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Reconceptualising Relatedness in Education in 'Distanced' Times

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As schools and universities worldwide tentatively move beyond an initial emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the prospect of socially-distanced learning spaces prompts us to ask how we can maintain good educational relationships. Supporting students in a time of far-reaching changes means acknowledging that certain normalised practices, and the conceptual frameworks embedded within them, have come under significant duress. Resisting the urge to rush to quick solutions and seeing our common vulnerability and uncertainty as an opportunity for growth, we, a multi-disciplinary teacher education faculty, chose to pause and use this moment of recalibration to develop a new set of orienting priorities for teacher educators. We reflect on dynamics of care, control and power inherent in educational relationships and demonstrate how relatedness in education expands beyond the human and the local towards fostering a common sense of global and ecological responsibility.

Keywords: educational relationships, care, interdisciplinary, online teaching, teacher education, Covid-19

1. Introduction

The recent crisis has undoubtedly led to a disturbance in what is ordinary and normal - the experience of the uncanny, the rendering of the ordinary as strange, may itself be educational. Holidays are not holidays, Saturdays are not Saturdays and education

(understood in its popular sense) is not education. The rupture to normality and accompanying shift to new ways of educating prompted the authors, a group of teacher educators, to engage in a series of professional conversations, where we reflected on the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic. Initially these interdisciplinary conversations involved an exchange of practical knowledge and sharing of experience of online teaching. However, they turned rapidly towards broader questions of what our priorities and values should be during this time, and what those assumptions implied about our understanding of teacher education. At a time when the pressing need for immediate responses to the crisis threatened to become overwhelming, our conversations became a moment for pause and reflection and offered a form of professional and intellectual sustenance.

Our conversations were given an added impetus when we were invited to provide a webinar on education to the institute for the humanities and social sciences at our university. This event was broadcast and recorded in April 2020[1], at a critical point in the global spread of Covid-19, and for education internationally, with enforced school closures and uncertainty over college and state examinations. In developing this webinar we drew on our respective areas of expertise, which included the psychology, sociology, philosophy, technology and history of education as well as teacher professional learning.

Through our sustained interdisciplinary dialogue, we developed an understanding of the current context not only as a challenging and unsettling period but also as a moment in which we could look afresh at that to which we had become

[1] A video of this webinar is available to view at https://mooreinstitute.ie/2020/05/01/video-of-covid-19-response-webinar-education-during-covid-19-precarity-privilege-purpose/

accustomed. In this new strangeness, that which had only recently appeared unremarkable suddenly took on new significance. One such example was the seeming ease with which we had built relationships with our students, and they with theirs. With informal everyday interactions no longer possible, the hitherto 'ordinary' educational relationship started to look remarkable.

This paper captures our diverse voices and disciplinary perspectives as we grapple with the idea of educational relationships in this distanced, disembodied space. The paper is offered as a counterpoint to the rush for solutions and practical know-how that has characterised much of the emerging educational literature during the pandemic. By deliberately resisting neat answers, we highlight how thoughtful professional conversations might prompt us to look anew at the operation of relatedness in our practice and to reflect on how, following the present crisis, we might reimagine the ways we mobilise care in teacher education.

The following section sets the context for our dialogue by outlining some of the ways in which teacher education has come under duress in the current context and by giving an overview of some key issues in online teacher education both before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. We then present the key themes emerging from our discussions of relatedness and care in education, triggered, initially, by the question of how 'caring' relationships can be fostered and maintained in disembodied learning environments. In our exploration of this question, we have drawn on theory and exemplars of established and newly developing international practices.

2. Covid-19 and teaching in distanced times

2.1 School closures and the shift to distanced learning

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, schools and universities in nearly 190 countries worldwide closed, prompting a rapid turn to online teaching and home schooling (UNESCO 2020). The suddenness of the shift means that the experience of students, teachers, and parents during this time might more accurately be described as emergency remote teaching, as 'home schooling' correctly understood would imply a degree of intent and pre-planning (Hodges et al. 2020). While it is too soon to state with any degree of certainty what the long-term effects of this period will be, the emerging research identifies similar issues across international contexts where schools