop] made me feel more prepared because it gave me a real chance to take on that responsibility of sharing knowledge that, you know, before all of the assignments that we had done had been aimed at the markers in a way sort of thing. Whereas this was like the college was still marking what I was doing, but I had this different audience all of a sudden and so I felt more accountable and I think that made me really feel more prepared because that is what it is like when you are here [in the centre], and you don’t get a chance to do that and that is what I was saying like with practicum it always starts so false [...] Whereas in this situation it was like ... and no-one else was there like my associate and the other teachers were off doing other things so it was just like me on my own, you know? [Bonny, Int. 1, p. 48]

In this moment Bonny feels “more accountable”, “more prepared” and “empowered” through this ‘real’ experience. She explained it was not doing a presentation per se that was the defining feature of the whānau workshop as:

even though we did lots of presentations there were probably only one or two moments like that where you actually weren’t just regurgitating what they had told you, you were actually able to give it a bit of your own guts you know. Um, I don’t know how that made me feel more prepared for teaching, but it made me feel more um like I felt more confident in myself that I knew something. [...] You did essays all the time but I mean a lot of it was just reading and reading and then I would think about the question and I would write and I think what a lot of what you are writing about is regurgitating what you had read. [Bonny, Int. 1, p. 53]

It appears the whānau workshop allows Bonny to feel more prepared than ‘playing’ the student role did. Arguably this is the difference “between representation and being-in-the-world” (Macintyre Latta, 2004, p. 341).

My interpretation of the data suggests students’ desired practice in order to know in a different way, through embodiment of their teaching knowledge, not just to apply theory as such. They did not feel they really knew about teaching until their knowing was embodied through action and within relationships. In pre-service education the traditional site to embody knowledge is practicum, although it does not necessarily have

to be so (Hedges & Gibbs, 2005). Yet for these participants, practicum was often mentioned in terms of its lack of affordance for this:

I mean you can practice on practicum but I guess I didn't feel that comfortable, I mean I did, but I think I would have extended myself more and try things more and you've got that real sense of support. I've had great associates. I haven't had any bad practicum -but you know one person, ...that sounds they are busy they don't have time for making real life relationships with students who are going in two weeks, you know? [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 25]

Jacinta's experience (above) of practicum was that she did not always get to practice the very things she felt she needed to or wanted to understand better. What she was looking for was a context in which the very things she wanted to focus on in 'the real' could be done. This included an associate teacher who had the time to enter the types of conversations or dialogues that she needed to have about her teaching. She found this was not always possible on practicum and this prompted her decision to shift to the field-based pathway in the same institution:

I knew it was going to be really hard [changing pathways] I just thought I'm quite happy at school and I did well and I understood what they were teaching but I was missing the practical competence and strategies. Like we were learning about all these strategies and theories and things but and taking that and putting it in a real life situation was really difficult and even though we had teaching experience I just felt they were too short and I don't think they were very realistic. Like I think it would have been better to perhaps have been at one place for a whole year, one day a week where you could actually build relationships. Like meaningful relationships-like you were getting all this stuff at school yet teaching experience is so, not fake [but?]... [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 12]

Jacinta's recurring motif that the programme was experienced as an accumulation of bits of the knowledge for teaching surfaced when she talked about shifting to the field-based pathway. She was "missing the practical competence and strategies" and yet she was passing the practicum component of the programme: "I had an 'A' average at school [teacher education programme] and for my practicum so I had, they did back me up and built up my confidence". I suggest this comes back to Wenger's (1998) point how educational design involves knowing when to reify and when to factor in participation. Ultimately this is a balance. Too much reification, coupled with "pedagogical authority that discourages negotiation" (Wenger, 1998, p. 265) of meaning can lead to a tenuous sense of understanding, the effect of which is a narrowing of applicability. Jacinta points to this when she says (above) "putting it in a real life situation was really difficult".

My reading of Jacinta's experience is she draws on the discourse of the real to argue for a context in which she has enhanced possibilities to focus on an "inner attention"

(Macintyre Latta, 2004) to her teaching. This takes place through relationships rather than by ‘methods’:

I wanted to put what I was learning actually into practice in a meaningful context because practicum felt so out of context. All we were learning about was relationships, Vygotsky, culture and relationships and I was like "this is just ridiculous" I can't actually feel comfortable with what I am learning because I am not using it. [Jacinta, Int. 1, p. 13]

What I am suggesting here is how pre-service participants understood formal knowledge about teaching would be an insufficient basis for being teachers and ‘doing’ teaching (as no doubt did their teacher educators). Most strongly desired to ‘make it their own’; not only to acquire and use others’ language/knowledge but to transform this and generate their ‘own’ knowledge through the ability to negotiate their meanings with others and in ‘real’ contexts. As Wenger (1998) argues “meaning exists neither in us, nor in the world, but in a dynamic relation of living in the world (p. 53). Similarly Edwards (1995) argues learning to teach is about becoming language users and as such students need a context in which they can begin to engage in the types of professional conversations or discourses we encourage them to ‘know’ about through formal study.

Furthermore, my interpretation of the data suggests, as teacher education students, pre-service participants tacitly knew “academically formulated knowledge” (Lampert & Ball, 1998, p. 31) needs to be situated in contexts in which it could be brought into service, and that learning and coming to understand how this can be achieved was as integral a task of learning to teach as was the acquisition of a knowledge base for teaching. This is an epistemological claim about the types of knowledge pre-service early childhood teacher education students desire in order to construct their teacher identities: propositional knowledge alone cannot guide practice (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; Kemmis, 2005; Korthagen, 2001; Lampert & Ball, 1998).

Summary

In this last part of the chapter I have explored how pre-service participants described to me the process of finally feeling as though they had unlocked the knowledge for teaching and how this knowledge, the knowledge of the institution, had fused with each person’s developing teacher knowledge. Through employing the metaphor of ‘cracking the code’ it has not been my intention to suggest reference to the codification of the well prepared teacher as represented in the wider official level concerning the likes of statutory requirements for approval processes. Rather, my focus is at the institutional level. Here codification exists in the way in which the knowledge is assembled within

the total teacher education programme and how participants described being positioned in relation to that knowledge. Generally speaking, lecturers and “significant others” (Britzman, 2003, p. 179) such as associate teachers were seen as having the knowledge and as students, participants had to discipline their minds and bodies in order to access it.

Conclusion

This chapter is based on a sequence I identified in participants’ accounts of accessing and acquiring the knowledge for teachers and thus ‘becoming knowledgeable’. This was a journey from abstraction to concretisation, represented by three phases each of which is consistent with the three parts of the chapter. First, in Part 1, I discussed the acquisition and steady accumulation of the ‘bits’ of ‘the code’; parts of the learning to teach jig-saw. In this view knowledge is object, a thing that is “waiting to be uncovered and taken in by the receptive mind” (Sumara & Luce-Kapler, 1996, p. 3). However, the steady accumulation of knowledge at the expense of knowing what to do with it (as teachers) and how it related to their teacher identities was challenging for most. In constructivist terms this was experienced as a prolonged sense of disequilibrium. This constitutes the second phase (Part 2). In the third phase participants’ experience of ‘dis-ease’ with their learning to teach process finds a sense of resolution through two channels. The first was the affordances structured into the philosophy assignment and second, their early and constant search for ‘the real’ (or practice) of teaching. Each of these comes together with the effect that participants felt as though they had finally ‘cracked the code’.

‘Cracking the code’ is effectively a story about the knowledge problem. Accordingly, this chapter casts light on the relations between the knower and the known. It is about how, when knowledge is discursively treated as ‘out there’, as object, getting it becomes an individual problem. Using Sfard’s (1998) exploration of two metaphors of learning, acquisition and participation, as a framework the research texts of pre-service participants were suffused with language substantially aligned to the acquisition metaphor of learning. As Sfard points out, this metaphor has been associated with learning (and hence knowledge) “since the dawn of civilization, [as] human learning is conceived of as an acquisition of something” (p. 5). Whilst accounting for the process or mechanism/s that purportedly support acquisition has changed, at the

heart of the acquisition metaphor is “the cognising agent who is cast as fully autonomous” (Davis & Sumara, 1997, p. 109). It is my contention in the first years of their teacher education programme participants largely experienced learning to teach as consistent with the acquisition metaphor of learning (Sfrad, 1998). Yet, pre-service participants were very concerned to not just ‘know’ but to ‘understand’ their knowledge.

Accordingly, I have argued pre-service participants desired to understand how the formal, codified knowledge of teacher education could be taken up and become part of their teacher selves, expressed by Bonny as “part of who I am”. For participants this became a matter of seeking to make connections between the formal knowledge and their dynamic and developing sense of identity as a teacher. I have metaphorically referred to this as wanting to ‘crack the code’ and have argued participants conveyed a sense of having ‘cracked it’ through carrying out the philosophy assignment in their final year of study. I suggested this was an explicit turning point in their constitution as knowledgeable teachers, a discursive shift from knowing to understanding. This assignment provided an institutionally sanctioned space for aligning the knowledge for teaching, (i.e. the theories/content of teacher education) with their ‘own’ teacher knowledge. By ‘own’ teacher knowledge I mean how participants’ desired to take the codified knowledge they were accumulating (in-the-head) and to engage with it in ‘the real’: and in doing so come to understand it in a relational sense and not as abstracted or disembedded knowledge. Whilst participants focused on the philosophy assignment as though it had finally given them the opportunity to ‘make it their own’, it is my contention they sought opportunities for doing this from the beginning of their programme. One way they did this was to bifurcate the programme into ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ and for most, to focus principally on the practice elements of the programme.

Concomitant with desiring to ‘crack the code’ I have argued participants did so through consciously desiring to connect the texts of their teacher education with their own texts through accessing the discourse of the real. In doing so each sought a more embodied sense of knowing. Implicit in this argument is how, as teacher education students, participants found the value of ‘cognitive knowledge’ limited in the construction of their identities as teachers. Instead, I have argued they understood teaching to be a situated, relational and embodied practice. Some, such as Jacinta and Bonny, found the learning to teach process emotionally troubling, whereas Beatrix, Evie and Sarona appeared more able to rationalise the process. I suggest Bonny and Jacinta

desired a connected sense of knowing across the full curriculum of teacher education, not seemingly content to relegate the more theoretically based knowledge to the background in order to focus on ‘the practical’ as did Evie, or to postpone the need for a fuller understanding until practicing as a beginning teacher as did Beatrix. Sarona appeared to be accepting of the notion of teacher education as a series of postponements. Peggy was the only pre-service participant who was already familiar with ‘the real’. I have suggested due to her familiarity with the world of early childhood education Peggy was in a unique position to assess the importance of the institutional knowledge to her already constituted teacher identity. Her texts provided an alternative glimpse of how ‘the real’ played out in her learning to teach process when she suggested “we don’t do it when we go to work”.

Through listening to participants’ stories and via the analytic and interpretative process I have been able to make visible the theory of knowledge driving the curriculum as experienced by participants of institution A. This theory is consistent with constructivist accounts. While these have roots in knowledge as object, they seek to bridge the gap between knowledge as object and the knower as an autonomous, cognising agent (B. Davis & Sumara, 1997, p. 109). The desire to ‘crack the code’ is not a technicist claim linked to notions of technical rationality. Neither is it strictly a theory to practice issue because theory into practice most often implies that a (scientific) theory through its “generalizable formulae, procedures, or rules” (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003, p. 197) is then applied in practice to the circumstances that arise within ‘real’ situations. Rather, my interpretation of the research texts suggests that participants desired the “recovery of robust notions of practical knowledge” (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003, p. 194) within their learning to teach process. Aristotle’s notion of *phronesis* encapsulates the type of knowledge participants desired to hold in order to make them feel better prepared. Rather than knowledge that could be explained through the academic performance of “a good essay”, I have argued participants wanted knowledge that was embodied, knowledge as action that takes account of how knowledge for teaching could become part of their own complex and dynamically evolving teacher knowledge. The latter they understood to be best constructed through engaged relational activity. This accords with Lave’s (1993) view whereby meaning “has a relational character (p. 18) and isn’t constructed through individual intentions alone. It is my contention rather than seeing the issue as needing to know more, participants wanted to know differently in

order to ‘know what to do with it’. Taylor (1993) suggests that sometimes our students are ahead of us:

Rather than dismiss some of their concerns as being basely utilitarian or anti-theoretical, perhaps we should be asking ourselves whether the traditional concern to pass on universal, theoretical knowledge on the one hand and professional skills on the other is missing out what students themselves –could they articulate it –deem to be the need for practical knowledge. (p. 68)

I will return to this discussion in Chapter 8 where I suggest that pre-service participants have put forward a compelling argument that aligns with one of the most widely documented problems in learning to teach, that is, the problem with enactment (Hammersen et al., 2005; Kennedy, 1999), which in turn is tied to the pedagogy of teacher education. Meanwhile, in the next chapter I pick up the stories of field-based participants and describe their process of becoming knowledgeable.

Chapter 7:

Lifting the veil: The experiences of field-based teachers

This chapter explores the experiences of field-based participants in ‘becoming knowledgeable’. Its central concern is to explicate how Denise, Geejay, Kelsey, Mia, Piata, Tiale, and Toni each came to have a strong personal or subjective sense of understanding the knowledges of their teacher education programme.

In becoming knowledgeable, most participants described their experience as ‘coming to see’ their work differently. The knowledges of teacher education, and most importantly the ways these were explored, appeared to illuminate what previously could only be partially ‘seen’, or known. It was as though through the process of becoming knowledgeable a metaphoric veil had been lifted:

And then you start study, you kind of learn the benefits of how you sort of interact with children. So then for me especially, with interactions they got better I guess you can say. But in the way that you do use language with children and then you take them a step further and you offer them new things. Yeah, that has been a gradual change for me. [Denise, Int. 1, p. 24]

One of the key effects of ‘becoming knowledgeable’ was participants’ strong sense of having retrofitted the knowledge/discourses of teacher education to their day-to-day practices. As Denise (above) found; “it helps you understand why you’re doing it”. Put more broadly, teacher education ‘lifted the veil’ on a set of knowledges and understandings not available to participants while they remained unqualified.

I settled on the notion of ‘the veil’ because of the sense it conjures up of something in front of our eyes, a bit like a screen that obscures our seeing. The veil can be partially or fully lifted. My use of the term ‘veil’ comes from the Western Eurocentric notion of a veil; “to envelope or screen as or in the manner of a veil; serve as a veil to” (Trumble & Stevenson, 2002, p. 3513).

It is not my intention to infer there is a ‘true reality’ we are obscured from seeing, as seeing is never neutral, even with objects in the ‘natural’ world (Crotty, 1998). The way we name the world is the way we ‘see’ it and as participants found “different uses of language constitute the world differently” (Mehan, 1993, p. 262). Indeed, as one

participant, Piata, was to find, the programme of Institution B made certain ways of ‘seeing’ more likely than other ways, and this made her experience of becoming knowledgeable more difficult than it possibly was for fellow participants.

Through this chapter I explore my contention that the process of learning to teach was largely experienced as a ‘seeing it differently’ process (Edwards & D’Arcy, 2004) and suggest the notion of ‘seeing’ was consistent with a sense of *understanding* the knowledge for teachers. Accordingly, this chapter clarifies the conditions for understanding the knowledges of teacher education.

The chapter unfolds in four parts. First, I explore the ways in which participants drew on visual imagery to describe how the knowledge of teacher education illuminated not only their existing ‘realities’ of being a teacher, but also evoked new ‘realities’ to consider. In this part I suggest use of the term ‘seeing’ points to a sense of understanding. In the next part I present a case study of Piata for whom visual metaphority was absent in her texts and speculate how this may have been so. In Part 3 I discuss how participants’ ability to access the knowledge of the institution and a sense of becoming knowledgeable was significantly brought about by dialogic affordances structured into the teacher education programme. In the final part of the chapter, I describe how participants explicitly expressed a sense of confidence and legitimacy at being newly qualified teachers through having developed a sense of “knowing practice” (Kemmis, 2005).

Part I: Seeing it differently

What you learnt in class you could sort of see, or put into action the following day, and then it just became part of your practice as you went along. [Toni, Int. 2, p. 30]

Being able to “sort of see” the knowledges, as Toni (above) suggests, and being able to ‘see’ these sufficiently to “put [them] into action” were prevalent storylines in the data. Field-based participants drew on a range of visual metaphors as evocative of how, through their process of learning to teach they came to ‘see’ new understandings about themselves as teachers and about teaching.

Broadly speaking two forms of ‘seeing’ were talked about. In the first form, the knowledges of teacher education illuminate what is already familiar (or known) to participants. Knowledges within their existing field of vision were framed and re-framed through the knowledge and language of the academy. In this way the teacher

education programme lifts the veil on different ways of representing ‘reality’, imbuing this with new and more technical meanings. Their process of learning to teach, therefore, makes available new ways of seeing the familiar expressed by Geejay as “what you don’t know, you don’t question”. Typically, this knowledge was largely propositional knowledge but also included knowledge of official discourses enclosed in mandatory requirements such as the Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices (DOPs), the Early Childhood Regulations (New Zealand Government), and other documents such as *Te Whāriki*.

The second sense of ‘seeing’ concerns knowledge that illuminated what was formerly unknown, or outside participants’ a priori frames of reference. This form of ‘seeing’ was in terms of the more openly political features of the programme such as issues of advocacy, equity, and biculturalism.

Seeing the knowledge

I actually saw something that a child was doing and it was a concept of Piaget and that blew me away. It absolutely blew me away, the fact that we had to sort of take him on board ... [Geejay, Int. 1, p. 42]

Geejay’s (above) recollection of a time when she ‘saw’ the knowledge she had previously been introduced to in class was a very compelling experience—it ‘blew her away’. The centre context provided an affordance for Geejay, as it did for others, to recognise many of the conceptual features of the knowledge for teaching encountered in the teacher education classroom. Thus making “concretely realisable” (Taylor, 1993, p. 61) the concepts and ideas they were learning about within the teacher education programme.

“Those things were real light bulbs”: Denise

Denise recalls a similar experience to Geejay:

When I started studying and then I went to work one day and I could um, actually put a name to what some of the children were doing. Like ‘private speech’ when children were doing that or reaching into ‘intersubjectivity’ with children and those things for me were real light bulbs and those were the things that I really liked and I have talked to other people about it and say ‘oh my gosh now I can finally say ‘oh the child is doing this and doing that’ and that’s um -like theory what do you call it? Like the maturation or nature versus nurture; so I could actually label things. Those were big things for me. That is what I wanted to get out of it, to actually recognise those sorts of things in children. [Denise, Int. 1, pp. 18-19]

Denise's emphasis was on acquiring a more abstracted way of understanding teaching and learning. She is in effect talking literally about having 'seen' abstractions such as 'private speech' and 'intersubjectivity'. It appears her entry into the discourse community of early childhood is enhanced by the affordance of an almost seamlessness between her student-teacher self, her existing frames of reference, and her teacher self; an example of building propositional knowledge on the everyday (Northedge, 2002). In particular, Denise is learning new ways of seeing the familiar made possible by being socialised into the dominant discourse of child development. She is not passive in this process, asserting "that is what I wanted to get out of it". Through her identification with this aspect of her teacher knowledge she disciplines herself as well as being disciplined (in the Foucauldian sense of this term) and in turn constitutes her identity as a teacher from those knowledges.

In this way Denise, and others, embodied their knowledge both through the structured and the spontaneous praxis inherent in the field-based programme whereby meanings were carried from the centre to the classroom, back to the centre and around again as an iterative process.

It "turned on lights for me": Tiale

I think it's what I experienced at course that made a lot of difference to how, umm, to my own practice. In terms of the discussions, the open discussions and the multiple views that were shared, really just sort of turned on lights for me. [Tiale, Int. 1, p. 28]

For Tiale, it was the context of the classroom discussions with the "multiple views" which had the effect of turning lights on (the knowledge). Her sense of 'seeing' is enhanced by engaging in dialogue. Through this process she came to see (interpret) the familiar differently:

Tiale: There was always, umm, 'I've got the answer' and then there would always be a question and you'd made to think twice about it. There was always sort of, and then at the end of the day but there's no right or wrong answer is there? But they always made me, [if?] I felt something was concrete they would sort of give me another view that made me think 'wow, that could happen too and I'm not sure how I'd deal with that one'

Kate: *So they were quite provocative?*

Tiale: Yes!

Kate: *Did you find that, ah, how did you find that? Sounds like you...*

Tiale: I found it, it was, I found it really good and especially for I think, I really put my centre up there in terms or like, in my discussions, I always thought that we had a great system and you know that sort of thing. And it was good that they would

point out different, you know, different ways of doing things, that we could try and I would take all those things back. [Tiale, Int. 1, p. 29]

Just when she thought she had ‘the answer’ Tiale’s certainties were disrupted with “another view” and she was “made to think twice”. ‘Thinking twice’ is about how “practice requires second thoughts. These second thoughts are called [...] theory” (Britzman, 2003, p. 4). Korthagen et al. (2006) argue that the reframing of possibilities for action allows students to be active in gaining new insights as to how they might understand situations and act within them. For participants, it appears the very public nature of having to ‘think twice’ supported them to “authorize meanings, forms of theorizing that suggest a sense of ownership and voice in the theorizing process” (Britzman, 2003, p. 65). Tiale’s representations of ‘doing childcare’ were largely located within the one and only centre she had experience of prior to teacher education. The story she lived by (Nuttall, 2004) elevated her centre as a model of good practice. Talking about herself and others in her class she explained how

A lot of the girls in my class were, um... very open to new ideas and discussions and they would have only seen things done this way. And to have it brought to them in many different lights, they would have, I think they would have taken lots from it and stuff like that. [Tiale, Int. 1, p. 30]

This is an example of how ‘lifting the veil’ enabled participants to (variously) appropriate new perspectives within, and sometimes against, their pre-existing knowledge and assumptions they brought to teacher education.

“A new set of eyes”: Mia

As an effect of what she learned Mia gained new ways of seeing in contrast with her parent eyes:

It is funny I always say to people how I had chosen an early childhood centre when I had my own child and I had no knowledge of early childhood, no formal training, and then now as a parent I have gone into that centre and I remember why I chose it as a parent and now going in as a teacher I am not sure I would have chosen the same centre. It has really given me a new set of eyes I look through about what is good for children. It has changed what I look for in a centre and what I believe is good for children [Mia, Int. 1, p. 110]

Mia is not speaking as an empty vessel here, having been comfortably filled up with the knowledge of teacher education. She immediately qualifies her comment with “but as I said before, it has really consolidated a lot of what I already did [...] a lot of it I have modified along the way, or I have actually discarded even. I think it is a real balance”. Whilst she believed she got “new [teacher] eyes” she also came to understand how

teacher knowledge is not a discrete body of knowledge independent of the knowledge and beliefs that are brought to the learning to teach process. Elsewhere in this chapter I discuss how Mia found the process of having her prior frames of reference challenged unsettling.

Why talk of ‘seeing’ knowledge?

The idea of knowledge and knowing being compared with illumination and seeing can be traced back to ancient Greek philosophy and Judeo-Christian beliefs (Davis, 2004; Rorty, 1980) and its association with the pursuit of ideal knowledge or Truth. Rorty (1980) suggests the notion of knowledge as illuminating led to the “domination of the mind of the West by ocular metaphors” (p. 13). In this conception, knowledge such as universal knowledge or truths was associated with “*looking* at something” (Rorty, 1980, p. 38) and the thing that did the looking was the Eye of the Mind. The eye of the mind looks at the knowledge object. The eye of the body, meanwhile, looks too but at less erudite knowledge and hence the distinction between knowing *that* and knowing *how* developed in Western epistemological traditions. Given the perspective we are looking at something, it follows there must a separation of the knower from the known (B. Davis, 2004, p. 23). Rorty cites Dewey (1960) who coined the phrase ‘spectator theory of knowledge’ to capture the sense “knowledge must be of the unchangeable”:

This theory of knowing is modelled after what was supposed to take place in the act of vision. The object refracts light and is seen; it makes a difference to the eye and the person having an optical apparatus, but none to the thing seen. The real object is the object so fixed in its regal aloofness that it is a king to any beholding mind that may gaze upon it. A spectator theory of knowledge is the inevitable outcome. (Dewey, 1960 cited Rorty, 1980, p. 39)

When knowledge (the truth) that is ‘out there’ is seen, the outcome is akin to being enlightened (Davis, 2004, p. 76) knowledge as “the real object” implies knowledge already exists, knowledge that was once organized by God, or by existing social traditions could be seen using the vantage points of reason (Rorty, 1980). This was the view of knowledge Husserl and later phenomenologists’ rejected by arguing the knower and the known are inseparable.

Davis and Sumara (1997) suggest that metaphors become “literalized and woven seamlessly into our everyday beliefs and practices—so completely that their figurative aspects dissolve into transparency” (p. 108). In drawing on visual metaphors as a cultural artefact I have interpreted participants as wanting to convey the sense they

literally felt as though their minds had been opened (enlightened) and/or they could literally ‘see’ much of what they were learning. My reading of the research texts as an entirety strongly suggests a sense of ‘seeing’ is consistent with a sense of *understanding* the knowledges of teacher education (as will shortly be explored).

What and how was it seen?

As can be discerned from the types of examples given above, the field of vision, the sights most commonly talked about were closely linked to participants’ work with children. Examples provided largely represented the content associated with two strands of the programme; one focused on learning and development (or pedagogical knowledge) and the other with professional practice knowledge. Each of these concerns the more immediate, day-to-day practices of teaching; described by Geejay as “the nuts and bolts of early childhood, the mechanisms. The big wheel that turns the whole thing around”. Participants’ stocks of knowledge gleaned from their experiences and the “uncodifiable and extremely context sensitive knowledge” (Backhurst, 2007, p. 69) of being a teacher mingled with, and at times, bumped up against the knowledge for teachers in the cut and thrust of the teacher education classroom. With participants’ sense of ‘seeing’ closely linked to their ‘real’ experiences a common storyline in the data was, as expressed by Toni “I think I learnt something every day”. She added: “It was happening all the time. I could notice things or I would respond differently to how I would normally respond”. The centre context was spoken as a powerful site of turning the classroom knowledge into action/practice as exemplified by Toni:

Toni: I think because I built my knowledge up while working and studying at the same time, that the knowledge actually stayed there. It didn’t just...(flaps arms)

Kate: Right. It didn’t just fly away.

Toni: It didn’t, yeah. So, you know what you learnt in class you could, sort of see or put into action the following day and then it just became part of your practice as you went along. So I felt like my study, it was like steps and I just carried on stepping up along as I learnt something, I put it into practice. So, yeah my practice is different from before I started training and it, it is better even though I’ve (inaudible)

Kate: And um are you able to articulate to say how much, in what way it’s better?

Toni: Um,... I suppose it’s better because I’ve gained some knowledge on subjects. So when a situation arises you can [...] I can, you know you can sort of say ‘well I, I do know that it’s better for children if you do this’ [Toni, Int. 2, p. 30]

Toni portrays the development of her teacher knowledge as a seemingly simple process of putting this knowledge into action the next day. She clearly considered the close (temporal) proximity of the centre and the teacher education classroom as supporting

her to retain a sense of holding onto ‘the knowledge’. Her experience of being able to ‘transfer’ the knowledge was repeated by all except Piata who required an intermediary in order to do this (as will shortly be explored).

If, as constructivist theory posits, new ideas are built in part on existing ideas (Beck & Kosnik, 2006) then this explains Toni’s experience of being able to “step up as you went along”. Certainly, within all accounts participants felt the process of becoming (more) knowledgeable to be a gradual one. I have interpreted this as a fit between what was being learned in teacher education and the affordances to engage with this knowledge.

Accounts suggested that much of the (official) discourse offered in the classroom was partly familiar and thus formed frames of reference to engage with the content and processes of their courses. In this way participants were able to ‘see’ the knowledge for teaching either in their mind’s eye, or in the actuality of the early childhood setting.

Just-in-time knowledge: the emergent curriculum of teacher education

In field-based texts the ‘to-ing and fro-ing’ between the teacher education classroom and the centre, with its affordance to situate and ‘try out’ their knowledge served to blur any assumed boundaries between the “false oppositions” (Hager & Hyland, 2003, p. 272) of theory and practice, body and mind, and expert and novice. Able to bring their concerns or needs to class meant some knowledge was gained through a “just-in-time” (Mulcahy, 2006, p. 62) process:

If you ever ask them [the lecturers] something to do with your work situation, like for instance the pay thing for me I would discuss that in class or with a lecturer through course content and stuff. They were really good at giving you your own personal time and just ensuring that you understood [...] A lot of the time if it is off topic and you just bring something up that has happened to you they do let you do that. [Denise, Int. 2, pp. 33-34]

As students, field-based participants were able to initiate conversations about issues of concern arising from their experiences as practicing teachers, which may or may not have been relevant to the particular course as explained by Denise above. I suggest this affordance enhanced participants’ sense of being able to ‘see’ the knowledge. Arguably, this process encourages lecturing staff to ‘loosen their grip’ on being the authority in the classroom and to model processes of inquiry with students.

Toni spoke about a situation at work where she felt compromised in relation to a particular set of practices being pursued there:

Toni: I suppose I had a tricky situation while in my second year. There was a child with a behavioural problem. And I suppose in that situation I thought "this course doesn't tell me how to deal with this, how to play the situation out". I suppose I did have support from my tutors at that time so, you know, and so just when I was thinking "oh I can't work in a place if they are going to treat a child like that" I did have yeah support.

Kate: So how did you access that support?

Toni: You know when you do your reflective journal? I sort of wrote things down so that helped. But I could also go and talk to [*name of lecturer] if it was a real ethical – cos it was an ethical dilemma. So that you knew that that support was there and you were reminded that you know, it was always there and if you need to come and talk about this.

Kate: Was that an important aspect of the course for you, the fact that you could access your lecturers on topics as they arose?

Toni: Yeah, yeah, oh definitely yeah. And the whole class situation too because you had built up that trust over time. That if you did not want to talk to someone about it at class that you could actually ring up someone who was at that same level of understanding and training as you are and that you could talk to them about it. [Toni, Int. 1, pp. 31-32]

Both Denise's and Toni's experience of accessing and receiving 'just-in-time' (Mulcahy, 2006) knowledge and support enhanced their experience of learning to teach. Toni used a number of avenues structured into the learning to teach process such as weekly journal writing for engaging in conversations that mattered to her. She was able to talk with her peers as a source of support, either in class or individually by phone. And she was aware she could talk with a particular lecturer in a confidential manner.

All avenues are means of exploring different interpretations and thus meanings on the emergent issues of practice that confront her, and hence provide ways of interpreting and gaining fresh meanings/knowledge. Most importantly, these offer a passage out of the cul de sac of her 'own' or localised centre thinking. Edwards and D'Arcy (2004) suggest learning is a 'seeing it differently' process whereby learning is the expansion of understanding and a transformation of the ways in which the world is conceptualised. These various avenues provide numerous ways for 'seeing'.

Mulcahy (2006) compares the “‘just-in-time’ stuff and the ‘just-in-case’ curriculum” (the kind of curriculum conventionally on offer in the academy) (p. 65) that takes place in problem-based learning pedagogy. She argues student teachers fashion their identities from both sets of knowledge, claiming that in traditional programmes “not only has the formal knowledge of the academy been privileged over the practice knowledge of

students but much “self-work” is largely hidden from view” (p. 65). Opportunities to engage in ‘self-work’ in a highly visible and legitimate manner were talked about by all field-based participants. It is not clear to what extent discipline knowledges were part of resolutions, but what is clear is how opportunities to engage in what I have referred to as ‘conversations that mattered’ to students were very much part of the learning milieu.

In the next section I briefly discuss ‘seeing knowledge’ that proved more difficult to know about or ‘see’. Here, the knowledges of teacher education illuminated the unknown, phenomena that largely lay outside of participants’ a priori fields of vision (horizons) and frames of reference.

Illuminating the unknown

...I had no idea that early childhood education was going to go that wide [Tiale, Int. 1 p. 9.]

.... I knew I was going to learn more about extending children. I didn’t know it was going to open my eyes to a wider um, scope. No I did not. That was not an expectation. [Geejay, Int. 1, p. 51]

I don’t think I would have thought as widely through families, all parties involved—you know, families, yourself, the child all of that but it [advocacy] was always a focus [Mia, Int. 2, p. 13]

I didn’t expect to learn about the historical aspects of early childhood or other services that were out there [Denise, Int. 1, p. 24]

As well as casting light on what was already familiar, the curriculum of Institution B also illuminated alternative bodies of knowledge—knowledge represented in conceptual frameworks that make connections with early childhood’s sociopolitical and historical commitments (Kane, 2005). In particular, the content of the early childhood context and te Ao Māori strands appeared to catch participants ‘off-guard’ when set against their expectations of what they might learn. Collectively, these two strands are consistent with the sociohistorical ethos of Institution B as evidenced in Institution B’s conceptual framework: “whereby teachers, through their practices, should actively promote an equitable and fair society”. Many of the participants’ comments in this theme were often (but by no means always) prompted by my questions about expectations, unexpected or surprising aspects of the programme. Geejay was a major contributor of ‘seeing differently’ texts:

Geejay: A lot of my beliefs have changed, around early childhood and around life. Yes very much so. I am much more aware of what is around me and the political scene and the scale of things and how things are often disproportionate and how to be aware about the areas of inequity and inequality umm so to watch out for those in families and children and centres and among staff. Very much more aware.

Kate: Mm, do you think ... it sounds like a fairness is coming through

Geejay: Yeah, a fairness built on, once again not just what I think is fair, but what is fair, you know, yeah and te Ao Māori did that a lot for me yeah [...] So, te Ao [strand] yeah, really opened my eyes and context one -the changes, the shifting paradigms, society, yeah very much. [...] And of course in doing so of course I am able to embrace those with other beliefs a whole lot more openly. I am grateful for that. Not that I didn't before but I have more understanding that there is more than one way...[Geejay, Int. 1, pp. 45-46]

Having had knowledges “around early childhood and around life” appeared to enable Geejay and others to take part in new, openly political conversations. As an effect of this new knowledge Geejay repositioned herself as being “much more aware” than when she entered the programme. She came to understand that different interpretations of the social world exist. As an effect of the context and te Ao Māori strands Geejay and others came to see (“opened my eyes”) early childhood education as more complex and inherently a more political and ethical practice. Geejay explained the effect of these courses on her:

Geejay: And now that I know much more than I knew before about cultures, about belief systems, about the way people behave and are. Um... I find that there is an acceptance and an understanding there... from where they have come. Okay? I hear my colleagues and others talking about um, issues of race perhaps and I think that was me that was the way I used to think. I now have a better understanding perhaps of the whys and the wheres. And um, It is a grossly, grossly, white system.

Kate: Do you see the knowledge of “the whys and wheres” that you just explained as a direct relationship to having been on the course?

Geejay: Mm, yes absolutely.

Kate: Did you expect that that would be what a teacher education course would be about?

Geejay: No, absolutely not. I knew I was going to learn more about extending children. I didn't know it was going to open my eyes to a wider um, scope. No I did not. That was not an expectation. [Geejay, Int. 1, p. 45]

Geejay recognised how she ‘saw’ more than she had expected, adding she was “literally forced to look at [some] issues”. Adding that these were ones she “might not have seen at 20 [years of age]”.

Others also talked about how these courses supported them to be more expansive in their knowledge and understandings of the field. Kelsey identified how without the te Ao Māori strand she “would probably still be arrogant like some of my family are”. Whilst there was a sense in the research texts that their ‘eyes’ had been opened to the more political, marginalised and ideologically challenging knowledges contained within the planned curriculum of teacher education, this was tempered with a sense this was

still ‘a work in progress’ for most. To the extent that hegemonic discourses circulate in society, it is unsurprising some participants came to the programme not expecting to engage with marginalised knowledges. That “teaching is a complex activity that is inherently political and ethical” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 24) was, however, a positioning most seemed prepared, if somewhat tentatively, to appropriate. ‘Illuminating the ‘unknown’ was a smaller data set than ‘illuminating the known’, but, a significant one as it demonstrates how teacher education students are receptive to ‘having their eyes opened’ and being positioned and positioning themselves as learners alongside more dominant discourses such as developmentalism. Although as Geejay’s comment about her colleagues above (“talking about issues of race”) suggests, furthering their bicultural development (Ritchie, 2003) as newly qualified teachers can sometimes occur in unsupportive contexts.

Seeing is understanding

I came to interpret the use of visual metaphors and notions of knowing as ‘seeing’ as consistent with participants’ having a sense of *understanding* in relation to the knowledges of teacher education. Understanding made possible, as already suggested, in large part, because field-based participants through their immersion in and personal connection with daily practice as teachers were able not only to envisage and engage with, but to embody this knowledge. They were literally ‘practiceseeing’ the knowledge.

‘Understanding’ as discussed by Belenky et al. (1986) is distinguished from ‘knowledge’:

By *understanding* we mean something akin to the German word *kennen*, the French *connaître*, the Spanish *conocer*, or the Greek *gnosis* (Lewis, 1983), implying personal acquaintance with an object (usually but not always a person). Understanding involves intimacy equality between self and object, while *knowledge* (*wissen*, *savoir*, *saber*) implies separation from the object and mastery over it. (pp. 100-101 –italics in original)

Following Belenky et al. (1986), I suggest through their use of visual metaphors participants conveyed a sense of understanding. They weren’t ‘spectators’, they were ‘seeing’ in a phenomenological sense whereby object and subject were reciprocally experienced. The notion of ‘personal acquaintance’ highlights a relationship between the knower and the known. The knowledge of teaching, rather than being treated as if it were “an object—some third thing—to be grasped, held, stored, manipulated, and

wielded” (Davis & Sumara, 1997, p. 109) was treated as more akin to “knowledge—as-(inter)action” (p. 110). By this I mean when participants spoke about their learning they conveyed a strong sense that the knowledge of teaching was something that could be inspected, interrogated, and interpreted through a very active process of engagement in the teacher education classroom and in the life-world of the centre, and at times beyond.

The process of interpretation and the ‘self-work’ this encompasses assumed a central role in both the institutional processes of learning to teach and of participants’ quest to locate the knowledge of teaching within their practice as teachers. This was also a structural requirement of the programme as dictated by weekly in-centre tasks, reflective journals and a host of assignments targeted to knowing in and through practice. There was a sense in the research texts of participants ‘demanding’ the classroom knowledges alternate between both figure and ground in their learning. Because of the temporal proximity of the centre to the teacher education classroom participants were able to act on this knowledge in their own local situations (Taylor, 1993), to ‘test’ this knowledge out (apply it) and come to an understanding of it. When understood this became the ground against which new learning was enacted. I suggest this hermeneutic circle accounts for why those with deep sense of understanding included the telling of relational stories indicating, in Aristotle’s terms the knowledge had become ‘part of themselves’ (Taylor, 1993) This, I contend, is what fuelled their descriptions of knowing as ‘seeing’.

The delicate balance of understanding/misunderstanding

Understanding and misunderstanding rather than being in binary opposition whereby understanding is given prominence over misunderstanding must both be considered as part of learning. Hogan and Smith (2003), drawing on Gadamer reminds the reader of “the propensities to illusion to which understanding is ever prone” (p. 173). Understanding moreover implies knowing but it also suggests there is ‘room’ for misunderstanding as understanding is an interpretive act (Brown, 2001; Taylor, 1999; Taylor, 1993). Talk of misunderstanding, or of not making sense of the knowledge for teaching was not widespread in the research texts. Most accounts were imbued with a sense of confidence, and for some, such as Geejay, a sense of conversion (Taylor, 1993). The teacher education programme had not only met expectations but for most it had gone far beyond these. Kelsey however, was less sure and conflicted about the extent to which she had changed, describing herself as “stuck in the way I was” (see p. 115).

While as an unqualified teacher Kelsey was “pretty blind to what other teachers were doing” she did not, however, draw on the same visual imagery when talking about her new knowledge as did others. I noticed she appeared to position herself in possession of the knowledge of teaching rather than as understanding in the sense described above. Wenger (1998) suggests “understanding is always straddling the known and the unknown in a subtle dance of the self. It is a delicate balance” (p. 41). Recall how Kelsey talked about having “a lot [of knowledge] behind” her. Kelsey’s talk suggested an epistemological positioning of knowledge as ‘object’, something independent of her and held as a store. Whilst by the end of teacher education Kelsey described her teacher-self as being “more confident” and “professional”, defining ‘professional’ as “knowing what I am talking about, being able to give advice and know that it will work or know that it is going to help, her knowing did not seem ‘part of her’. I have interpreted Kelsey’s texts as suggesting she was still ‘coming to see’ some or much of what she learned.

Apparently Plato said truth or knowledge was a matter “of pouring sight into blind eyes” (Findlayson, 2005, p. 23). However, we know becoming knowledgeable is not a simple matter of being passed the knowledge object. This is in part because many of our background narratives prove resistant even to our own desires to understand. It is possible that Kelsey’s strong narrative of her ‘personality’ being central to how she taught appeared to play an important role in filtering out, or blocking some knowledge from becoming embedded more firmly in her teacher identity. Discourses such as those about ‘human nature’ and ‘personality’ are deeply ingrained in Western views of ‘the self’ (Burr, 2003; Harre & Gillett, 1994). Furthermore, it is very tempting to accommodate new ideas within existing frameworks and thus not be transformed by new learning. Much depends on an openness to ‘a fusion of horizons’. Moreover, Howie and Hagan (2009) in their local study of the field-based practicum noted how the quality of the ‘home’ centre can have an effect on students’ ability to learn linked to teacher education programme goals. I suggest, that for Kelsey, the process of ‘lifting the veil’ begun in teacher education and was still taking place. Eighteen months after graduating she had shifted centres twice in order to find what she was professionally looking (or searching) for.

Rupture in the smooth storyline

In the next part of the chapter I draw on Piata’s stories to demonstrate that for one field-based participant a sense of understanding was *not* the story she chose to tell

relative to her sense of being prepared as a teacher. Notions of becoming knowledgeable as associated with visual or light based metaphors were absent in her stories. In their place were ones of how hard her experience was:

I always said it was harder for me than anyone else in the class. I mean even in the Māori course they were saying to me “you know you’re so lucky because you’re Māori, you work in kōhanga you know everything about the assignment. [Piata, Int. 1, p. 13]

Gergen (1999) asserts that “without understanding, we are lost” (p. 143) unable to generate meanings together, to co-ordinate action and thus cannot co-exist. He suggests this is how travellers can feel in unfamiliar territory. Piata, whose voice has been only minimally present to this point, described her process of learning to teach as akin to being a traveller in a foreign land where it was often difficult to locate the figure of teacher education against her background understandings and narratives. In Gergen’s sense she was metaphorically lost until she began to get her bearings, which she did in her final year. Methodologically Piata represents a form of negative case (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to my construct of lifting the veil.

Part II: Piata’s story: “It was all foreign to me”

I can’t really remember back what I thought I might learn but I knew that it was all foreign to me, like even all the text books and things. When I was reading through I was thinking I’ve never heard of any of these people. I mean it was only until the Māori course that I’d heard of like, I knew who Mason Durie was and I knew who those Māori writers were. [Piata, Int. 1, p. 9]

When Piata arrived at Institution B few aspects ‘spoke to’ her lived reality up to that point in her life. In the beginning there was little she could recognise in the programme, or that they recognised about her and her early childhood context:

because it’s always been funny for me at [the] course because I’m at Kōhanga. It’s like I’m the only different umm, you know, we don’t run the same as any other centre and because we’re under the [National Te Kōhanga Reo] trust, it’s like something’s always got to be different about us. [Piata, Int. 1, p. 11]

Her experience of difference points to how the predominant discursive positioning of the teacher education curriculum largely centered on early childhood education as ostensibly understood, practiced and conceptualised in English medium or “mainstream” centres. Whilst Piata’s emphasis appears to be on structural features of early childhood provision (“we don’t run the same”), embedded in her stories was a much wider sense of the sociocultural context of Te Kōhanga Reo and of being Māori.

When asked by me “what it was like being on the course as the only person from a kōhanga” she replied:

I found it quite difficult, especially the first two years. This last year has been the easiest for me in that regard because.. I was just coming to grips with how kōhanga ran, you know under Te Korowai and Te Ahomatua –well our kōhanga anyway. And then on the side of that you’ve got to try and explain it to—I don’t want to sound rude (Kate: No, no, no)—but you know, like explain it to Pākehā how we’re run and I came to lots of dilemmas with my class mates because of that. You know [...] things would come up and they would say ‘well why do you do that’ and I’d say, “I don’t know I have to go back and check” and it would get me quite worked up and the first year I was in tears a lot because I didn’t understand why we did things the way we did. [...] ...And people wanting to know why, why, why? You know, it’s like being harassed. [Piata, Int. 1, p. 11]

Piata’s description is reminiscent of pre-service participants who found their understanding of the learning to teach ‘jigsaw’ didn’t fall into place until the final year of the programme. In this sense, she had to ‘crack the code’ before the possibility of ‘seeing’ and thus ‘lifting any veil’. But it was how she was asked to explain, account for, and justify many aspects of the kōhanga system to her classmates that came to be the disturbing element for her.

A pedagogic culture of discussing interpretations and coming to understand was evident in the classroom, as mentioned previously by Tiale. But the experiences of Tiale and others were not expressed as it was by Piata—as a form of harassment. Piata had to engage in the pedagogic space in a manner not mentioned by others:

I didn’t mind [their questions] as long as I knew how to answer them, because umm it’s one thing, you know they could just say well, “I don’t know, I don’t know how you get away with doing that”. Like for instance our Māori language policy, oh no not for the language, for one of the enrolment criteria was that one of your parents had to be a Māori descendant. And then in class that came across as a question like, “how do you get away with that, that’s discrimination”, that’s you know, what do you call it when you’re exempting a race, not racism ...

Kate: Prejudice?

Piata: Yeah prejudice, it came out like that in a class. And I was saying ‘well there’s nothing wrong with the English language, its Māori language that needs to be umm, that’s why we’re there to revitalise it, to bring it back’.

Kate: Mm. So you encountered lots of prejudice and that hurt quite a bit?

Piata: Yeah

Kate: Do you think that... something, some sort of initiative from the lecturing staff could have helped that a bit, or was that during your morning and afternoon teas?

Piata: Oh no, no, this was during class. But no the lecturers were really good, especially the ones that understood how, like [* names of lecturers]. You know they really know what they’re doing and they’re talking about it was just, yeah, just the ones that didn’t really know much about kōhanga then they didn’t really step in that much. I mean always my last comment was “I’ll find that out and I’ll bring it

back to class and let you know”, cause I didn’t want to just leave it where someone just made a comment and that was it. [Piata, Int. 1, pp. 12-13]

Piata’s feelings of “being harassed” can be understood as a “will to know” (Rinaldi, 2006, p. 14) by her class colleagues; “well, why do you do that?” Rinaldi (2006), drawing on Levinas’s concept of the ethics of an encounter explains how

there is a strong Western philosophical tradition that gives primacy to knowing. Through this will to know, we grasp the other and make the other into the same. An example is concepts and classifications [...]. With grasping through the will to know, alterity disappears and singularity and novelty are excluded, to be replaced by the ‘totalitarianism of the same’. The ethics of an encounter attempts to counter this grasping through respect for the absolute alterity of the Other. (p. 14)

Being other/ed

I suggest at a structural level the discursive construction of teacher education contributed to positioning Piata as ‘other’, but in addition she experienced being ‘other/ed’ (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999) in a way not talked about by other members of the same class. Positioned as outside the dominant discourses, neither did she receive much support from lecturers who she described as not knowing “much about kōhanga”. It is a feature of field-based programmes that learners are keen to address “questions arising from the ‘now’ of practice” (Bell, 2004, p. 10), the ‘just-in-time’ knowledge. However it seems Piata was busy answering her classmates’ questions possibly more so than asking and exploring her own. Little wonder she believed the programme was harder for her than others in her class, implying how she was positioned as an apologist for all things Māori:

A lot of the times it was like, at times when things were happening in the media like the hikoi and um, you know the election and stuff like that was really hard because here was all these things happening out in the world about Māori and um..not very positive things a lot of the time... [Piata, Int. 1, pp. 13-14]

While Piata said the programme felt “foreign”, I suggest it was she who was being positioned as ‘foreign’ (‘other’) by many of her classmates and lecturers. For example, the events she speaks about above such as the (parliamentary) election and the hikoi (protest march) were clearly issues raised either formally or informally in teacher education and she expresses a sensitivity to how these were talked about. There is a sense the “ordinariness of ‘whiteness’” (Mac Naughton, 2005, p. 157) and the naturalisation of many of the dominant ‘truths’ of early childhood education (Mac

Naughton, 2005) worked to block Piata's ability to freely and safely make sense in the teacher education classroom.

Piata's ability to see in her mind's eye the concepts she was being introduced to was restricted in a way other participants did not appear to experience. This would mean she was shut out of much of the immediate engagement and retrofitting that was possible for her classmates. She didn't find it such a self-evident translation between what took place in the teacher education classroom, the knowledge she brought there, and her kōhanga experiences. When asked if the course made sense she replied:

Not a lot of the time. I had to really, every course I had to approach [my liaison person at kōhanga] and get her to sit down with me and explain... about everything that was required for that course because I just didn't. I couldn't see how to apply all the Pākehā theory to kōhanga, because you know, most of the times it did. [Piata, Int. 1, p. 15]

I have interpreted Piata as saying she did not have access to the same affordances to make sense of them as others did. She could not initially place theory and practice in a relationship of reciprocity as others were more able to do. Her learning, therefore, became more akin to a process of 'cracking the code'.

Piata, interestingly, was the only field-based participant to express a linear relationship between 'theory' and 'practice'. This suggests when the knowledge for teaching is difficult to embody, the traditional dichotomy between theory and practice is invoked (as we saw with pre-service participants). For Piata, the blurring of boundaries, mentioned previously, was not a feature of her process of learning to teach—until her third and final year.

Relationships at the heart of learning teaching

Few spoke as significantly as Piata did of the liaison teacher's role in supporting them to make links between the content of teacher education and their practices as teachers. Piata needed her liaison person to translate (literally) the content of courses into the kōhanga context before it could be understood by her. In her final year, Piata experienced a lecturer who was more in tune with her learning and relational needs than others had been. She described the qualities of this person:

Piata: She was laid back, well not laid back so that you know everyone gets away with things but she was laid back and umm, she obviously knew what she was talking about. So she knew her theory. She was also accepting of other different points of views and I think that was really important because some lecturers may be a more, I don't know...

Kate... judgmental?

Piata: Oh, they're more like you know, not accepting, just you know this is, because "I'm saying this, this is what it is" and if someone else challenges that it's like well, they're shot down. Whereas that teacher for those courses she was really accepting of other different views and didn't make anyone, I don't think she made anyone feel like they didn't want to contribute because they wouldn't be listened to or something. [...] and to make people feel like they're um, a part of a class and that their opinions are valued. It doesn't matter whether you know they're the same or different than the lecturers. Yeah, I think that's got to be good. [Piata, Int. 1, pp. 28-29]

I have interpreted the key to this experience for Piata to be how she felt accepted as a learner. In this lecturer's class she felt able to "contribute", to express her "different views" and to be "listened to", in other words to engage with knowledge as relational and as a tool. This is not a view of knowledge as "securely founded" (Taylor, 1999, p. 31) to be passed on as object, but knowledge as socially constructed and subject to interpretation and reinterpretation. Piata is able to come to some sense of understanding in these courses through the lecturer's "style", which allows others' knowledge to be valued. Piata enjoyed the courses this lecturer taught:

the critical thinking ones like the year 3 context course especially, the one we've just come out of [year 3 learning and development] [...] I really enjoyed those courses because of the critical thinking that was required for them. Cause they, yeah, I reflect on everything I do but you know, having a critical lens on things is, I think it's important. Because I don't believe everything I read straight off the, you know, I think you've got to have a bit of, not mistrust, but yeah a critical edge to it, you know. [Piata, Int. 1, p. 27]

The two third-year courses Piata refers to each focus on being a knower and having a critical disposition to knowledge. The context course supported students to appropriate a critical framework for deconstructing and understanding a range of wider issues influential in determining policy and direction in early childhood education. The learning and development course included, for example, issues of inclusion, advocacy, and children's rights. It is possible Piata's enjoyment of these courses was also about the content of these, which likely resonated with her life experiences as an indigenous woman growing up and living in a colonized homeland. In chapter 5 we saw how Piata valued the notion of listening to children and paying them more attention than she did prior to teacher education. It is tempting to draw parallels here where she desired to be listened to and in turn recognises the value of listening to others. She understands the power of teacher's "pathic knowledge, a knowledge which feels atmosphere, reads faces, and feels the mood of different situations" (Giles, 2010, p. 1516).

Northedge (2002) argues a key role lecturers play in tertiary education is helping students unlock the academic/knowledge code, to enter the discourse by supporting them to break into the hermeneutic circle of understanding. He suggests however:

University teachers often misunderstand this role through not appreciating the sociocultural groundings of meaning. Their thoughts are so deeply rooted in specialist discourse that they are unaware that meaning they take for granted are simply not construable from outside the discourse. (p. 256)

Piata found some knowledge was treated as truth and certainty and could not be challenged by others' realities or understandings and (mis)understandings. In teacher education this is particularly worrisome given how teaching is an interpretive practice requiring us to be aware of how our thinking both positions us as it positions others. Piata's texts illustrate how 'seeing' is never neutral and always involves a process of interpretation that occurs within sociocultural and political contexts and associated frames of reference (Weiss, 2008). When the frames of reference for making sense of unfamiliar discursive environments are missing, students are 'locked out' (Northedge, 2002).

The discursive context of teacher education

Piata's story can be viewed as symbolic of a larger social issue, namely that "we do not really see through our eyes or hear through our ears, but through our beliefs" (Delpit, 1988, p. 297). In other words, the world we see, come to know and engage in is a socio-politically constructed, not a neutral, objective, or naturally given reality:

the eye does not merely see, but is socially disciplined in the ordering, dividing, and "making" of the possibilities of the world and of the "self". By asking how the eye sees, it is possible to ask about how systems of ideas "make" possible what is seen, thought about, felt, and acted on. (Popkewitz, 1999, p. 22)

Worlds are already interpreted when we enter them. Piata's storyline, "I knew that it was all foreign to me", illustrates not just the discursive nature of teacher education. Significantly, her texts provide an insight into how unexamined belief systems of teacher educators can disrupt students' learning. The question of students' beliefs filtering the learning to teach process is a notable strand in the literature. However, much less attention has been paid to structural systems of belief acting to filter students' learning. Zeichner and Conklin (2005) suggest research on the "inner workings" (p. 700) of the teacher education classroom is well overdue.

For other field-based participants, the classroom environment and course content, whilst at times challenging, was not discussed in terms of being ‘foreign’ but more often than not as an extension of existing familiarities and realities, or truths—a process of ‘refiguring the ordinary’ (Weiss, 2008). What I am suggesting here is how many conceptualisations of being knowledgeable were located within current dominant discourses and conversations brought to the process of learning to teach. Piata’s stories, on the other hand, highlight how it was initially difficult for her to ‘see’ in a similar manner.

There was some awareness of being (discursively) constructed as teachers: Mia commented how being an advocate for children “was always drummed into us really, for want of a better word [...] and [...] that whole professionalism thing and I don’t think I would have really had that [or] have thought as widely [without teacher education]”. Geejay was aware she was now seeing “through a different lens”. Kelsey knew she was being encouraged to think differently—consider how she had broken with some long held family beliefs. In addition, most explicitly talked about becoming and being reflective teachers as an effect of teacher education. This was a positioning and identity all were comfortable appropriating. It is arguable however, whether participants fully appreciated how the system of ideas and practices they engaged with sought to construct them as particular types of subjects (Novinger & O’Brien, 2003) in a discursive sense. Or importantly, how it made certain knowledges visible whilst making others invisible (Popkewitz, 1999). Furthermore, participant’s re-cognised understandings have become a new or second veil, an interpretive screen through which they constitute themselves as teachers, and in turn, will seek to constitute others.

Summary

So far I have explored my contention that the process of teacher education was experienced as a ‘coming to see it differently’ process. I have suggested, following Belenky et al. (1986), there is a difference between ‘knowing’ and ‘understanding’ and how incidences of visual imagery in participants’ accounts point to a sense of understanding much of the content of teacher education. Piata’s storyline (“it was all foreign”) whilst providing a counterpoint to my claim of ‘seeing’, supports it too. Until she managed to get her bearings and could engage in the discursive environment of teacher education she was unable to enter the learning conversations as readily as others and hence was limited in her ability to ‘see’ (understand). Her experience throws light on the importance of the dialogic (intersubjective) and relational encounter as pivotal in

shifting knowledge from the head to the body and thus achieving a sense of understanding and to connect this to personal acquaintance with the object of knowledge (Belenky et al., 1986).

In the next part of the chapter I build on this claim and suggest how accessing the knowledge and coming to know was “a relational achievement” (Gergen, 1999, p. 147) significantly aided by the dialogic affordances structured into the programme of Institution B. Whilst participants’ experience of teaching, and of early childhood settings, supported them to ‘see’ it could just as equally have acted in a counter wise manner as “the relationship between learning to teach and experience with teaching is an old and troublesome puzzle” (Cohen, 1998, p. 167). I suggest the dialogic nature of the learning to teach process goes some way to addressing this “troublesome puzzle” by providing important opportunities for ‘lifting the veil’.

Part III: Conversational partners: engaging in dialogue

Well quite a lot of the time is when I deal with children that are emotionally distressed or are misbehaving and I have got those strategies to actually deal with those. Or where you are going one way and that is not working and you can naturally try another way and kind of reflect on that. That for me is a big thing and just knowing how to deal with those sorts of behaviours in children. I find that very, for me personally, that is I do find that rewarding and a big well part of me feels sort of proud of myself because I can do that because it is so easy just um to get someone else to deal with it. But for me I like to follow those things through and through study they give you those strategies to deal with those sorts of things. [...] when you do readings, and things you learn about that sort of stuff. But a lot of the time it is through discussion, hearing from other people because you know that if it is from a personal experience it is one thing to read something in a book but to actually experience and do it is another. [Denise, Int. 1, pp. 19-20]

Denise (above) describes a discursive shift from knowing to knowing, doing and feeling—she “can do that” and as an effect “part of me feels proud”. Denise’s feelings of pride appear to stem from not only knowing how to work with children but in being able to enact or embody her teacher knowledge (“to actually experience and do it”). I understand Denise to be saying her ability to work knowledgeably with children has been a process of formal learning (“they give you those strategies”), tempered significantly by talking with others (“but a lot of the time it is through discussion, hearing from other people”) and coordinating her actions within the possibilities discussed in these engagements. Her knowledge is not simply held ‘in-the-head’ as “when you do readings and things” but is embodied, “to actually experience and do it” thus breaking down the barriers between knowing that and knowing how.

As active members of their early childhood centres, field-based participants brought experiential knowledge of ‘the real’, as a form of currency to enter learning dialogues from the very beginning of teacher education. Consider, for example, Denise’s comments previously whereby she was able to identify ‘private speech’ and ‘intersubjectivity’ in children in her centre; terms taught in the very first paper she encountered in teacher education.

It is my contention that participants’ sense of understanding was strongly linked to affordances structured within the process of learning to teach, which allowed for a dialogic and relational engagement between the knowledges of teacher education and the ‘real’ of the early childhood setting. Significantly, field-based participants never explicitly referred to ‘the real’ or ‘reality’ of the centre, yet it was ever present in their texts recounting the use of their experiences of teaching as a significant point of engagement with the discourses of teacher education. The reality of the centre setting allowed students a context for the interpretation of these discourses and thus positioned them as highly active participants in their process of learning to teach. The research texts were replete with references to how the classroom context, especially the open discussions and to a lesser extent the reflective journals were pedagogic practices and spaces that supported dialogical relations between participants and others in their learning to teach process. Other pedagogic structures such as weekly in-centre tasks (a structured task that linked the weekly class content with the centre) and in-centre visits by lecturers (to students in their home centre) were also raised but with less voracity.

Constituting teacher self through the ‘other’

The dialogic relationship is a sense in which one’s ‘own’ meanings (albeit socially informed) and the texts of teacher education engage in a conversation or as a fusion of horizons to create new, different or amended views. For the participants, the dialogic process involved increasing awareness (or self-knowledge) of the voices they brought to the process of learning to teach. These voices were reflective of their biographical backgrounds or *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1987 cited in Kemmis, 2005). For example, Mia said how the programme “totally challenged perceptions like that which actually I grew up with and I thought were totally fine and you know my mum was a very stern disciplinarian”. Likewise, Kelsey came to understand she was no longer as “arrogant” as others in her family as an effect of taking part in courses in the Te Ao Māori strand.

Already included in this chapter are a number of extracts that highlight the importance of dialogic affordances. Tiale talked about how it was the open discussions and the multiple views that were shared in the teacher education classroom that turned lights on for her. But importantly, Tiale noted how whenever she thought something was “concrete they would sort of give me another view”, which she called being “made to think twice”. She would take these new ways of thinking back to her centre and raise these with her colleagues. Toni’s ability to bring a “tricky situation” to the attention of her lecturers first through the weekly reflective journal or in “the whole class situation” is another example the dialogic structured into the programme. Denise too brought her issues to class as when she had her “pay thing” in her centre. The process of becoming knowledgeable involved a multiplicity of ‘voices’ as participants constituted themselves as teachers within and against various other ‘voices’ at play (Giles, 2010).

Class discussions as significant

For Denise it took time to engage in class discussions on the basis of her “learning issues”:

I think when you are in first year you are not really confident enough to bring your learning issues up or the things that are happening for you at work into the class but then as you start to learn [about?] your group a bit more and start to build that confidence you do bring personal issues and you learn to trust your group.
[Denise, Int. 1, p. 33]

Denise, who is a Cook Islander and is of a similar age to Piata, needed time to locate her voice (Jensen, Foster, & Eddy, 1997) in the pedagogic space of the teacher education classroom. This points to how some students may require extra support, notwithstanding an inclusive classroom environment, to become confident to enter the language community and to exercise agency. Denise explained why group discussions were so useful:

Because you would talk about things on topic as well as things that you might have wanted to bring up but you know it wasn’t relevant to the course and stuff. But just getting new ideas, strategies, activities, ways to deal with things. I liked a lot of that incorporated in group discussions it helped a lot. [Denise, Int. 2, p. 37]

Denise points to two areas of discussion “things on topic” (the ‘just-in-case’) and “things that you might have wanted to bring up” (the ‘just-in-time’). One of the qualities of a conversation for Davis and Sumara (1997) is that topics arise within the process of conversing. Denise conveys the sense that both students’ and lecturers’ agendas were valuable sources of professional knowledge construction.

Using a sociocultural lens, Edwards (1995) describes how novice teachers are first introduced to new concepts on the inter-mental (or social) plane and how, with targeted support, they incorporate these into practical tasks before subsequently discussing their new learning in order to internalise their understandings. Edwards likens the process as “the constant “zigzag” of action and discussion between the learning situations and reflective explication and the growing sophistication of a student’s ability to represent consequent understandings of the situation” (p. 603). This was the process as outlined by field-based participants that was structurally linked to a ‘to-ing and fro-ing’ between the classroom and the centre. Recall Toni’s comment about being able to “see or put into action the following day” the ideas that were talked about in the classroom. While there is a natural affordance for this zig-zagging within the field-based model, experience is not necessarily “a direct line to insight” (Britzman, 2003, p. 4) but requires mediation. For these participants, the growth of sophistication through Edward’s process of reflective explication appeared to be supported by classroom dialogue. Mia was adamant that the quality of her learning pivoted on being able to ask questions and have her thinking mediated:

I think you need to, to get a lot of learning out of it. You have to ask questions. For my own learning I think. I can’t think that I would have learnt as much had I not. I think it is very important even to talk about it with your peers in class that was very beneficial, we did a lot of that. Um [also?] your colleagues at work. I think it is really beneficial to ask questions. [Mia, Int. 1, p. 14]

Through dialogue, therefore, both students and lecturers were users and generators of knowledge. These discussions arguably provide participants a forum for practical reasoning (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003) as they bring the particular from practice to the intellectual ‘safety’ of the classroom where, with others, they engage with the canonical knowledge of the academy (notwithstanding Piata’s experience) and back again in a spiral of knowing (Wells, 2002) process. As Denise built up the confidence to ask her questions and to raise issues in class she:

found the benefits of doing that. People would offer their ways, their strategies [...] as well as the lecturer [...] But it helps you to understand why you’re doing it and it benefits you as well as the child, and I can see that *when I do it*. [Denise, Int. 2, p. 7]

Moreover, discussions arguably enabled field-based participants to get a sense of their developing theories of practice within the social and ostensibly collaborative learning milieu of the teacher education class—described by Geejay as the “sharing of the knowledge from the lecturers [...] and the relationships with the students”. Geejay’s

description positions lecturers and students as in a reciprocal relationship and points to how knowledge for teaching was not positioned as strictly hierachal in the process of learning to teach. Given that language is central to “carry[ing] the conceptual structure of a body of knowledge” (Edwards, 1995, p. 607) it is within classroom dialogues between lecturers and students that the latter ostensibly begin to use the language more confidently.

“It’s that whole talking you know, hashing ideas”: *Mia*

“Education is not an affair of ‘telling’ and being told, but an active and constructive process” (Dewey, 1916, cited in Beck & Kosnik, 2006, p. 9):

In fact that really was one of the strengths of the course I felt. [...] It allowed you to hash all that stuff out. It allowed you to make your own conclusions based on what you’d seen and heard and were learning. So yeah, it was really good for me. [Mia, Int. 2, p. 12]

Mia’s ability (above) to “make your own conclusions” points to the sense of agency she experienced as part of her learning process. She came to recognise and appreciate how teaching is an interpretive practice through a consideration of what was seen, heard and learned in the teacher education classroom. This took into account the knowledge for teaching that was repeatedly negotiated and reconstructed in relation to her ‘own’ teacher knowledge. Mia came to understand teacher knowledge as a ‘balancing act’:

Because I think a lot of it is from my own upbringing. I think a lot of it I have modified along the way or I have actually discarded even. I think it is a real balance between what I have learnt and a huge amount of what I do has been affected by what I learned, what I've seen, what I've read, what I've experienced from other people, so yeah but definitely a balance. I always think that who we are as people and where we come from and our journeys and that definitely effects what we do. So yeah, a balance I guess. [Mia, Int. 1, pp. 10-11]

Mia came to have a strong sense of her own theories of practice. Her positioning suggests to me that she felt legitimated to author her own professional practice knowledge. Edwards (1995) points out that, unless the two discursive constructions of knowledge in terms of teaching—the “powerful and context free” knowledge of teacher education and the “situationally constrained” knowledge of teaching practice—are brought together teachers are unlikely “to test and develop the theories carried by it in their own practices” (p. 601). Rather than a divide between the two discourses participants appeared to experience a bringing together of these knowledges within the dialogic affordances of the classroom.

“Just explain it to me”: Taking a risk

For some, key terminology was difficult to grasp. Kelsey, who, by her own admission had difficulty with some concepts gave an insight into how the class context provided a relatively supportive space for coming to know. (Note how she finally ‘gets it’ through being able to ‘see’ it in her mind’s eye):

Kelsey: I think because the first time it [pedagogy] was explained it went over my head and I didn’t want to know about it really. There were a couple of words like that. I can’t remember the others [...] oh ‘intersubjectivity’ was the other one. Oh no, that went straight over my head about three times. I just said “explain it to me”. Everyone is saying “it is not just this, this, or this” and I was like “don’t tell me what it’s not, just explain it to me”.

Kate: Did you get it in the end?

Kelsey: Yes. Because I work with under 2s so I was like I never had intersubjectivity with under 2s because I saw it as you had to verbally communicate something, [but?] if someone gave you a nonverbal and I was like “oh, that happens all the time!” I did get it in the end. [Kelsey, Int. 1, pp. 15-16]

There are many possible interpretations for Kelsey’s story, but the one I am interested in here is how the class (cohort) group was a place where Kelsey was able to say ‘I don’t understand’. She used the resources of the group to meet her needs as a learner. The affordance of connecting ideas to the ‘real’ of the centre is evidenced by Kelsey’s ability to link an explanation of ‘intersubjectivity’ that resonated with her experiences as an infant and toddler teacher. She is able to grasp the meaning of the concept saying “oh, that happens all the time”. The element of retrofitting knowledge comes to the fore with its interplay with the real of the centre. Kincheloe, Steinberg, and Villaverde (1999) argue that “higher thinking always references some lived context” (p. 12). Kelsey’s example demonstrates how as students, participants were able to ‘force’ a tight integration between their learning process and practice as teachers. This arguably supported them to ‘see’ the knowledge more clearly than if it was left as an in-the-head phenomenon. But the tight integration was also a distinct structural feature of the learning to teach process too. Keeping weekly journals was one way this was achieved.

Thinking twice; journals as a dialogic space

A pedagogic tool and practice all spoke about that supported close integration between the classroom and the centre/kōhanga was the notion of reflection. Mia particularly used the weekly reflective journals to ask questions, to raise issues and to get feedback from the course lecturer:

the lecturers were really good, because and I’d hash out a lot of those kind of issues in my journals and they always gave feedback which was really positive and you

know 'have you tried this' or you know 'is that really appropriate?' So you know it was quite reflective. [Mia, Int. 2, p. 9]

Both students and lecturers used the journals as a dialogic space to raise awareness of knowledge held tacitly (as assumptions) and to build on students' thinking. By definition reflection is 'seeing twice'; first arguably at a less conscious, or tacit, level and the second time at a more conscious, or reflective level. Toni mentioned using the dialogic structured into journals to work through a practice situation concerning an ethical dilemma. She used the weekly journal to process the issue "I sort of wrote things down, so that helped". Journals were thus used contingently when the need arose. In this manner, Edwards (1995) argues, addressing needs contingently is an important part of linking reflection to learning. Geejay, as we saw earlier, believed the system of reflective journals enabled her to critique and improve her practice. This form of dialogic engagement supported Geejay in her shift from "ignorance" to being "more knowledgeable".

Reflective journals were a compulsory part of the weekly assessment requirements. Participants, however, appeared to have an ambivalent relationship with them. Sometimes they were viewed more as an obligation, and as Mia said "they were a drag to fill out". Piata mentioned that "everyone hated journals but I was probably one of the only ones that did like them because it made you reflect on something every week and I mean, it made you think about why you were doing it".

The emphasis in the enacted curriculum on processing second thoughts through journals reflects a key premise contained in Institution B's conceptual framework; that of education as praxis. The dialogic affordances structured into the programme such as the classroom dialogues and the requirement to complete weekly journals each supported participants to become aware of how their own assumptions, values and working theories are as central to the process of becoming knowledgeable teachers as was the content of their teacher education programme. Through the conceptual framework Institution B acknowledged the dangers of reifying an individual process of reflection. In doing so they address a key criticism of the shift to reflective practice (Moore, 2004) and its attempt to overcome the problem of what constitutes the nature of knowledge for teaching and teacher education (Edwards et al., 2002). Edwards (1995) suggests the "role of the expert as task setter and contingent supporter" (p. 603) engages with the student teacher to support them shift through a process of acquiring the knowledge, to clarifying that knowledge and being able to reconstruct it within effective

performance. Edwards's concern is to support student teachers to "both translate their own experiences into frames provided by public knowledge and to acquire the more powerful language frameworks offered by an understanding of that knowledge" (p. 598). Processes of guided reflection and reflective journals were part of the kaupapa (philosophy) to help students surface their tacit knowledge, and reflection as a pedagogical tool was used to link classroom content to students' own knowledge and hence move toward understanding.

However, this was not always a comfortable process, as Mia explained:

Sometimes I found it frustrating because sometimes I wanted from the lecturer just a clear cut answer. You know? like this is what will fix that for you. At times I found that really challenging because I didn't kind of get that. But for my learning it was a really good thing that I didn't because it forced me to think further and come to my own. Like I feel really confident in my own philosophy and why I do things and my own beliefs and that now and I am totally okay with it. [Mia, Int. 1, p. 7]

Mia came to understand, and respect, the reasoning behind this pedagogic strategy:

I hung in there and you know as lecturers changed and some were even less likely to give me the answers I got more frustrated. But it was great value because it really makes you reflective and it makes you understand that there are no rights or wrongs in early childhood. I mean there are some givens I think, and some facts but, you know, we bring so much of our own lives into the job

Kate: And do you think the course allowed you to bring a lot of yourself in?

Mia: A lot, yes and always I believe it reminded us of that, you know? It always reminded us that there are so much of our own stuff, our own values, beliefs because every course reminded you of that. That was great. ... [Mia, Int. 1, p. 8]

Mia begins to see value in being 'made' to be reflective, or to think for herself, through an understanding of how our more subjective knowledge contributes to our knowledge and identities as teachers; a position she believes she didn't hold at the outset of teacher education:

Well I think what happened was that when I went into training I didn't understand that a teacher's, what a teacher's core values and beliefs are was meant to impact on their work. I think that's the thing that training did for me. It taught that every teacher brings to the service their values and beliefs. And that I think was the key for me. Because I'd always thought 'right well this is my belief and my values, but I can't put those out to children'. [Mia, Int. 2, p. 30]

Mia's realisation "we bring so much of ourselves into the job" and how "core values and beliefs are meant to impact" on a teacher's work was an epiphany for her. This constituted a turning point away from a sense of confusion:

Whereas partway through my training I really didn't have a clue why I thought that way or you know? I was thinking this has just made me confused, I shouldn't have

started but in fact I feel very confident in the whole thing now and even if it is wrong or different I can live with it now. [Mia, Int. 2, p. 7]

Like others in the group, Mia came to have a strong sense of her identity as a knowledgeable teacher. She shifted from feeling as an unqualified teacher where she “always [had] that sense of, you know, I’m not really trained in this” to feeling “very confident”.

In proposing participants engaged in dialogic encounters (conversations) it needs to be emphasised that learning can be fraught, not only because concepts can be out of reach of learner’s present understandings (Northedge, 2002), but also because there are deep investments at stake in learning (such as one’s beliefs located in socially/culturally valued discourses). Davis and Williams (2002) warn not to “romanticize or sentimentalize what learning a subject entails” (p. 266) when drawing on the notion of education as conversation given the sheer hard work that is most often involved in learning.

Integration is the key

Close integration between the teacher education programme and the education setting has come to be a hallmark of effective teacher education programmes (Beck & Kosnik, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2006a). Integration helps ameliorate the excesses of the two worlds pitfall identified by Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985), and supports the transference of knowledge for teachers to teacher knowledge. Beck and Kosnik (2006) contend that (in pre-service programmes) making practicum experiences “a constant topic of conversation in the campus courses” (p. 39) is one way to reduce the gap students perceive between course content and the school/early childhood education realities. For the field-based participants in this study the day-to-day realities of practice experienced and constructed by participants’ ‘doing’ teaching became grist for the dialogic mill that was the learning to teach process as discussed above. Arguably this requires special skills of teacher educators as pointed to by Piata’s texts.

Sidorkin (1999) considers dialogue to be an ontological concept related to being human, arguing it is “central for defining human existence, not merely a form of communication” (p. 4). He posits “the dialogue is when you suddenly relate to another human being directly and fully. Dialogue is when such a relation takes you completely out of your regular life” (pp. 17-18). Following Sidorkin, it was the dialogic and tonal quality repeatedly present in field-based research texts that interested me. Participants,

as students, engaged in an ongoing and a fluid dialogue about practice and about practice as a context for learning (Lampert & Ball, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991). This situation is akin to praxis, active meaning making in the pursuit of doing (acting) right action that was made explicit through the multiple opportunities for dialogue and thus integration of the texts of teacher education and those of the centre.

Summary

In this part of the chapter I have discussed how the structure of the programme with its emphasis on the dialogic construction of the teacher was a key aspect not just of stories participants told—but of ‘lifting the veil’ on new ways of seeing and being. Participants’ sense of accessing the knowledges of teacher education and becoming knowledgeable was a gradual revealing of those knowledges always within and against ‘the real’ of the centre with its affordance of situating knowledge, coupled with a structuring of learning conversations and dialogues in the learning to teach process. That is, it is not ‘experience’ per se (or what is often called practice) that makes this field-based model seem to ‘work’ for newly qualified teachers. This takes us back to Giovacco-Johnson’s (2005) concern about the teachers in her study (see chapter 3) needing more practicum in order to feel better prepared. While more experience may have given the special education teachers more familiarity with the field, it arguably won’t help them to be more prepared for action as beginning teachers (Britzman, 2003; Cohen, 1998). The answer (or key) to the troublesome puzzle (Cohen, 1998) of experience in teacher education appears to be found in the quality of dialogic learning relationships whereby participants’ experience of ‘the real’ and the knowledge for teachers come together in an ongoing search for meaning.

In the last part of the chapter I discuss how *being confident* was a key storyline and positioning of all field-based participants by the end of their teacher education. Despite participants’ particular project and journey over the 3 years of teacher education all said they had arrived at the same point; feeling/being confident. I contend therefore being/feeling confident is a “discursive counterpart” (Sfrad & Prusak, 2005) to the lived experience of being prepared through the field-based programme.

Part IV: Feeling confident: joining the club

I think I’m a lot more confident from the first year [of teacher education]. I didn’t even, when they first said come on board as a staff member I just got a big shock cause I thought why do they want me cause I’m really, really, shy and I didn’t see

why they would want me as a teacher there since you have to be right in there all the time and make decisions and you know, talk with parents and all those kinds of things, yeah. But, I can say now that I'm, you know, I'm really confident and I know what I'm doing, I know why I'm doing it, and I know how to express that to other people, like other staff members or parents. [Piata, Int. 1, p. 21]

Despite feeling and being positioned as a foreigner in the teacher education classroom until her third year of the programme Piata (above) completed teacher education feeling “really confident”. By knowing the ‘what’ and ‘why’ of her teaching practices and importantly by opening this up to others she graduated with a sense of her own social and linguistic competence. This sense of confidence is manifested through increased participation in her community of practice, having shifted from its periphery to its centre. Concomitantly she has become an ‘insider’ not only within her staff group but to the wider discourse community of early childhood education. She has become a member of the teaching profession and ‘joined the club’:

I don’t know whether it’s just that I’m fussy or that I think, it’s not that I think I’m better because I’ve trained but you know, there’s certain things that I know because I have trained, about children’s development and things that [...] they [unqualified kaiako] don’t do that I think, Oh Man! You know it really bugs me sometimes.

Kate : Mm, what’s an example?

Piata: Oh, like leaving children unsupervised, when it’s in the regulations and that as well, yes, but you know what I mean, [...] like not interacting with the little children as much as other children, and not following the programme. And see, because I write the programme I find it hard that they don’t follow the programme, you know -if you are trying to focus on specific behaviour, tasks and things. Like, if they [children] are writing with just pen and pencils that day and then I will go and ask them [the relievers] to clean up and that, and they haven’t done any of that, they’ve let the kids go doing other [things?], which I suppose you’ve gotta think, well at least they were doing something, but then it wasn’t what I planned. [Piata, Int. 2, p. 9]

Piata reveals her confidence and simultaneously provides an insight into aspects of the new interpretive veil through which she constitutes herself. She positions her teacher-self as knowing how to ‘read’ the situation, seeing it differently now as a qualified teacher. In contrast to relievers, Piata knows about child development, planning for children’s development and how to follow through with this. She has an understanding of official knowledge such as the early childhood regulations and the requirement for having children well supervised at all times. As an effect of being a qualified teacher she explained “you just know how you’re supposed to act and how you are supposed to be interacting with the children and things”. Through knowing how to act Piata has

come to ‘see’ her teacher self/identity through different, more confident eyes than when she began teacher education. Importantly for Piata, her knowledge is embodied.

Each field-based participant experienced feeling confident. Like Denise (below), most expressed this as a function of having become knowledgeable:

In terms of my course, like I’ve said lot of times before, its established a new found confidence in me and I’m just comfortable to do with I want to do in the centre as well as you know, making sure it’s okay with everybody else. I just really put that down to knowing more about it, becoming more knowledgeable which in turn contributes to your confidence cos you know what you are talking about now and you just know why you are doing things now. [Denise, Int. 2, p. 36]

Due to having ‘before’ and ‘after’ experiences of themselves as teachers enabled participants to track their preparedness journey. Toni’s *raison d’être* for undertaking teacher education was she desired the confidence she saw in her qualified colleagues. Whilst (jokingly) saying she “only just went for the piece of paper!” she added “I didn’t actually think I was going to learn heaps”. For participants the notion of ‘learning heaps’ was equated with feeling and being knowledgeable. But as we saw in Chapter 5, on completion of her programme Toni felt she had “more meaning” to herself as a qualified teacher. Toni’s choice of words is significant; her learning is not viewed as acquiring more knowledge, but rather as having “more meaning”. I interpret Toni to be saying that she can *engage* with a more complex world than she did prior to teacher education because she has different, more sophisticated (and more legitimate) ways of representing this world. This in turn gives rise to a sense of confidence. This was expressed by Tiale as having “felt my sense of confidence was growing with everything I learned”. Because the act of teaching “dwells primarily in knowledge as concrete and particular” (Korthagen, 2001, p. 334) it is my contention that affordance to blur boundaries between the traditional dichotomy of theory and practice led to feelings of confidence—it was linked to the ability to use the knowledge in their work. Not to apply theory to practice but of knowing practice. I will return to this point shortly.

Most often expressions of confidence were in relation to two inter-related phenomena; being/feeling articulate and being/feeling legitimated, or an amalgam of these phenomena.

Being/feeling articulate

I understand why I am doing it and I have a confidence as to why I am doing it. It’s more about my own confidence level, I can articulate why I do it. I don’t think I had that before [Mia, Int. 2, p. 24]

...if there’s going to be a change in the programme or something and I have an opinion on it. In the past I would have just taken on what our um, head teacher’s

ideas about it [...] but now I feel confident I can actually have an opinion and share that opinion. [Tiale, Int. 2, p. 36]]

...confidence because you know what you are talking about now and you know why you are doing things. [Denise, Int. 2, p. 36]

I'm more confident and professional [...] [professional is] knowing what I am talking about, being able to give advice and know that it will work or know that it is going to help. [Kelsey, Int. 1, p. 34]

I feel confident, I have confidence in working with children, I've got confidence in working with colleagues, with parents, with management [...] and because the course gives you that confidence to approach, you know, all people and that belief that you do know something and that you are worth it then yeah-I am ready. [Toni, Int. 1, p. 41]

Having the confidence to take part in professional discussions with centre colleagues, with children's parents, and others in their communities of practice was expressed by all. These were often linked to comments that indicated feelings of being legitimated as fully qualified teachers.

Being/feeling legitimate

That sense of confidence is definitely knowing that I am now a qualified teacher and that I do have some standing. [Geejay, Int. 2, p. 5]

I think amongst my other qualified peers I feel [on] that level with them now. [Tiale, Int. 2, p. 3]

I feel that I am a vital member of the team [Geejay, Int. 1, p. 67]

I seem to be the one with the knowledge [in the teaming team] [Toni, Int. 2, p. 5]

For most, being legitimate was expressed as having a strong sense of the stocks of formal knowledge and having been introduced to the traditions and practices of the field. Geejay believed this knowledge was "very different from that mother thing, it is a more concrete, this is what the experts say, this is what research has told us". Taking up the identity as a professional meant as Geejay said, "I don't see it as an expert but with more authority". She has appropriated a more conceptually abstract and technical language than she had prior to teacher education which meant "I have a really good foundation and I am ready to build on that foundation and I am ready to go forward, and I am going forward, and my voice is being heard and I feel that I am now a vital member of the [teaching] team". Participants became knowledgeable in the codes required to function effectively as a teacher and to participate more centrally in centre life. The ability to participate, I suggest, was an effect not just of being knowledgeable, articulate, and/or legitimate but significantly because their knowledge and understandings are held in the form of knowing practice (Kemmis, 2005).

Knowing practice

Underlying much of what has already been expressed throughout this chapter concerns the relationship between theory and practice in teacher education. Earlier I argued that field-based participants, as students, used their knowledge of the day-to-day reality as a significant point of engagement with the knowledge/discourses of teacher education through forcing a tight integration between what they were learning about in class and their experiences as ‘teachers’. At the heart of their learning to teach process was the affordances of being able to “construct knowledge in the context of practice” (Lampert & Ball, 1998, p. 38). Importantly, however, the centre is not the only context of practice. The field-based teacher education classroom provided a forum for students to come together to discuss and theorise practice under the guidance of (mostly) a trusted “nonauthoritarian” (Beck & Kosnik, 2006, p. 24) lecturer—a more experienced ‘other’. Given how language is central to “carry[ing] the conceptual structure of a body of knowledge” (Edwards, 1995, p. 607) the class context arguably enabled field-based students a site for using and developing a language of practice through structured and supportive dialogues where lecturers (and no doubt classmates) act as discourse guides (Northedge, 2002).

Segall (2002) maintains “when theory and pedagogy are not made to speak to each other in a dialectical fashion, theory becomes no more than a body of (someone else’s) knowledge” (p. 157). For the participants, it is this sense of being able to use the legitimate or official knowledge of teacher education to theorise their practice, and in the classroom to practice theorising that I contend contributed to feelings of confidence. Korthagen (2001) argues that “teachers’ professional development is not so much grounded in knowing more, but in perceiving more in the practical contexts in which one has to teach” (p. 71). From this perspective, coming to understand knowledge for teaching can be viewed as a relational endeavour inextricably linked to the practices of teachers and to the messy lived world of participants.

Kemmis (2005), in his examination of professional practice knowledge, argues for a reconceptualisation of this knowledge as ‘knowing practice’. His argument turns on the notion that professional knowledge is both a discursive and embodied, or performative phenomenon. As such, it is broader than that which exists ‘in the heads’ of teachers (or teacher educators). Drawing together a number of threads of thinking about teacher

knowledge and reasoning, Kemmis (2005) suggests that the term ‘knowing practice’ captures two important senses:

the sense in which a person comes to know what a particular kind of practice is, and in the sense of *being* ‘knowing’, which means being aware and self aware about how things are – a sense that one knows what one is doing when one engages in practice, and reflexively becomes more knowing as one continues to practice. (pp. 407-408, italics in original)

One of the key qualities of knowing practice is the search for saliences (Kemmis, 2005). This is a search for what makes a situation what it is, and what it can be made to be, by drawing on a host of understandings that reflexively coalesce through a knowing practice. In the texts of field-based participants I identified this search for salience. Consider, for example, Toni’s experience of working in partnership with parents:

[I’m] being more confident and sharing more, sharing more than just “had a good day”. I think because I am more confident in sharing, parents have been able to communicate back. So I think it is a two-way thing so even though their second child is coming through the centre and even though I have known them through that first child the relationship is a lot more, I don’t know, um meaningful for both parties with the second child, yeah, because I have got that learning, yeah. [Toni, Int. 1, p. 35]

I suggest Toni’s ability to understand how her relationship with these parents “is a two-way thing” goes beyond simply having become more acquainted with the parents in question but because she has developed a sense of salience about what she might share with parents and how she might share this. Her knowledge for teaching fuses with her developing teacher knowledge. This makes the relationship more “meaningful”. In this example as in numerous others in the research texts there is a sense of reciprocity that goes beyond the linearity of theory into practice. I suggest it was a sense of knowing practice that gave rise to feelings of confidence rather than the ability to theorise practice. It appeared to be the constant interplay of figure and ground, between the class sessions (where they ‘lifted the veil’) and the ‘reality’, or their experiences of the centre (the ‘discourse of the real’) that led to participants’ ability to develop salience.

Conclusion

Field-based participants described the process of learning to teach as a progressive revealing of the knowledge for teaching as codified within the programme of Institution B. This took place through the continual negotiation and renegotiation of meaning both in relation to this knowledge and to participants’ day-to-day experiences within their centres. Participants talked about taking the centre into the teacher education classroom

and engaging with it; a kind of forward and backward movement involving the everyday knowledge of the centre and the more formal, or “form-alized (to contain it, pour into forms)” (Lave, 1993, p. 23) knowledge of the teacher education programme. It is my contention it was the interplay between ‘the real’ of the centre and the dialogic nature of the teacher education programme that substantially contributed to participants becoming and thus ‘*being* knowledgeable.’

The field-based programme was inclined toward a participatory process rather than a content pedagogy (Mulcahy, 2006). Incorporating features of problem-based pedagogy, the programme supported students to explore ‘real’ questions (Northedge, 2002)—those of their own and those of the planned curriculum. Participants were encouraged to draw on their experience as a significant point of engagement with the knowledge/discourses of teacher education (including the discourse of the reflective practitioner). As an effect, participants embodied their knowledge through praxis thus enabling them to make sense of the ways in which teacher education sought to discursively construct them, and they in turn desired to construct themselves. The traditional hierarchy between theoretical and practical knowledge, so often a structural reality of higher education, did not prevail in their stories. Importantly, it appeared that practice and the knowledge inherent within it (practical knowledge) was not positioned as inferior to theoretical knowledge (Hager & Hyland, 2003).

Through the possibilities for active and agentic engagement in the learning to teach process participants described how they came to ‘see’; to know and understand the familiar differently. I have argued that the abundance of ‘seeing’ data (or use of visual metaphoricity) in participants’ accounts was, in effect, accounts of understanding the knowledge of teacher education. What was ‘seen’ was first illuminated (unveiled) in class and is further re-cognised in practice. This is in part supported by Eraut’s (1994 cited in Atkinson & Claxton, 2000) contention that there needs to be as small a possible time-gap between learning procedural knowledge and the use of that knowledge in practice in order to be most effective.

It is my contention what was ‘seen’ was what they were discursively ‘shown’. Knowledge associated with the learning and development and professional practice strands was prominent in the research texts. Having said that, participants were highly receptive to ideas in the remaining two strands, early childhood context and Te Ao Māori, although with less of a sense of understanding associated with them, as evidenced by Piata’s texts of experience. I suggest however, whilst their ‘view’ of

teaching and being a teacher felt new to them, rather than being a new view all have largely joined the existing discourse/discursive community of early childhood education. Importantly, participants have appropriated ways of thinking as teachers (deliberative reasoning, reflective thinking) and interacting (negotiating meaning and engaging in dialogue) that supports them to develop salience and to be active members of a profession based on teaching in groups.

As previously established in Chapter 5 field-based participants, like their pre-service counterparts, identified the phenomenon of preparedness as '*being* knowledgeable'. This is potently exemplified by Geejay's comment that she had been transformed by teacher education from a prior state of "ignorance" to being "more knowledgeable": a process whereby formerly she called herself a "caregiver", to feeling able to take up the title and identity of 'teacher'. Feelings of being legitimated through teacher education were widespread in the group.

As with pre-service participants, at the heart of field-based texts were different degrees of tension concerning the nature of knowledge, about coming to know and *being* knowers. For most, the (official) knowledge of teaching was largely experienced as 'close at hand'. While the knowledge for teachers was both codified and reified in course structures, it was significantly able to be engaged with through active participation. In this sense, the view of knowledge underpinning the curriculum (as experienced) was socially constructed. Socio-cultural theories posit a distributed, across social and historical contexts, view of learning whereby mind is not located solely within the individual but grows out of peoples' engagement in joint activity with shared tools. In this context, field-based participants came to understand, albeit tentatively for some, how teaching as an interpretive practice requires teachers to locate themselves mindfully within the landscape of knowledge for teaching, yet be continually open to the partiality and the social and politically constructed nature of all knowledge, including the local and situated knowledge of their own and others' practice.

At an implicit level this chapter has addressed the question of 'what does it mean to 'be prepared' when you are already teaching?' Cohen (1998) argues that "experience can be the enemy of new knowledge and changed practices" (pp. 174-175). I suggest, however, that the dialogic nature of the learning to teach process whereby as students participants were structurally bound to engage in teaching as an interpretive practice, challenged the authority of experience they brought to learning teaching. Although in this study participants' knowledge was evidenced through talk and not in actual

teaching practice, there is, however, ample data suggesting that changed practices were an effect of ‘lifting the veil’ and coming to see new or different horizons as qualified teachers.

In the concluding chapter I bring the stories of field-based and pre-service participants back together again and discuss how the findings of this thesis can be linked to the nature of knowledge for teaching.

Chapter 8:

Bodies of knowledge

Overview

I began this study by inviting participants into the problem space with the intention of seeing where this pointed. My primary aim was to generate a rich description of ‘preparedness’ as the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 2002). Since then I have maintained a sustained focus on the central research problem: ‘How do students/newly qualified teachers make sense of their preparedness for teaching?’ My methodological commitment and approach was to elicit stories of the lived experience of ‘being prepared’ whereby lived experience “hints at a process whereby we attribute meaning to what happens to us” (Brodkey, 1987 cited in Britzman, 2003, p. 32).

In a study such as this the search for meaning is not limited to participants, this has also been my role and responsibility as researcher (Denzin, 2001). This took place by first being in a conversational relationship with participants to elicit accounts of ‘being prepared’, and from there to engage in a hermeneutic search for meaning within, and beyond, the original texts. This was made possible because of my researcher positioning as a gatherer of stories, including those within the research literature. This positioning does not give me a privileged position from where I can tell ‘the truth’ of the matter, but it does allow me to be an “informed reader” (Denzin, 2001, p. 67) and thus to tell the story of this thesis. This story seeks to “preserve the substantive realities of lived experience without sacrificing the important gains that have been made in understanding their representational practices” (Gubrium & Holstein, 1997, p. 113).

I began this study with the aim of elucidating the phenomenon of preparedness. Subsequently however, I identified an equally, and possibly more significant data story in terms of our developing knowledge and understandings about early childhood teacher education and the process of learning teaching. Through the hermeneutic interpretive process I came to understand the story of this thesis to be centrally concerned with how teacher education students desire to understand their teacher selves and identities

through embodying, or practicing, the knowledge of the academy. Analytically I termed this storyline ‘the discourse of the real’. I have argued that it was through this discourse participants attempted to make sense of how the learning to teach process sought to discursively construct them, and they, in turn, attempted to construct themselves as knowledge/able teachers.

Elbaz (1991) maintains “if the story achieves a unity or wholeness, it is because the teller has done so, not because unity has been found to inhere in the stuff itself. Unity is something we seek to accomplish in our lives” (p. 5). A sense of unity is reflected not only in my use of the discourse of the real, but in the two key themes of ‘being’ and ‘becoming knowledgeable’ that were consistently to the fore across the research texts. It was the phenomenological quality of these stories as a search for meaning that I have been concerned to convey. As such, they are important methodologically.

I largely worked with the research texts dialogically as each set provided counterpoints to the ‘Other’. For example, I wondered—‘how did field-based texts come to be so imbued with accounts of visual metaphoricity?’, what could this point to and what might this suggest about pre-service texts? Simultaneously I also questioned ‘how was it that pre-service texts came to be riven with the traditional dichotomies of teacher education, yet curiously absent in field-based ones?’ What could this be pointing to? It was through this dialogical encounter that I came to see the significance of the contrasting data stories of becoming knowledgeable; framed by the metaphorical constructs of ‘cracking the code’ and ‘lifting the veil’. While other research data, such as the interviews with programme directors were important sources of information and lent support to the thesis argument, their explicit presence in this thesis has been minimal as I have sought to foreground the stories of newly qualified teacher participants.

It is not my intention that each of the metaphors so deeply sediment meanings that they become ‘the story’ of this thesis. Within each data set is contradiction and complexity as is now understood through the adoption of poststructural sensibilities to understanding the ‘other’. The story of this thesis concerns the desire of early childhood teacher education students to embody the formal knowledge for teaching. This is a discursive shift of knowledge from ‘in the head’ to the body in order that this becomes practice knowledge (Kemmis, 2005)—hence the title of this thesis.

In this chapter I weave these stories back together again, and in doing so suggest the significance of this thesis is in clarifying the conditions for teacher education students to

understand the knowledge for teaching and thus become “self authoring members of communities of practice” (Edwards et al., 2002, p. 106). It is my contention that, in order to do so, teacher educators place equal attention on (formal) knowledge for teaching *and* on how students construct their teacher knowledge. Accordingly, this thesis suggests that the key to teacher education students’ sense of preparedness lies within the design of teacher education programmes and how these conceptualise and articulate the nature of knowledge (and knowing) for teaching.

Currently there are a number of promising lines of flight taking part in the broader teacher education research community that focus on pedagogies of practice in order to address the kinds of issues this thesis has raised. The following is a discussion of these points. First, however, I summarise the key claims of the thesis.

Part 1: Clarifying the conditions for understanding the knowledge of teacher education

Summary of key claims

So what does this thesis say about ‘being prepared’ as an early childhood teacher in this time and in this place? From newly qualified teachers’ perspectives, most explicitly stated their sense of preparedness was about ‘being knowledgeable’. This positioning is consistent with one of the most prominent constructions of the teacher evidenced in early childhood conceptual frameworks (see Chapter 2) and more specifically those of the two institutions at the heart of this study. Alongside an expectation of being introduced to, and becoming familiar with an accumulated store of disciplinary knowledge, both groups of participants expressed a strong sense of wanting to hold that knowledge not simply ‘in their heads’, but an embodied and re-constructed phenomenon. Following Belenky et al. (1986), who assert there is a an important distinction between ‘knowledge’ and ‘understanding’, I have argued that the need to embody knowledge within and against the ‘real’ of the centre and the propensity to talk about what they knew in relational terms, rather than as a ‘knowing that’ way of talking, was consistent with desiring, and having gained, a sense of understanding some or much institutional or formal knowledge.

Whilst participants in this study were pleased with the store of knowledge they acquired, it was knowledge as a relational phenomenon to which they accorded greatest value. This was a phenomenological sense of ‘being knowledgeable’ whereby the

abstract theoretical mode of knowing is not seen as dominant over the mode of knowing in lived experience (Donnelly, 2006). This sense of knowing was desired by all, although empirically it was more prominent within field-based texts than it was within pre-service ones. A sense of ‘being knowledgeable’ took place through the process that I have termed ‘becoming knowledgeable’.

Each group largely experienced the process of becoming knowledgeable differently. For pre-service participants there was a steady, and at times, overwhelming sense of acquiring ‘the knowledge’ at the expense of knowing ‘what to do with it’. As it turned out, from most participants’ perspectives it all ‘came together’ in the final year of the programme through the pedagogic affordances structured into a particular course. This course provided the necessary capstone in their process of becoming knowledgeable. Field-based participants, on the other hand, experienced a more gradual accumulation of knowledge for teaching and in the process came to ‘see’ their work differently. I have suggested that the structural and pedagogic affordances of close proximity between the teacher education classroom and the centre supported the ability to commute between these sites both physically and dialogically, which contributed to the development of their teacher knowledge.

In becoming knowledgeable, participants in both groups experienced a discursive shift from holding knowledge as object (store) to understanding knowledge as relational (Gergen, 2009) or knowledge-as-tool (Grossman et al., 1999; Smagorinsky, Cook, & Johnson, 2003) and practice (Kemmis, 2005). This shift could be seen at the level of the subject, the intersubjective and the institutional. It was in this shift that I recognised the substantive story of this thesis. That is, how newly qualified teachers became knowledgeable.

Whilst the various knowledges held were remarkably similar across both groups of newly qualified teachers, I have argued that the process of accessing and acquiring the knowledge was aligned to the structural form of each institution. From a phenomenological perspective or “the logic of the world as experienced” (Brown & Heggs, 2005, p. 293), each institution positioned students differently in terms of their relationship to knowledge. For pre-service participants, I have described how the experience of accessing the knowledge of teacher education could be likened metaphorically to a form of code-cracking. For field-based participants there was a sense of seeing (or knowing) the familiar differently through meanings that were obscured from view while they remained unqualified.

The constructs of ‘cracking the code’ and ‘lifting the veil’ point to the assumptions and theory of knowledge underpinning the curriculum of each institution as experienced and described by newly qualified teachers. Pre-service participants described a situation whereby they moved through a process from abstraction to concretisation. Field-based texts pointed to a spiral process (Wells, 2002) whereby much of the curriculum of teacher education included high levels of possibility for addressing ‘real’ questions within a collective milieu of meaning-making. These two institutional settings represent discursively different ways of coming to know. For pre-service participants I have broadly described the theory of knowledge as consistent with constructivist accounts and for field-based with social constructivist accounts. While both accounts consider knowledge as socially constructed, the first places importance on the cognising individual to make meaning whereas the later places substantial emphasis on the social as the important site for making meaning. These theories of knowledge formed the basis of the lived pedagogy of each teacher education programme.

The discourse of the real: making sense of knowledge

In Chapter 4 I outlined how I came to understand the key story of this thesis through identifying the discourse of the real. Briefly, I noticed how, when exemplifying something important about being a teacher, newly qualified teachers invariably drew on instances where their accounts shifted beyond knowing as cognised, to knowing as an embodied and a re-cognised moment. In these moments participants situated their knowledge in the particular, in or against the ‘realities’ of being a teacher. I called this talk ‘accessing the discourse of the real’. It is my contention that both sets of participants accessed this discourse for a similar purpose: to make deeper sense of the knowledges of their teacher education programmes and to actively construct their teacher identities.

Using Snook’s (1993, 2000) argument about the different conceptualisations of teaching as a ‘practical craft’ or as a ‘learned profession’, participants’ access of the discourse of the real was very much about the latter. Research texts pointed to the desire to be someone who:

...is not a maverick with a nose for the unusual, who is indifferent to the body of general knowledge codified in rules, formulae, and procedures (without familiarity of these how could she or he even recognize the atypicality of the present instance?). To the contrary, a person of judgment is a keen student of the general stock of knowledge, all the better to find a fit ... between it and the particular case.

The adeptness of the person of judgment, then, lies neither in a knowledge of the general as such nor in an entirely unprincipled dealing with particulars. Rather, it lies precisely in the mediation between the general and the particular, in bringing both into illuminating connection with each other. This requires perceptiveness in one's reading of particular situations as much as flexibility in one's mode of "possessing" and "applying" the general knowledge. (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003, p. 198)

Participants across both groups were 'driven' to understand the relationship between the general and the particular and to become a "person of judgment" (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003, p. 198). In Edwards et al.'s (2002) terms this equates with becoming a self-authoring member of a community of practice. It seemed to me that participants, because they knew teaching to be a situated, relational practice, desired to locate the more generalised knowledge for teaching within contexts in which it was to be brought into service (the real), in order to understand teaching and being teachers. Elsewhere (Ord, 2007), I have suggested how "this discourse is not the object of their sense making, it is employed in order to make sense" (p. 9) of the knowledges of teacher education.

The ability to locate the knowledge for teachers in 'the real' of teaching is a structural reality of field-based programmes. However, it was the way in which this knowledge of 'the real' was used to assiduously engage in the formal learning process that enabled these participants to see differently (Edwards, 2005) and thus become knowledgeable. This finding in turn threw light on pre-service participants' desire for practice knowledge in order to 'crack the code'. The metaphoric construction of 'cracking the code', I suggest, pointed to how pre-service participants were caught up within the long standing knowledge problem in teacher education.

It was through the discourse of the real I noted how most pre-service participants bifurcated the learning to teach process into 'theory' and 'practice' (including the structure of their programme), more often privileging practice, and knowledge of practice, over what they termed 'theory'. I came to interpret their desire for more practice knowledge as a search for meaning and for identification with the knowledges of the field of early childhood education; not as a rejection of formal knowledge.

At the heart of this thesis is a tension about the nature of knowledge for teaching. 'Becoming' and 'being knowledgeable' were fundamentally experienced as a knowledge problem: expressed by Nuttal (2003) as "the nature of human knowledge and how is it accumulated" (p. 31). In the next part of the chapter I confront the fundamental paradox in newly qualified teacher accounts: that the goal and signifier of

membership of the teaching profession is to be knowledgeable, yet when participants spoke about the experience of ‘being prepared’ it was largely of ‘becoming knowledgeable’. I suggest this paradox is situated in discourses about how teacher education students are asked to come to know teaching as embedded in the pedagogy of teacher education. These two themes, the knowledge problem and the pedagogy of teacher education, provide the focus for the remainder of this chapter. In doing so I place the experiences and sense-making of newly qualified teachers back into the wider sociopolitical world of teacher education and the production of knowledge/able teachers.

Part 2: The knowledge problem

The nature of knowledge for learning teaching

What is the kind of knowledge needed for learning teaching? My interpretation of the data suggests this knowledge is relational and embodied. It is knowledge that “does not rest in contemplation but becomes clarified in action” (Hollingsworth, Dybdahl, & Minarik, 1993, p. 10). For participants this is a form of knowing in practice where “practice serves as the worldly experience through which a concept derives its grounding, coherence, and meaning” (Smagorinsky et al., 2003, p. 1408).

Typically, the nature of knowledge for learning teaching has largely been represented by the theory/practice dichotomy, whereby teacher education supplies the formal knowledge and the student applies it to their practice. This is associated with the “historically dominant “application of theory” model of preservice teacher education” (Zeichner, 2010, p. 90). This use of theory to practice model is widely disputed in the research literature. (As it has been considered by successive generations of teacher education students as contributing to their difficulties with learning teaching.) Lampert (2010) asserts that the problem between theory and practice is as old as teacher education itself. She argues this problem has been fuelled by the assumption that “theory and practice are different from each other and that in the organization of learning teaching, that there is a gap to be bridged” (p. 31). Lampert’s argument rests on the assertion that teaching is relational work, whether it is in relations with children, with parents, with colleagues, or with subject matter. Thus teaching is carried out in “particular moments of interaction” (p. 22). Knowledge is therefore located within practices in a dynamic manner and not something to be applied to practice. When

notions of theory and practice are used in teacher education they are used more often than not to signify a dichotomy linked with the Cartesian separation between mind and body (Lampert, Beasley, Ghousseini, Kazemi, & Franke, 2010). For Edwards (2000) the theory (research knowledge) to practice story has set up “false expectations” (p. 185) about the relationship between the two. This false expectation was evidenced in research texts.

Theory to practice in research texts

The theory to practice conceptualisation of learning to teach was identifiable most notably within pre-service texts. With the exception of Piata, talk about ‘theory’ and ‘practice’ was absent in field-based texts.

Rather than interpreting this talk as the theory to practice problem as such, I came to interpret it as the desire for a shift from ‘knowing’ to ‘understanding’. Newly qualified teachers desired to understand the knowledge for teaching where understanding was expressed in terms of a practical accomplishment, which took place in the social sphere. To do this required an interpretive context, the possibilities for which did not appear as freely available to pre-service participants as they were for field-based ones. It is my contention that the milieu all participants desired to ground their interpretations in, and against, was ‘the real’ of the early childhood setting. By doing so, newly qualified teachers were able to develop a sense of understanding and to actively construct their teacher identities.

Until grounded in the real, knowledge for teaching was largely ‘academic’ in that the knowledge object was very often removed from a sense of personal acquaintance (Belenky et al., 1986). In this sense, pre-service participants were more likely to experience the theory to practice problem—a gap between their knowledge and a sense of understanding. I suggest that in the absence of an alternative discourse to speak through, pre-service participants, in particular, described their need to come to understand the knowledge in terms of theory and practice. While on the surface this may be interpreted as a rejection of ‘theory’ in favour of ‘practice’, my reading of the research texts suggested an alternative interpretation. There is ample evidence in both sets of data that pointed to an embrace of the knowledge of the academy. What was at issue, however, was how this knowledge related to their teacher selves and the identities they wished to construct. The process of identification with knowledges for teaching required an embodied experience. Recall Jacinta’s plea “I know it all but where do I get to practice it?”

It was the field-based texts that shed light on this situation by showing how, when boundaries between theory and practice are blurred, where ‘practice’ describes situations in which the theoretical or formal knowledge “meets people’s lives” (Kemmis, 2005, p. 413), teacher education students begin to develop what Kemmis terms “knowing practice” (p. 421). This is “a form of practice that is alert to the ways in which knowledge and theory develop in and through practice” (p. 421). According to Kemmis what is important is that practice itself is not considered as neutral or inert. The world of human activity is discursive, conflicted, richer than most theory or formal knowledge can allow for simply because it cannot reckon with the way in which the learner’s subjectivity comes to the fore when she/he begins to ‘apply’ her/his knowledge. In this study, participants did not consider practice knowledge as stripped of formal knowledge but desired opportunities to put formal knowledge to the ‘test’ in situations of practice (Edwards, 1995). This is linked to my earlier claim that participants wanted to understand the relationship between the general and the particular, and thus a desire to situate their knowledge in the complexity of early childhood settings.

Lenz Taguchi (2007) asserts that, in the theory to practice model of teacher education, “theory is supposed to be supplied to practice. But practice is already theoretical” (p. 278). For example, recall Beatrix, a pre-service participant, who wasn’t sure “how much any theory can really prepare you for the real life when it’s somebody’s beloved child and you know, it’s a real life thing”. I have interpreted Beatrix as saying there are certain situations where theory does not help. I suggest she is right if by this she, and others, mean there is not a linear relationship from theory to practice. What Beatrix confronted in this moment was herself and the knowledge of teacher education presaged into ‘meeting people’s lives’ (Kemmis, 2005) as they enact it through an inevitable subjectivity. Arguably, ‘real life’ subjective encounters form the substance of teaching in early childhood education, and are central both to the role and the identity of the early childhood teacher. How we come to understand the place our subjectivity plays in our teacher knowledge is vitally important. This situation provided Beatrix with an interpretive context in which arguably she is able to begin to understand practice as theoretical. Yet Beatrix (understandably) considered this situation as a failure of ‘the theory’, something she could not have reckoned with outside of a situation that afforded the surfacing of her personal histories and assumptions she brought to that moment. Beatrix admits “they [teacher educators] do emphasise it’s a lot

of hard work” and how in class she recognised herself as “think[ing] ‘oh yet I get that’, but when it’s there in front of you it’s a different matter”. In the (practice) moment Beatrix privileges commonsense knowledge over the so-called ‘theoretical’, believing it to be a choice between one or other of the polarised pair of theory/practice (Cook-Sather, 2002).

In one sense, Beatrix’s experience illustrates Kennedy’s (1999) problem of enactment. Unless teacher education students have opportunities to enact and thus situate knowledge for teaching it remains largely unformulated and ‘in their heads’. This is not to advocate an unmediated learning from experience (Ball & Cohen, 1999). One needs careful dialogic support to embed complex educational ideas (Edwards, 1995) such as implementing a pedagogy of partnership. But it is also a problem of understanding how all practice, as I have said previously, is always already theoretical. The common-sense is as theoretical as is formal knowledge, and formal knowledge is as interpretive as common-sense. As an aside, this issue is not to be personalised to Beatrix. Not all field-based participants had been sufficiently inoculated (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000) against this slippage either. Kelsey (a field-based participant) for example, considered her ‘personality’ to be more significant in forming her teaching identity than much of what she learned in teacher education.

Britzman (2000) suggests that teacher educators have not given sufficient attention to “what makes understanding so difficult” (p. 200). We need to understand how all knowledge is discursive and to understand the role our subjectivity plays in both constructing and constituting our teacher knowledge. In addition, Britzman raises important questions about not understanding: “one must be interested in times when meaning breaks down, resists new understandings, and delays itself. In other words, learning also proceeds in fits and starts, through misunderstanding and surprise, and by detours” (Britzman, 2000, p. 17). Learning is not easy work (Davis & Williams, 2002). It involves uncertainty and evolving thought is tentative. Research texts suggest that learning teaching requires attention to self-work and the ability to think twice.

Thinking twice

Present in field-based texts was continual reference to the ability to retrofit the knowledge for teaching to pre-existing knowledge and practices, of ‘seeing’ the knowledge through the teacher education classroom and/or the centre, and structured

opportunities to engage in disciplinary conversations (Applebee, 1996). The self-work (Mulcahy, 2006) of constructing teacher identities through subjective engagement is a public and professionally legitimate learning process, as is the possibility to engage in second thoughts, or thinking twice (Britzman, 2003) in the field-based classroom. Furthermore, field-based participants appeared to ‘demand’ the content of teacher education programmes not be severed from contexts of use. Moreover, slippage into “an exclusively cognitive domain” (Ball & Forzani, 2009, p. 503) by their teacher educators was clearly questioned by those in the class who wanted their learning to be made relevant, to address’ real’ problems of practice. Arguably each of these situations afforded opportunities whereby teacher educators (and class colleagues) could openly attend to the way in which student participants constructed the reality of teaching, and therefore their teacher knowledge.

As we saw earlier, for Kemmis (2005) ‘knowing practice’ involves the development of salience—the ability to bring all forms of knowledge including objectivist and subjectivist (or life knowledges) to bear on professional judgment. In this respect, Kemmis promotes the use of a contextualist knowledge base (Edwards et al., 2002) for teaching. Teacher education classroom conversations and dialogue are a forum for the honing of salience and the development of a contextualist knowledge base. In field-based classes students had a multitude of shared referents around which to engage dialogically and to avoid conversations becoming centrifugal (Lampert & Ball, 1998). Arguably pre-service participants’ call for more practice was also a call for experiential knowledge in order to provide similar shared referents on which to base dialogic relationships and the affordance to think twice.

Penlington (2008) has put forward a theoretical rationale for how dialogue can act as a context and catalyst for teacher learning. This is based in part on the Vygotskian notion of internalisation. Penlington argues that the social realm in which dialogue takes place affords opportunities for engaging with others where new ideas are encountered and existing knowledge and assumptions are able to be surfaced and reframed. Additionally, the tool of pedagogical or practical reasoning is also learned and engaged with through such dialogic encounters. Penlington argues it is practical reasoning that underpins teaching practice. Like Kemmis (2005), she suggests practical reasoning involves “a variety of subjective and objective determinants figure into a teacher’s practice, some of which operate at a conscious level, while others work to shape practice more subliminally” (p. 1306). Those that work at a subliminal level can be

attributed to the discursive nature of knowledge and practices whereby much of what is known appears to be common-sense. In the next section I consider how understanding is a discursive accomplishment that rests on supported entry to the particular discourse community.

Understanding as a discursive accomplishment

Piata's dilemma that she "couldn't see how to apply all the Pākeha theory to kōhanga" provides an important window through which to carefully consider how understanding is a discursive accomplishment. For Piata, until the Pākeha theory (knowledge) was translated into terms through which she can come to understand, she remained an outsider to it. Piata, therefore, placed great importance on her liaison teacher who enabled her to enter the discourse community of the teacher education classroom through being her discourse guide (Northedge, 2002).

It has been my contention that the 'real' (also termed the 'practical' by pre-service participants) provides an interpretive context in which to engage and begin to understand. Piata's case is important for several reasons, notwithstanding the fact that she had the 'real' at her 'finger tips'. First, it clearly shows the extent to which all knowledge and knowledge construction is discursive. Understanding is not simply a process of personal acquaintance (Belenky, et al, 1986) or enactment. As we see with Piata, one can be shut out of the discourse before any possibility of enacting. Second, her story is also significant because it shows how lecturing staff are immersed within their own discursive contexts and that the use of specialised language can be a barrier for those new to it. I suggest that the latter was a situation in which pre-service participants also found themselves. The philosophy assignment provided an important turning point in understanding the knowledges of their programme. It was a space where they were able to take part in the discourse in a dialogic and practice-based manner. A space where their discourse guides appeared to give sustained attention to both the knowledge for teaching and on how students construct their teacher knowledge. However, as I have suggested and Northedge (2002) points out, students "need regular opportunities to speak or write in the presence of a competent discourse speaker, who can guide their framing of meaning towards accepted usage" (p. 262) from the beginning of their programme.

The paradox of being knowledgeable

There is a paradox in a focus on the production of knowledgeable teachers. If this is largely conceived as an end point, and not at least as equally as a search for personal/professional meaning and a sense of ‘knowing practice’ (Kemmis, 2005), then we are at risk of failing to support our newly qualified teachers to be agentic (Turnbull, 2005) in understanding and concretising the important conceptual tools offered through our programmes. This claim is consistent with the desire to embody knowledge that I identified in the data and is a recurring motif in research on teacher education. In Mahmood’s (1996) study this was represented by participants as the gap between the ‘ideal’ of teacher education and the ‘real’ of the early childhood centre. Furthermore, Edwards (1995) points out the problem of the theory to practice divide is the way it ‘robs’ prospective teachers of the opportunity to engage more meaningfully with academic discourses.

Bonny’s statement about ‘not coming out with an A+ amount of knowledge’ typifies the paradox of ‘being knowledgeable’. I have interpreted Bonny to be saying that she graduated with too much ‘in the head’ knowledge relative to the amount of practice knowledge. Arguably, if teacher education students experience an emphasis on building up a store of professional knowledge that outweighs their ability to understand that knowledge and to construct their teacher identities, then much of this knowledge will be left as a store. For pre-service participants, access to a teacher identity as both a user and generator of knowledge (Edwards et al., 2002) appeared to be achieved at the eleventh hour through the philosophy assignment. My reading of the data suggests they desired this from the beginning of their programme. In this sense, the notion of ‘preparation’ as something done prior to acting, or getting ready, breaks down; participants wanted to use their knowledge prior to becoming qualified teachers. Paraphrasing Evie, these are things you can’t learn in a “lecture theatre”. While I have interpreted Evie’s use of the term ‘lecture theatre’ largely as a rhetorical device, I believe she, along with participants in both groups, felt she needed to learn in a way that enabled her to embody her knowledge and shift from knowing to knowing/feeling/doing. Participants have a strong sense of needing to take action while they were learning teaching. In a recent survey of student teachers in England, Malderez, Hobson, Tracey, and Kerr (2007) noted similar findings whereby student teachers reported not being able to make links between the

theoretical elements of the teacher education programme, and the valuing of the practical and school based components over the theoretical.

Addressing the knowledge problem

Through this study I have suggested that the knowledge problem wasn't necessarily about different forms of knowledge—the objective or formal versus the practical—but was largely about how participants were asked to come to know that knowledge. This issue led teacher educators Lampert and Ball (1998) to ask:

How much can knowledge, and an understanding of what it means to use it, be generated outside of the situations of action? How could we design our work in teacher education to give prospective teachers opportunities to develop knowledge as well as an appreciation of what it takes to use it wisely in context? (p. 36).

Similarly, Darling-Hammond (2006b) suggests that “although it is important to have well-chosen courses that include core knowledge for teaching, it is equally important to organize prospective teachers’ experiences so they can *integrate* and *use* their knowledge skilfully in the classroom” (p. 97 –italics in original). Darling-Hammond adds that this is “probably the most difficult aspect of constructing a teacher education program” (p. 97). Smagorinsky et al. (2003), working from within Vygotskian notions of concept development agree, claiming that if these issues are not addressed then graduates are at risk of leaving teacher education with pseudoconcepts for teaching. These are ill-formed understandings of the concepts teacher education has sought to develop in students.

Currently a number of compatible lines of research inquiry are exploring not just the sacred theory-practice story (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000) but also the notion that learning teaching rests on an idiosyncratic uptake of the knowledge of teaching (Ball & Forzani, 2009). This literature responds to the argument that a high degree of certainty about what needs to be learned for teaching can be predicted through the explication of core practices (Grossman et al., 2009), or the identification of “high leverage practices” (Ball & Forzani, 2009, p. 503) of teaching. This work is located within a concern to address the long term problem of teacher education whereby the effects are said to be ‘washed out’ and/or a ‘weak intervention’. It articulates some provocative lines of flight by turning to pedagogies of practice to reconceptualise the practice of learning to teach through shifting from a predominant emphasis on formal knowledge to that of practice. In an interesting move Ball and colleagues (Ball & Forzani, 2009; Ball, Sleep, Boerst, & Bass, 2009) argue that teaching is not ‘natural work’ and therefore requires a highly specified approach to framing the content of teacher education programmes. This

argument is based on how, in a sense, everyone has been a teacher at some point, that there is a universality about teaching, but a teacher in a classroom engages in “specialized work that is distinct from informal, commonplace showing, telling or helping” (Ball & Forzani, 2009, p. 500). Teaching is thus, in many senses, unnatural. This notion is a challenge to popular conceptions of teaching held by lay people and often brought to teacher education by students. A good example of this is the number of participants in this study who believed, prior to engaging in teacher education, that it would be easy. This possibly points to the idea that to learn teaching would be an additive process (McLean, 1999) rather than a more disruptive one or what Boler (1999) suggests takes place through a ‘pedagogy of discomfort’.

Through engaging with this literature (including that of the work most notably identified with Fred Korthagen, 2001, 2004, 2006) I have seen strong resonances with the storylines in this study. Grossman and McDonald (2008) argue that in taking a new direction, teacher educators “will need to face some uncomfortable realities about our field” (p. 185) of the type that arguably motivated Jacinta’s question:

Can it educate, can it teach you to teach? I don’t know. Is that expecting too much?
Am I supposed to just get it together? I don’t know what to think.

Part III: What can be learned from this study?

Pedagogies of practice

After 3 years of teacher education Jacinta (above) has been left wondering about whether such programmes can “teach you to teach”. It is a good question. How can we respond to the kinds of questions Jacinta raises? One immediate thing that we—the corpus of teacher educators—can say is that there is increasing acknowledgement that both the process of ‘preparing’ teachers and learning teaching are more complex than previous and prevailing conceptions have acknowledged (Atkinson, 2004; Edwards & Protheroe, 2003; Grudnoff & Tuck, 2003; Russell, 1997; Wideon et al., 1998; Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). I suggest we share this research narrative with teacher education students and allow the complexities and uncertainties of learning teaching be an integral part of the process of learning to teach. Recall Bonny, who did not want to confide her true reasons for becoming a teacher least her teacher educators *not* consider her to be a ‘good’ teacher? How many others feel as though they must ‘impression manage’ their learning to teach process? When the self-work of learning teaching is a legitimate

feature of the teacher education classroom, students and teacher educators alike can not only “examine the social and political factors that produce dominant educational knowledge and practices, and ask in whose interests they serve” (Mac Naughton, 2005, p. 9) but understand and embrace the complex and conflicted nature of educational practice.

Grossman, Hammerness & McDonald (2009) outline how the notion of knowledgeable teachers came to the fore in teacher education during the 1980s as the knowledge demands of teaching became more apparent. This was based in research that focused on teacher thinking. These authors assert that an unintended outcome of this direction was how other aspects of teaching became “obscured [...] including the need for skill in orchestrating instructional activities, and the relational work involved in creating classroom communities” (p. 273). Grossman et al. argue that the teacher education curriculum “move away from a curriculum focused on what teachers need to know to a curriculum focused around core practices, in which knowledge, skill, and professional identity are developed in the process of learning to practice” (p. 274). They argue that this shift will address the enduring theory to practice problem in teacher education. The idea of identifying the core practices of teaching so that teacher education can focus its pedagogy on these runs counter to most assumptions about teacher education. It begins not with the question of what knowledge teachers need to have, but instead asks what do teachers need *to do* in order to be good (beginning) teachers, and only then sets about to address questions of what knowledge is necessary.

Ball’s (Ball & Forzani, 2009) term “high leverage activities” is a related set of ideas and describes how, when these are understood (where understanding is a practical accomplishment) many other related understandings are incorporated. These are the kinds of teaching tasks that arguably provide the traction (Bransford et al., 2005) to begin teaching with a sense of purpose and ability. A feature of this research is the notion that teaching is “intricate work” requiring practical judgment. In making this claim Ball and Forzani reject a view of teaching that enshrines an image of teaching “as highly improvisational and wholly context dependent” (p. 503). They are intent on introducing more precision into learning teaching, based on the notion of teaching as deliberate practice.

Grossman et al. (2009) discuss pedagogies of enactment. This involves the notion of approximations of practice whereby core practices are learned through structured “opportunities to rehearse and enact discrete components of complex practice in settings

of reduced complexity” (p. 283). The learner is coached in their ability to engage in more complex iterations of each core practice. This idea arguably has its roots in microteaching but is ‘reinvented’ within a more nuanced understanding of the ‘person in the process’ of learning to teach. This could include more complex theoretical and conceptual tools for thinking about teacher learning (Walshaw, 2008) than have previously been drawn on or available to teacher educators.

From my reading of this literature it aligns well with research carried out in the Netherlands and associated with Fred Korthagen (Brouwer & Korthagen, 2005; 2001; Korthagen et al., 2006). The pedagogical argument put forward by Korthagen and colleagues is that, unless teacher education is based on the concerns of teacher education students (as prospective teachers), then it will always have a limited effect. This argument is grounded in a raft of ideas but a basic tenet is that the type of knowledge of most value and use to teachers is perceptual knowledge (as opposed to propositional knowledge), and that teacher education is principally a process of change. Korthagen (2001) argues that teacher education following technical-rational model has not achieved the outcomes it desires. The inevitable theory to practice gap, Korthagen (2001) asserts, is actually *created* through assumptions about the nature of knowledge in this model. In traditional teacher education “knowledge about teaching is considered as a created subject and not a subject to be created by the learner” (p. 15), the learner is largely on the outside of the learning process looking in.

Alternatively, some forms of teacher education consider learning to teach as a process of inquiry undertaken within a community of inquiry. For example, Phelan (2005) and Farr Darling (2001) each employ an inquiry approach, one that closely mirrors approaches to teacher education embedded within problem based learning models (see Edwards & Hammer, 2006; Mulcahy, 2006). At the heart of these approaches is the decentering of the hierarchy between theory and practice. Korthagen (2001) maintains that the theory to practice gap “disappears” (p. 14) in an inquiry based approach, simply because it is not created when practices become the central organiser (text) of teacher education, rather than the theory. I have argued that this effect was detectable in field-based texts.

It is not to be mistaken that practice approaches are totally reliant on school or centre based learning settings. Whilst the core feature is one of enactment this can take place in a range of settings, including the use of video technology (see Lampert & Ball, 1998), coaching and feedback sessions (Grossman et al., 2009) and activities involving

portfolios, case methods and instructional routine activities (Lampert et al., 2010). The philosophy assignment, as described by pre-service participants closely resembles a portfolio task. Dialogic encounters such as those described by field-based participants are also consistent as they are able to provide opportunities to understand teaching as an interpretive practice and teacher thinking as a process of practical reasoning (Dunne & Pendlebury, 2003; Kemmis, 2005; Penlington, 2008). Many of these approaches are currently being used in teacher education programmes (Grossman, 2005) but are also the subject of research programmes such as the one described by Ball et al. (2009).

Research possibilities

I suggest that the research lines of direction being explored by the authors cited above could constitute similarly productive programmes of research for early childhood teacher educators. For example, what would our sector identify as ‘high leverage activities’ or the ‘core practices’ of teaching, and how can programmes of teacher education be transformed to be more practice based? Ball et al. (2009) are engaged in a collaborative research programme across teacher education institutions to develop a curriculum of teacher education that is “both shared and sharable, and that can systematically support teacher educators’ learning in and from their work” (p. 459). This project and networked ones (see for example Grossman et al. (2010)) have built a platform of research methodologies and knowledge that early childhood teacher educators could productively tap into.

This study did not observe the “inner workings” (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005, p. 700) of the teacher education classroom. This is not just a limitation of this study, but is a highly neglected area of research in teacher education generally (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). An insight into the actual processes of teacher education would illuminate how students are currently supported and challenged to co-construct their identities as teachers. Some preliminary exploratory work has begun in this area (Everiss, Brennan, & Mara, forthcoming) and further work in early childhood teacher education programmes would identify how students are supported to enter and engage in the discursive milieu of these settings.

Whilst a strength of this study is the rich corpus of data entailing student perspectives it has nevertheless resulted in an over-reliance on participant self-reports (Luke, Luke & Meyer, 2000). A study using ethnographic methods, and tracking teacher education students through their programme of study, would capture the

evolving nature of learning teaching and would allow for the confirmation of the claims of the study through observational study.

Each of the newly qualified teacher participant data sets in addition provide a set of case studies that could be explored in more depth and ideally in collaboration with each participant. Furthermore, these can be brought up to date by working with respective teachers to report on their successive experiences of being and becoming teachers, including their career trajectories. This research would also involve collaboration with Māori and Samoan researchers to explore the experiences of those participants who work in language immersion programmes such as Ngā Kōhanganga Reo and A'oga Amata. Lastly, teasing apart (researching) the crucial aspects of each programme as mentioned by each set of participants would shed further light on productive pedagogies used in each setting and provide 'sharable' (Ball et al. 2009) knowledge with the early childhood teacher education community.

In this section I have only 'scratched the surface' of practice pedagogies as a possible existing research platform to engage with (Cameron & Baker, 2004) and have provided some further suggestions for research. I turn now, in this last section, to draw together the implications of this study.

So what does this study point to? What are its implications?

The importance of this thesis is in clarifying the conditions for understanding that early childhood teacher education students desire in order to know teaching, and thus to feel well prepared. Participants across both groups identified the need for practical understanding of the knowledges of their programmes. I suggest these findings are significant because they cause us to pause and wonder about the structure and effects of our programmes of teacher education, the ways in which we support students to understand, and conversely understand the importance of misunderstanding (Taylor, 1993). From a Heideggerian perspective, we are in an already interpreted world with "one's self-understanding, one's outlooks and one's actions somehow running ahead of oneself. It is to find oneself invariably predisposed, provisionally or more definitely" (Hogan, 2002, p. 217). Teaching is a profession where the already interpreted nature, as in the beliefs (or discourses) brought to the learning to teach process can impede the learning process (see Wideen et al., 1998).

Through an emphasis on embodied knowing, or knowing in practice, our understandings, outlooks and actions come to be illuminated and thus available to self-knowledge, to scrutiny and to being in relationship with others. This is important as teaching is relational work (Lampert, 2010) that takes place in highly interpretive contexts. Practice theorist Schatzki (1996) asserts that “practices are the site where understanding is structured and intelligibility articulated” (p. 12). Practice theorists claim that it is practices that are “the source and carrier of meaning, language and normativity” (Schatzki, 2001, p. 12). Practices are places and spaces where our systems of meaning are embodied and where understandings and misunderstandings can be revealed, celebrated, confronted and importantly—engaged with. This is relational work.

It is my contention that the key to teacher education students’ sense of preparedness lies within the design of teacher education programmes and how these articulate the nature of knowledge for learning teaching and for teaching. For this reason it is important for early childhood teacher education programmes to undertake close study of their inner workings (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005).

Wenger (1998) asserts that educational design is centrally about knowing when to reify (or codify) and when to rely on participation. He argues “there is a pedagogical cost to reification” (p. 264) that does not exist in practice, as the codification of knowledge can create the illusion of a simple transfer process. Moreover, “reification may seem to lift knowledge out of practice, and thus obviate the need for (and the complexities of) participation” (p. 265). Clearly, as evidenced in this study, teacher education students have in-built antennae for an over-reliance on reification. The pedagogical cost to rampant reification is that students relegate aspects of the programme they discern as being ‘too theoretical’, or alternatively get ‘lost’ on a sea of knowledges (Martinez, 1998). As mentioned earlier, the risk is that newly qualified early childhood teachers graduate with pseudo-concepts. Moreover, they may then obtain work in the kinds of situations Aitken (2006) describes as novice orientated cultures, which may serve to entrench these ideas rather than expand them.

This study suggests that early childhood students are not unlike teacher education students in other sectors; they too desire a balance between reification and participation in the process of learning teaching. Well designed processes of participation allow teacher educators to still their voices and enable those of teacher education students—the ‘Other’—to enter (disciplinary) conversations that matter (Applebee, 1996).

I agree with Davis and Sumara (1997) who argue teacher educators should adopt a “hermeneutic attitude” with an “interpretive mindset” as both teaching and learning take place in relations between “the individual and the collective, between accepted truth and emerging sense, and between actualities and possibilities” (pp. 119-120). There is not a direct relationship between subjects and objects of knowledge but a relationship of interpretation. How then can we better support students to practice “teaching as informed interpretation and deliberative action” (Edwards et al., 2002, p. 125). I suggest many of the messages of teacher education are ‘lost in translation’ unless we adopt a pedagogies of practice approach as briefly outlined in this chapter and currently being trialled in research projects internationally (see Ball et al., 2009; Lampert, 2010).

Early childhood teacher educators might seriously consider working together in a form of self-study to address the types of questions and issues this study raises in terms of the nature of knowledge for teaching. We need, however, to continue to build teacher education programmes in ways that support students to engage with the intensely ethical and political nature of our field of practice (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005). In determining our pedagogies of practice, as I suggest earlier, we need to communicate not only with ourselves but those who our programmes are intended to serve; teacher education students, early childhood education services, as well as our own professional organisations and official bodies.

At the outset of this study I wondered: Do newly qualified teachers’ experiences of preparedness differ when they enter through distinctive programmes and pathways and (if so) do the differences matter? I suggest it is not the model that matters (field-based or pre-service) but the substance of programmes that is at issue (Zeichner & Conklin, 2005). In particular are opportunities for understanding the knowledges of teacher education where understanding is a practical accomplishment—a process shared by children and adults alike:

How do we stay close to the child? Here lies one of the highest achievements of Malaguzzi’s thought. The traditional relationship between theory and practice, which designates practice as consequent to theory, is redefined and, therefore surpassed. Theory and practice are placed in a relationship of reciprocity, but one in which, to a certain extent, practice takes precedence over theory. Admitting this possible pre-eminence of action over logic could be upsetting, and could even lead to complete rejection, because we would seem to be renouncing rationality and the supremacy of theory, as well as our ability to predict. (Rinaldi, 2006, p. 56)

Through listening to newly qualified teachers I have explored processes of making sense of being prepared through teacher education. In doing so, I have identified how

students' desire to embody the knowledge for teaching in order to 'make it their own'. Previously, I have suggested that use of the term 'preparation' for teaching is an "over-played idea" (Ord, 2007). Feiman-Nemser (2001) notes how Dewey warned us that preparation was a "treacherous idea" when applied to education. Dewey said that "only by extracting the full meaning of each present experience are we prepared for doing the same thing in the future" (Dewey, 1938 cited in Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1015). I suggest teacher education focus more closely on ways in which *students* enact knowledge for teaching in the present moment and on how *they* construct the 'reality' of teaching. Furthermore, if we are to retain the use of the term 'preparedness', then let it be 'preparedness' for change and uncertainty in an increasingly complex and diverse world.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Student/newly qualified teacher Information Sheet

STUDENT/NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHER PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Tena koe, talofa lava, kia orana, malo e lelei, fakaalofa atu, taloha ni, ni sa bula, greetings

My name is Kate Ord. I am a full-time PhD student undertaking research into how early childhood student teachers (centre-based and pre-service) experience and make sense of their teacher preparation programme and their sense of preparedness to teach. As a former teacher educator I have been motivated through this research to improve the quality of learning experiences for student teachers as they learn to teach. My principal PhD supervisor is Associate Professor Glenda Anthony of Massey University who can be contacted by telephone on: (06) 356 9099, extn 8600 or by email g.j.anthony@massey.ac.nz. My secondary supervisor is Dr Joce Nuttall of Monash University (Melbourne, Australia) who can be contacted by email joce.nuttall@education.monash.ac.au. I can be contacted by phone on [phone number] or by email at [email address].

My study is part of a larger Ministry of Education (TLRI) funded national research project examining the ways in which initial teacher education and the first two years of induction contribute to the preparation of secondary teachers in New Zealand. The project leader for this project is Glenda Anthony.

The TLRI project and the doctoral project have their beginnings in the current political climate of government policies focusing on teacher supply, teaching quality and anecdotal concerns about the quality and variability of ITE and induction. My doctoral study will identify key issues within the early childhood education (ECE) sector in order to pave the way for possible future, large scale evaluations of early childhood education ITE and Induction.

Participant Recruitment

Currently little is known about how early childhood student teachers experience their initial teacher education programme and the degree to which they feel prepared for their role as a qualified teacher. If you choose to participate in the study you will be helping to provide the teacher education community and policy makers with information about how being prepared as an ECE teacher is experienced and understood by students.

As someone about to graduate as a qualified early childhood teacher I warmly invite you to participate in this project.

What participation involves

Participation in the project will involve three, 1-hour interviews and one, 2-hour group interview over the next two years. The first interview will take place this year in the last weeks of your teacher education

course and before you graduate. The second and third interviews will take place in June and November next year (2006) and the group interview is being held in June 2007.

Each interview will be audiotaped and the tapes transcribed. You will be able to either read a copy of the transcription or listen to the tape and make additional comments if you wish. In the second and third interviews I may ask to return to some of the content of previous interviews if I feel the need to explore something you talked about in more depth. You may also raise issues in the same manner. To help you reflect on your experiences and to facilitate discussion in the second and third interviews I will suggest that you keep a journal of incidents where as a result of a teaching experience you reflected on your sense of preparedness. This journal will not be seen by me or used as data in the study.

I aim to bring together the six participants from your teacher education course who participate in the study in June 2007 for a group interview. This will be an opportunity to collectively discuss the themes that have been drawn from the interview data, to provide feedback on this analysis and to suggest further ways I could 'read' the data. You will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement for the group interview so that the identities of all participants are protected.

Please note, I am also interviewing the person responsible for the programme coordination and development at your institution. If you choose to participate in this study your identity will be kept confidential from this person.

If you would like to participate in this project please complete the expression of interest form attached to this information sheet and post it to me in the enclosed stamped addressed envelope as soon as possible. If initially you choose not to participate and then change your mind please contact me urgently, before the end of your course so I can talk with you about participation. If selected, you will be asked to sign a consent form at the first interview.

Selection criteria

To be eligible to participate in this longitudinal project you must firstly be sure that you will successfully complete your teacher education course by the end of this academic year (2005) and secondly, intend to teach for all of next year (2006) to enable interviews 2 and 3 to take place and be reasonably confident you will be available in 2007 for the group interview. In further selecting applicants attention will be given to ensuring participants of Maori and Pasifika identity are included. In addition, selection will, where possible, include a spread of participants from across the range of early childhood settings (ie. kindergarten, infant and toddlers, language immersion programmes, older children in education and care centres etc).

Number of participants to be involved

I aim to have six student participants from your institution and six from a second institution. Because the data that is being collected or generated is very detailed it is not possible to increase the number of participants. I am hoping that a broad cross section of people will apply to be involved so that a rich description of preparedness can be drawn from the data.

Project Procedures

The interviews will be transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis procedures in order to produce a rich description of how prepared to teach you may be feeling. From this description I intend to develop a set of constructs that could be used to develop an evaluation tool to evaluate student's sense of

preparedness. Toward the end of the research project I will prepare a summary of the project findings that I will send to you.

The audiotapes and transcripts of the interviews will be **kept in secure storage for 5 years** after the project is completed, at which time they will be destroyed.

To preserve confidentiality no individuals will be identified in the data or in the subsequent written reports from the data. Each participant will be asked to provide a pseudonym which will be used in all written and verbal reports.

I believe you will benefit from being involved however as you will gain first hand information about being involved in research and by reflecting on the experiences in your teacher education programme you may well be benefiting students, and therefore children, of the future. If you go on to take up the role of an associate teacher or mentor teacher participation in this project may give you insights into how to be an effective support person to beginning teachers.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any time;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Project Contacts

Throughout the project you are welcome to contact myself as researcher and/or my supervisors if you have any questions about the project. Contact details are included on the front page of this information sheet.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and to consider taking part in the project. I wish you best of luck for the future and a rewarding career as an early childhood teacher.

Kind regards

Kate Ord

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, Palmerston North Application 05/113. If you have any concerns about the ethics of this research, please contact Dr John G. O'Neill, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: PN telephone 06 350 5799 x 8635 humanethicscspn@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix B: Akoranga kit e ako-information sheet

Akoranga ki te ako: Ngā kaupapa mahi me te whakarite akoranga mo ngā tauira kaiako kōhungahunga.

NGĀ PEPA URUTANGA MOHIO PANUI O NGĀ TAUIRA ME NGĀ KAIAKO HOU.

Tēnā koe

Ko Kate Ord toku ingoa he tauria PhD ahau, ko tāku nei mahi, he rangahau he aha ngā mahi whakahaere whakarite kaupapa i roto o ngā kura kōhungahunga, whare mātauranga mo ngā kaiako tauira. Na taku mahi kaiako i pirangi au ki te rangahua i tētahi hua ki te pakari, kiap ai ake te hua akoranga mo ngā tauira kaiako ki te ako. Ko tōku tumuaki tuatahi PhD Kaiwhakahaere ko Ahorangi Glenda Anthony no te Whare Wānanga o Massey. Ko tona waea kōrero: (06) 356 9099 whaka-whanui: 8766, ko tona imera g.j.anthony@massey.ac.nz. Ko tōku kaiwhakahaere tuarua, ko Takuta Joce Nuttal no te Whare Wānanga o Monash ki Melbourne, Australia. Ko tona imera joce.nuttall@education.monash.ac.au. Ko tōku waea kōrero: [], ko tōku imera [].

Ko tōku mahi rangahau nā tētahi wāhanga o te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga (TLRI) pūtea kaupapa natana rangahau. E tiro ana ki ngā kaiako mātauranga me ngā urutanga whakarite o ngā tau e rua mo ngā kaiako tuarua o Aotearoa. Ko Glenda Anthony te rangatira mo tēnei kaupapa.

Ko ngā kaupapa TLRI me te me te Doctoral i timata mai I ngā tūrongopu o ngā kaupapa o te kawanatanga. E tiro ana ki ngā rauemi ngā akoranga pai, me ngā rapoto kōrero. Ko ēnei ngā awangawanga o te ITE me ngā urutanga. Ko tōku mahi rangahau ka kitea i ngā take e pā ana i roto i ngā kura kōhungahuga mātauranga ma te mohio anō ki te whakamātau i ngā kōhungahunga mātauranga ITE me ngā urutanga, ka totika whakamua.

Ngā whakaurunga

Kaore e nui ngā mohiotanga mo ngā mahi mātauranga o ngā kaiako me te mohio hoki kua reri rātou ki te mahi. Kia tika tonu rātou, kia kaha rātou ki te tu mo tēnei turanga. Mena ka hiahia koe ki te awhi tēnei kaupapa, ka awhina koe i ngā kaiako mātauranga whānui me ngā kaituhi kaupapa pēhea te haere o ngā kaiako o roto i ngā whare kōhungahunga o te motu me te mārama hoki o ngā tauira.

Ka whiwhi koe to Tohu Kōhungahunga Mātauranga piki mai ki tēnei kaupapa.

He aha ngā whakaritenga

I roto i nga whakaritenga o tēnei kaupapa, e toru ngā wāhanga mo te kōtahi haora uiuitanga me te huihuinga kōtahi e rua haora i a roopu e uiuitiana i roto i ngā tau e rua e heke tonu mai nei. Te uiuitanga tuatahi ka timata i tēnei tau I te whakamutunga o te wiki ngā mahi a ngā mahita i mua i to rātou whiwhitanga i o rātou tohu. Te rua me te toru o ngā uiuitanga ka timata i te marama o Pipiri me Whiringa-a-rangi i te tau (rua mano ma ono). Te uiuitanga roopu ka hikingia i te marama o Pipiri, te tau rua mano ma whitu.

Ia uiuitanga, ka hopungia i runga i te Tipene, ka tuhia te ripene, ka taea e koe ki te reti i te kape ka whakarongo rānei i runga i te ripene, a kei a koe te mana. I roto i te rua, te toru, o ngā uiuitanga ko te hiahia o te kaiako kia whakahokia mai ētahi o ngā mahi o ia uiuitaga kia titiro ia pēhea te hōhonutanga o ēnei mahi. Kei a koe te hiahia ki te whakarite i o whakaaro ki te awhi i ngā mahi, whakahaere i roto i ngā kōrero, whakatakoto i o mahi e kore ahau e kite i o mahi whakamau rānei i roto i tēnei kaupapa mahi.

Tōku nei hiahia ki te huihui mai i ngā akoranga tokoono te wānanga a ngā mahita ngā mea i mahi i te marama o Pipiri, te tau rua mano ma whitu mo te hui uiuitanga roopu. He wāhanga anō ka whakaritea ngā whakaaro ka tirohia ngā uiuitanga i roto i tēnei kaupapa mahi, he wā ki te whakamātautau pea. Ka kī atu ahau ki a koe kia hainatia i roto i te ture mo ngā mahi i mahitia e koe. Me mohio tonu koe ka whakamātautautia e au te tangata nei nana ngā kaupapa mahi i mahi i ta koutou tari. Ka hiahia koe ki te mahi i ēnei mahi kaore o mahi e kitea e ētahi atu tangata.

Ka pirangi koe ki te uruatu i roto i tēnei mahi kaupapa ka tuhituhi mai i o hiahia ka tuku mai ki ahau i roto i te mera naea nei tonu atu. Kei te kore koe e hiahia ki te uru mai waea mai ki au i te mutunga mai o te mahi, maku e kōrero ngā āhuatanga o ngā mahi me ka uru mai koe ka whakamāramatia ki a koe i mua i to uiuitanga tuatahi.

Ngā āhuatanga mahi

I roto i ēnei āhuatanga mahi me mahi tonu koe mena ka tutuki i a koe o mahi o ngā mahita o te mātauranga i te mutunga i tēnei tau rua mano ma rima. Tuarua, kia kaha tonu koe ki te ako atu a tēra tau rua mano ma ono. Kia matatau ki ngā uiuitanga rua me te toru. Me ka mahi koe ka wātea tonu koe i te tau ra mano ma whitu, mo te uiuitanga roopu ka whakaaro koe ko wai ngā iwi ka uru mai ki ēnei momo mahi a titiro atu ki to tātou iwi a ki ngā iwi i runga i ngā moutere me te whānui atu ki ngā kōhungahunga i roto i ngā kaupapa o to tātou reo rangatira a ētahi atu.

E hia ngā akoranga e uru atu ana

Taku hiahia kia tokoono ngā akoranga mai tētahi Wānanga Mahita, tokoono mai te akoranga i tētahi atu Wānanga Mahita. Na te mea ka kohikohitia ēnei kōrere i roto i tēnei kaupapa mahi kaore i nui atu ngā nama o ngā mea e uru atu ana. Engari kia whānui atu o i a iwi kia uru atu kia mahangia ai ki roto i tēnei kaupapa mahi.

Ngā āhuatanga o ngā kaupapa

Ka whakaritengia ngā uiuitanga i roto i o akotanga me o whakaaro. Mai i ēnei kōrero kei te hiahia ahau ki te whakatakoto whakamātautau ngā akoranga mo a rātou whakarite i a rātou mahi. I te whakamutunga o ngā rangahau kaupapa, maku anō e whakarite ngā kaupapa a ka tuku atu he rangahau kaupapa whakarapopoto ki a koe.

Ko ngā ripene me ngā mahi i roto i ngā uiuitanga ka pupuritia mo ngā tau e rima, i te whakaotitanga o te kaupapa a kātahi ngia rānei.

Kia mau tonu ki to mana, kaore ētahi atu e whakaatutia i runga i te rorohiko. Ahakoa ngā tuhituhinga ripoata mai i te rorohiko ngā akoranga e uru atu ana i roto i tēnei kaupapa, ka pātai atu ki a rātou o rātou ripoata i roto i te tuhituhinga me te kōrero.

Taku mohio ka uru ngā hua mou, na te mea, ko koe te mea tuatahi e whakamohiotia ana, i roto i ngā rangahau, i rotor a i ngā mohiotanga a to mahita i roto i ēnei kaupapa. Kua uru atu ēnei hua i runga i ngā akoranga a ngā tamariki mo āpōpō. Ka haere tonu koe i roto i ēnei mahi hei kaiawhina, hei mahita mo tēnei kaupapa, kei kōnā koe hei awhi atu i ngā mahita hou.

Ngā whakaurutanga tika

Ki te hiahia koe ki te uru atu kei a koe anō to whakaaro:

- Kei a koe anō te whakaaro, mo ētahi atu pātai
- Ahakoa kaore koe e hiahia ki te uru ki tēnei mahi
- Pātai atu i ngā mahi e pā ana ki tēnei kaupapa
- Ka whakarite kia mohio ai koe, kaore koe e whakaae mo to ingoa ki ngā iwi rangahau
- Ka hoatu ki a koe ngā kaupapa e kitea ai i te mutunga
- Kōrero atu ki a rātou ētahi wā kia whakakoretia te ripene kōrero i te wā uiuitanga

He wā whakamohio ki a rātou

I te wā o tēnei kaupapa mau e whakamohio atu ki ahau te kairangahau, a ko ngā kaiwhakahaere, me he pātai anō mo tēnei kaupapa ngā whakamohiotanga kei te whārangī o mua o tēnei pepa ngā whakamaramatanga katoa.

Kei te mihi atu ra ki a koe i riti ai i ngā āhuatanga mo tēnei kaupapa. Kei te mihi ki a koe mo ngā ra e heke mai nei i roto i ngā mahi mahita kōhungahunga mātauranga.

Kei kona

Kate Ord

I whakaritea i whakamanatia tēnei kaupapa i te Whare Takuira Komiti i Papaioea 05/113. Ka āhua awangawanga koe mo ēnei rangahautanga whakapaa atu ki a Takuta John O'Neill te tiamana, Whare Takuira o Massey. Waea Kōrero: (06) 350 5799 whaka-whānui 8635. Imera: humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix C: Letter of approach to participating institution

Tena koe

Dear

RE: Learning to teach: early childhood student teachers' experiences of their initial teacher education programme and sense of preparedness for teaching

I am a full-time PhD student with Massey University. My background in teacher education and my desire to improve the quality of learning experiences for student teachers as they undertake teacher education has prompted the focus of my thesis research. My project seeks to understand how early childhood education (ECE) student teachers experience and make sense of their teacher preparation programme and their sense of preparedness to teach. This study has the potential to break new ground because little is currently known about how early childhood students experience their initial teacher education (ITE) programme and the degree to which they feel prepared for their role as a qualified teacher.

My study is embedded in a larger Ministry of Education (TLRI) funded research project examining the ways in which initial teacher education and the first two years of induction contribute to the preparation of secondary teachers in New Zealand. The project leader is Associate Professor Glenda Anthony, who is also my principal PhD supervisor.

My study is focused in early childhood education and has four aims

- To provide a rich description of the phenomenon of preparedness through understanding how teacher preparation is experienced by ECE student teachers.
- To develop sensitising concepts that could contribute to the establishment of a set of constructs associated with preparedness as it relates to early childhood teacher education.
- To describe two programme approaches (pre-service and centre-based) to early childhood education ITE provision and each programme's conceptualisation of teacher education as preparedness to teach.
- To describe and analyse the influence of official discourses of ECE teacher preparation that currently exist for ECE teacher education in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

I have chosen to focus on two of the most common early childhood programme approaches and qualification pathways, pre-service and centre-based.

As [institution] provides centre-based teacher education I would like to discuss the possibility of involvement of students and a staff member of [institution] in my study.

Involvement in the study

If you agree to participation there are two aspects of involvement. The first is an interview with the person responsible for the programme coordination and development in order to ask about how the programme defines, describes and operationalises teacher education as preparation for teaching. This interview can take place at the convenience of this person. I am hopeful of undertaking this in the first term of 2006. In addition to the interview, I would be grateful for any official programme documentation such as course handbooks, publicity information, course material, and in fact any documentation that will shed light on your programme's approach to the preparation of early childhood teachers.

Secondly, I seek your support in accessing a group of graduating year students to invite them to become part of my study. I aim to interview six students about their sense of preparedness as they are about to graduate, and again six and twelve months after graduation in their first year as qualified teachers. In the following year, 2007, I will interview the students together in a group in order to collectively discuss the themes that have been identified through the interviews, to provide feedback on the initial data analysis and to suggest further readings of these.

The inclusion of your students in the research is dependent on agreement by your institution to participate and also participation of the programme coordinator.

I hope to begin data collection by early December this year. I realise that this is a busy time for everyone involved in teacher education, both staff and students, however talking with students as they are about to graduate from their ITE programme is a key time for them to reflect on the lived experience of their teacher education programme and their sense of preparedness.

Participant recruitment

Programme coordinator: An interview with the programme coordinator is central to the study. I would appreciate it if you could ascertain whether this person (who may well be yourself) would agree to be involved in the study. The information sheet for the programme coordinator is attached with this letter.

Graduating students: Once I have talked with graduating year students to explain my project, its rationale, aims and what participation would mean I will hand out an information sheet (see attached) and invite anyone who is interested in participating to complete an

'Expression of Interest' form (see attached) and send it directly to me. I am very hopeful of enough students agreeing to participate in order to select a cross section of students.

Project procedures

Interviews with the programme coordinator and students will be audiotaped and transcribed. Data from the student interviews will be thematically analysed according to hermeneutic phenomenological principles. Some material may be re-presented to students at the second and third interviews when they are in their first year as qualified teachers. The interview data from the programme coordinator will also be analysed to explore the discourse of teacher education used in the programme. This interview will also enable me to understand the constructions and representations of preparedness that students in the study hold.

The institution will not be identified in the data or subsequent written reports or publications. Similarly no individuals will be identified in the data or in subsequent written reports or publications. Students taking part in the group interview will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement.

Benefits of participation in the project

I believe there are significant benefits of involvement in this research project for both the organisation and the newly qualified teachers. The programme may benefit from an opportunity to focus on how it conceptualises teacher education in relation to the notion of preparation. Once data has been analysed I would be very pleased to provide feedback to your programme on my findings and on the literature related to preparation for teaching.

Students who participate in the project may become more aware of their ongoing development as teachers and may be motivated to incorporate research based evidence into their teaching practices or to undertake research themselves. If they become associate teachers or liaison teachers participation in the project may support them to be effective in these roles.

Thank you for taking time to read this letter and I look forward to contacting you in the coming week about involvement in the project. If you wish to contact me first or if you have any questions about the project please do not hesitate to phone me on [phone number] or email [email address]. My principal supervisor (Glenda Anthony) can be contacted at Massey University on 06 356 9099, extn 8600 or by email at g.j.anthony@massey.ac.nz.

Yours sincerely

Kate Ord

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, Palmerston North Application 05/113. If you have any concerns about the ethics of this research, please contact Dr John G. O'Neill, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: PN telephone 06 350 5799 x 8635, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix D: Programme Coordinator Information Sheet

Learning to teach: Early childhood student teachers' experiences of their initial teacher education programme and sense of preparedness for teaching

PROGRAMME COORDINATOR PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Tena koe, talofa lava, kia orana, malo e lelei, fakaalofa atu, taloha ni, ni sa bula, greetings

My name is Kate Ord. Currently I am a full-time PhD student undertaking research into how early childhood student teachers (centre-based and preservice) experience and make sense of their teacher preparation programme and their sense of preparedness to teach. As a former teacher educator with 15 years experience I have been motivated through this research to improve the quality of learning experiences for student teachers as they learn to teach. My principal PhD supervisor is Associate Professor Glenda Anthony of Massey University who can be contacted by telephone on: (06) 356 9099, extn 8600 or by email g.j.anthony@massey.ac.nz. My secondary supervisor is Dr Joce Nuttall of Monash University (Melbourne, Australia) who can be contacted by email joce.nuttall@education.monash.ac.au. I can be contacted by phone on [phone number] or by email at [.....]

My study is part of a larger Ministry of Education funded (TLRI) national research project examining the ways in which initial teacher education (ITE) and the first two years of induction contribute to the preparation of secondary teachers in New Zealand. The project leader for this project is Glenda Anthony.

The TLRI project and the doctoral project have their beginnings in the current political climate of government policies focusing on teacher supply, teaching quality and anecdotal concerns about the quality and variability of ITE and induction. My doctoral study will identify key issues within the early childhood education sector in order to pave the way for possible future, large scale evaluations of early childhood education ITE and Induction.

Participant Recruitment

Currently little is known about how early childhood student teachers experience their initial teacher education programme and the degree to which they feel prepared for their role as a qualified teacher. In addition there is a need for research that informs the picture on how people are currently being prepared to teach in New Zealand including descriptions of the different approaches to ITE provision. As part of my study I plan to describe two programme approaches (pre-service and centre-based), including each programme's conceptualisation of initial teacher education as preparation for teaching. If you choose to participate in the study you will be helping to provide the wider teacher education community and policy makers with information about how being prepared as an ECE teacher is experienced and understood by students and conceptualised by ITE providers.

As the person responsible for the overview and coordination of the early childhood programme I warmly invite you to participate in this project.

What participation involves

Your participation in the project will involve a one-hour interview with me and the sharing of programme documents such as handbooks, publicity information, conceptual statement, graduate profile, and course material. In fact any documentation that will shed light on your programme's approach to the preparation of early childhood teachers.

The interview will take place in term 1 2006, at a time that suits you. It will canvas your views as programme coordinator, on teacher education as 'preparation', it will ask about the assumptions and theories that underpin the programme and about the role and influence of official bodies such as the NZ Teachers' Council, the Ministry of Education and the NZ Qualifications Authority.

The interview will be audiotaped and the tape transcribed. You will be welcome to either read a copy of the transcription or listen to the tape and make additional comments.

If your institution agrees to take part in this project and you agree to my interviewing you I will also interview students from the 2005 graduating group. The first interview with students will take place this year in the last weeks of the students' course and before they graduate. The second and third interviews will take place in June and November next year (2006) and a group interview will held in June 2007. A copy of the student teacher information sheet is attached with this information sheet.

Please find a consent form attached. If you agree to participate in this project I will collect this form at the interview.

Project Procedures

The interview data will be analysed using discourse analysis procedures in order to provide a description of how your programme defines, describes and operationalises the concept of teacher education as preparation.

The audiotapes and transcripts of the interviews will be **kept in secure storage for 5 years** after the project is completed, at which time they will be destroyed.

Toward the end of the project I will prepare a summary of the project findings which I will send to all participants including yourself.

To preserve confidentiality no individuals, or the institution, will be identified in the data or in the subsequent written reports from the data. I will refer to you as 'programme coordinator (programme type)'. Student participants will be asked to provide a pseudonym that will be used in all written and verbal reports.

I believe the teacher education community will benefit from your involvement in this study. As a teacher educator myself I am committed to high quality teacher education and hope that my project will make a contribution to understanding how best to achieve this.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- * decline to answer any particular question;
- * withdraw from the study at any time;
- * ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- * provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- * be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- * ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Project Contacts

Throughout the project you are welcome to contact myself as researcher and/or my supervisors if you have any questions about the project. Contact details are included on the front page of this information sheet.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and for considering whether to take part in the project. Best wishes for the remainder of the year.

Kind regards

Kate Ord

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Application 05/113. If you have any concerns about the ethics of this research, please contact Dr John G. O'Neill, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: PN, telephone 06 350 5799 x 8635, email: humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz.

Appendix E: Expression of Interest Forms

Centre-based student

PARTICIPANT EXPRESSION of INTEREST FORM (CENTRE-BASED STUDENT TEACHER)

Thank you for taking the time to consider participation in this longitudinal study which aims to understand how being prepared as an early childhood teacher is experienced and understood by student teachers, and how **a student's sense of preparedness** impacts on them in their first year as a qualified teacher.

The study will be strengthened by the inclusion of participants from across the range of cultural groups in society and from a range of early childhood services.

To be eligible to participate in the study you must be:

- confident of successfully completing your ITE studies and graduating this year, and
- intending to teach in a licensed and chartered ECE service for all of next year (2006) and be reasonably confident of being able to attend a group interview in June 2007

If you believe you can meet the above criteria please complete the following questions in order to select participants.

1) Your name (please print)

2) Your age (please tick as appropriate)

- 20 years or less,
- 21-30 years
- 31-40 years
- 41-50 years
- 51 years +

3) Contact address (please print).....

4) Contact phone number (please print).....

.....(cell phone)

5) What ethnic group(s) do you strongly identify with? You may tick more than one.

- Asian (Please specify:.....)
- Cook Island
- Fijian
- Maori
- Niuean
- NZ European
- Samoan
- Tongan

Other (Please specify:.....)

6) Name of your ECE centre.....

7) Address of your ECE centre.....
.....

8) Phone number of centre.....

9) What sector of ECE is your centre situated in? (please tick)

- Education and Care Centre –community based
- Education and Care Centre –privately owned
- Free Kindergarten
- Maori Immersion Setting (please specify
- Pasifika ECE Service (please specify
- Other (please specify

10) What is the age range of children you work with (please tick)

- Infants
- Toddlers
- Young children
- Mixed age

Thank you for completing this form.

Please post to me before (date) using the stamped addressed envelope provided.

I will inform you of the outcome of your Expression of Interest by .

Once again, thank you very much for your interest in this project.

Kate Ord (address)
PhD student Massey University

PARTICIPANT EXPRESSION of INTEREST FORM (PRE-SERVICE STUDENT TEACHER)

Thank you for taking the time to consider participation in this longitudinal study which aims to understand how being prepared as an early childhood teacher is experienced and understood by student teachers, and how **a student's sense of** preparedness impacts on them in their first year as a qualified teacher.

The study will be strengthened by the inclusion of participants from across the range of cultural groups in society and from a range of early childhood services.

To be eligible to participate in the study you must be:

- confident of successfully completing your ITE studies and graduating this year, and
- intending to teach in a licensed and chartered ECE service for all of next year (2006) and be reasonably confident of being able to attend a group interview in June 2007

If you believe you can meet the above criteria please complete the following questions in order to select participants.

1) Your name (please print)

2) Your age (please tick as appropriate)

- 20 years or less,
- 21-30 years
- 31-40 years
- 41-50 years
- 51 years +

3) Contact address (please print).....

.....

4) Contact phone number (please print).....

.....(cell phone)

5) What ethnic group(s) do you strongly identify with? You may tick more than one.

- Asian (Please specify:.....)
- Cook Island
- Fijian
- Maori
- Niuean
- NZ European
- Samoan
- Tongan
- Other (Please specify:.....)

6) At this time what sector of ECE are you intending to teach in? (please tick)
(if you already have a teaching position please go to question number 8)

- Education and Care Centre –community based
- Education and Care Centre –privately owned
- Free Kindergarten
- Maori Immersion Setting (please specify)
- Pasifika ECE Service
- Other (please specify

7) What is the age range of children you would like to work with (please tick)

- Infants
- Toddlers
- Young children
- Mixed age

This section (qus. 8-10) is for those students who have already secured a teaching position for 2006.

8) Name of your ECE centre.....

9) Address of your ECE centre.....

10) Phone number of centre.....

Thank you for completing this form.

Please post to me before (date) using the stamped addressed envelope provided.

I will inform you of the outcome of your Expression of Interest by (date).

Once again, thank you very much for your interest in this project

Kate Ord (address)

PhD student Massey University

Appendix F: Participant Consent Form

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being audio taped.

I wish/do not wish to have my tapes returned to me.

I agree not to disclose anything discussed in the Group Interview

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: Date:

Full Name - printed

Appendix G: Example of participant communication sheet/panui

Learning to teach: Early childhood student teachers' experiences of their initial teacher education programme and sense of preparedness for teaching

Keeping in Touch #4 (April 2006)

**Tena koe, talofa lava, kia orana, malo e lelei, fakaalofa atu,
taloha ni, ni sa bulu, greetings**

Hi, hasn't it been a great month with beautiful weather and some extra days off work to get the batteries charged for the winter ahead? I've been in contact with most of you lately to make sure that the transcripts of interview 1 have been received and to book times for the second interview. It's been great to catching up with everyone. Like me, some of you said you were a bit spooked by how you 'sounded' on paper with unfinished sentences and grammatical errors. But that's how we typically speak. You can see how talking relies heavily on how the listener is interpreting our words—that's why often we don't finish spoken sentences as the person we are talking with often gives us non-verbal clues that they know what we are about to say. Often people finish each other's sentences because of this. One other thing we do when making sense in conversations is we think we know what someone is talking about but actually miss the point of it. I know I did this a few times during interview 1 -oops! Anyway-please don't be worried about these aspects of your transcripts-it's very normal.

Interview #2

The second round of interviews is about to take place, especially for those of you who I interviewed in December last year or January/February this year. The format is much the same as the first interview with the tape recorder and a range of questions, although we can begin by checking out if you have anything about the transcript from interview 1 that you want to talk about before moving on.

There are four parts (or themes), to the interview:

- The first part is a general opening question about how the past four or five months have been for you in your teaching.
- The second part of the interview will focus on talking with you about your experiences this year as a newly qualified teacher in terms of those moments (events, experiences, thoughts etc.) when you felt well prepared, or well qualified, and those moments when you didn't. These are the kinds of experiences that you have been asked to document (write about, draw about) in the exercise book I gave you at the first interview. Remember, the study is very interested in your experiences as someone who has recently graduated with an early childhood teaching qualification and is now out there in the complex, and at times demanding world of early childhood education.

- The third part of the interview asks you to think about your teacher education programme and talk about the kinds of things you did there that now seem to be most useful or important to you.
- The last part of the interview is interested in whether you are getting any particular support as a newly qualified teacher in your centre.

Keeping in touch

That's all for now. As usual, I can be contacted by phone, cell, or by email Take care and see you soon. **Kate**

Appendix H: Individual interview schedule –Interview 1

Choosing teaching

1a Can we begin by telling me what you were doing before you began your [teacher education] course.

- What was your main occupation?
- What other types of work have you experienced?

1b Tell me about how and why you chose to become a teacher- what were your reasons

- Were there any people and/or experiences that influenced you to teach over other possible careers?

1c Why did you choose the particular teacher education programme that you enrolled in?

- Did you consider applying for any other programmes?
- In what ways has the programme lived up to your expectations?

Phenomenon of preparedness

2a So, thinking about your time over the last three years [on the course] can you tell me about a time or an experience that stands out in your mind because it shows what it means to have learned something important to you about being a teacher

- that speaks to you about your sense of preparedness for teaching?
- a particular instance or situation when you thought to yourself “yes-this makes me feel really prepared”

2b Can you think of a time when you were left with the feeling that you weren't prepared, can you talk about that?

Experience of ITE programme

3a Have a think about your teacher education programme and what you expected it to be like –what do you think about it now that you are ready to graduate?

- How do your feelings of preparedness as mentioned previously fit with what you experienced on your course?
- How has the course contributed to your feelings of preparedness?

3b Can you think of ways that things could have been done differently to enhance your feelings of preparedness?

3c If you could make the decision again, would you choose the same programme?

Why/why not

3d What was the best aspect of your course and why was that so great for you?

Appendix I: Individual interview schedule –Interview 2

Teaching

1a Can you walk me through the last five months or so –what has it been like for you?

- [FB participant] –Has being qualified made a difference to how you have experienced yourself as a teacher? Or to what you have been expected to do?
- [PS participant] What's it like being 'the new kid on the block'-the beginning teacher?

1b Can you tell me about a typical day at your centre? [elicit concrete details]

Phenomenon of preparedness

2a Can you tell me about any experiences that you've had over the past few months that stand out for you because they are about feeling /well prepared or well qualified
[recall events using concrete details]

- The actual day
- The place
- What they said
- To what extent did your teacher education programme prepare you for this?

2b Can you tell me about one of the best days you've had since graduating/being qualified?

- What was so good about that
- In what ways did your course prepare you for this?

2c What about a time, an experience when you've been left with the feeling that you weren't sufficiently prepared or well qualified for an aspect of your work?

- How would you have expected your teacher education programme to have prepared you for this experience?

2d To date, overall how well prepared/well qualified have you felt?

- In what ways do you see this as a reflection of your teacher education programme and in what ways is it a reflection of personal features or life experiences?

2e Every day you are practicing as a teacher and gaining more experience. Is this experience changing your teaching? How? [teacher change]

Experience of teacher education programme

3a So, thinking back to your teacher education programme, what has been the most helpful to you as a beginning/newly qualified teacher this year?

- Are there any areas you now recognise as areas that you would have liked to have learned more about or focused more on in your programme?

3b (test hypothesis) A lot of people say their teacher education programme was a waste of time –what do you think about that?

Appendix J: Group interview schedule –Interview 1

Introductory round:

- Ask each participant to introduce themselves (on tape) and to say how it's been for them since they left their teacher education and have been teaching (as NQTs)

Lead in comment:

In the first interview I attempted to find out what 'being prepared' as a teacher meant to each of you. This was because for a long time initial teacher education has been referred to as 'teacher preparation'. I wondered what 'being prepared' meant to early childhood students because most of the research to date has been carried out in the primary and secondary sectors.

Tonight I want to further explore the meanings of 'being prepared' and what you think teacher education was about, now that you have been teaching for the past 9 months.

Question 1

- I know this sounds like a really dumb question –but what was your teacher education course about for you? What did it mean to you? [probe: why did you do it/what did you want from it?]

Question 2

- What was its purpose? What do you think these courses are trying to achieve?

Question 3

- [Pre-service] Did it [teacher education] change you? By the end of the course were you a different person? If so in what way? [this is the learning question]
- [Field-based] The next area I'd like to explore is the idea that many of you mentioned that because you were learning about teaching alongside actually teaching, you found it difficult to talk about particular/specific things that you actually learned on your course. What do you now see as some of the things you learned about being a teacher over the three years of the course? I am wondering- did it change you?

Question 3

[Lead in] One of the constant dilemmas in teacher education is whether it is doing too little or too much to prepare teachers for their first years in teaching (Liston, Whitcomb & Borko,

2006) or whether it is too theoretical or not practical enough. With this in mind here is the next question:

- Was your teacher education course well targeted to the job of a teacher? [Probe: If yes-in what ways? If not –why not?]

Question 4

[Lead in] Typically teachers continue to learn a lot in their first years as a newly qualified teacher:

- [Pre-service] In what ways do you see yourself as continuing to learn or change as a teacher? What do you feel you are still needing to learn about?
- [Field-based] In what ways do you see yourselves as continuing to learn or change as a teacher?

Question 5

- Looking back, what advice would you give people who design these courses? (content?/ structure?). I'm wondering -what advice would you give your lecturers?

Question 6

- [Pre-service] I noticed at interview 2, most of you seemed a bit overwhelmed –how are you feeling now about being a teacher?
- [Field-based] I noticed at the second interview that most of you seemed really 'flat'- were you? If so what was that about for you?

Thank everyone for coming and allow them time to mingle once interview over

Appendix K: Group interview schedule –Interview 2

Order of group interview

1. Begin with introductory round
2. A last look at preparedness
3. Feedback on themes
4. The idea of becoming a teacher
5. Induction/teacher registration
6. Long term plans re teaching
7. Conclusion/poroporoaki

[Field-based group open with karakia]

Introductory round:

Question 1

- So, briefly, how have things been going for you since we last meet?

Question 2

- *What's been going well for you at work this year? What is it that makes you feel good about your teaching or about being a teacher?*

Question 2b

- I'm interested in areas of your teaching role and teaching practice that cause you to do lots of thinking about these days (deeply considering or reconsidering)

Question 3 [feedback on themes]

Field-based themes

- Being prepared is about: learning lots

Discuss this theme and ask (if appropriate): In what ways have you retained much of your new learning or have you slipped back since finishing the course? [wash-out effects]

- Being prepared is about: feeling more confident

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): I am wondering about whether there is a relationship between having achieved at the level of the diploma and confidence, or is it mostly at the centre level where many of you have taken on new responsibilities?

- Being prepared is about: being validated/being recognised

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): I understand that being validated is important, especially as your practice may have been of a high standard previously, but I am wondering whether you felt sufficiently extended by the course, or whether it supported you to move outside your comfort zones and explore new ways of working with children/families/colleagues?

- Being prepared is about: being professional

Discuss theme and ask: What does being professional mean to you now?

- Being prepared is about: learning while teaching

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): How supportive or effective was your centre in helping you to apply theory into practice and what helped the most or hindered it?

- Being a qualified teacher is: teaching as struggling with complexity/working with dilemmas

Discuss theme and ask: Could teacher education have helped you here? I am interested in how the course content, structure and processes addressed or could have addressed the types of complexities you have raised [in previous interviews].

Pre-service themes

- Being prepared is about: not knowing what to expect/going into the unknown

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): how do you relate to this now?

- Being prepared is about: ‘being/feeling lost’

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): thinking back what contributed to feelings of being lost?

- Being prepared is about; ‘wanting the ‘real’’

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate) how does what you learned in teacher education relate to your experiences as NQTs-the real?.

- Being prepared is about ‘learning lots’

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): what are you still continuing to learn about 18 months later?

- Being prepared is about ‘no longer lost’ (the philosophy assignment)

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): what was it about this assignment and course that contributed to you no longer feeling lost? Or as most said ‘it brought everything together’.

- Being a qualified teacher is about ‘still lots to learn’

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): what are you having to learn most about nowadays?

- Being a qualified teacher is about ‘teaching is complex/having dilemmas’

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): how could your teacher education have supported you better with this?

- Being qualified is about ‘teaching as a professional’

Discuss theme and ask (if appropriate): does it feel as if you have joined a profession/that you are a professional? What does this (being a professional) mean to you?

Question 4

Becoming a teacher: Explain how I have been exploring through the data the idea of becoming a teacher and am wondering about the sort of teacher you feel as though you are becoming.

Discuss this theme and ask:

- So thinking back over the previous 18 months –what do you think about this idea of becoming, that we are in a process of change; even if we aren’t aware of it?
- In what ways have you changed over the past 18 months?
- In what ways do you sense of know you are changing as a teacher? And what helps or hinders this change?
- Do you have an image of the teacher you want to become?
- What do you think your teacher education provider wanted you to become? What was their image of the teacher they were promoting (trying to mould you into) [Probe –in what ways did you accept this image, resist it? What bits did you take up and which bits have you left behind?]

- What are the main areas of learning that you have done or are doing as a beginning/NQT teacher? [probe: professional knowledge (what are you getting more knowledgeable about?; professional practice (what are you getting better at))
- Professional identity: if you were to describe the teacher you are to a friend, how would you describe yourself?)
- Tell me about the support you are getting as a newly qualified teacher? [Probe: what support has been useful/; if involved in registration –how is it going/; If not involved in registration (at the last interview) is this still the situation and why (tell me about that)]

Long term plans re teaching

- What do you see yourself career-wise doing in five years? [Probe: who will do further study? (perhaps a teaching degree);
- How happy are you with choosing teaching as a career?

Conclusion/poroporaki

Thank participants for taking part in study and explain what happens next. Allow each to comment on the process if they desire to. Close with karakia [field-based group]

Appendix L: Programme Director Interview

Intended focus

The programme coordinator interview will be held after the first student interview. It is a single interview held to ascertain how the programme defines, describes (in course material) and operationalises teacher education as preparedness for teaching.

The research questions that the interview is intended to address are:

- How is ‘preparedness’ defined and described by the participating ITE institutions?
- How does the ITE programme structure, content and processes seek to prepare students for their role as teachers?

As this interview is held after the first student/newly graduated teacher interviews it will also be an opportunity for me to clarify any terms that the student participants have used which are not self-evident, or for me to check out any assumptions I have made, which relate to aspects of the programme organisation and administration. Care will be taken so that the identity of the student is kept confidential.

1. Context

1a. Tell me a bit about your role as Director and how you came to it?

2. Teacher education as preparation

2a: What are your thoughts about preparedness as a central organising concept in ITE and in early childhood ITE? How do you define it?

- How relevant is this concept/notion of preparedness to the programmes that you offer (institution)
- How does your ITE programme define a well-prepared graduating teacher?
- Is this the same for all the programmes that you offer?
- Does your graduate profile reflect these ideas? (ask for a copy of their graduate profile)

2b. So, if that's how you define a well prepared graduate, can you tell me some of the key design principles of your programme that allow students to achieve this?

- What are the underlying theories and assumptions of your programme relative to the notion of preparedness
- Programme structure

- Programme components (practicum, strands and courses, assessment etc.)

2c. In an ideal world, what do you think would be the features of a programme that prepared teachers really well?

3. ITE programme

3a. What do you consider are the strengths of your ITE programme [relative to the one students in this study from the particular institution have been engaged with]

3b. What have been the possibilities and constraints when designing and carrying out the programme

4. Influence of official bodies

4a. Which of the official bodies that have responsibility for initial teacher education (such as the NZ Teachers Council, MoE, NZQA) has had the greatest impact on your programme in terms of the preparation of teachers? And on your role as teacher educators?

- Why is this so?
- What about other official bodies and the impact of their policies?
- What is the relationship between the STD's and the 'Fit to be a teacher' criteria in relation to your programme and the preparation and sense of preparedness of graduates?
- How has the policy direction for qualified teachers outlined in the ECE strategic plan impacted on your programme?

5. Follow up or clarifying questions from student/NQT interviews

Before ending the interview I will ask each participant if there is anything else they would like to add and remind them that I will send the tape or the transcription for them to check and comment on.

Thank the person for their time and ask that I be given (if I haven't already) any documentation such as course handbooks, publicity information, course material such as course outlines, graduate profile, conceptual framework etc.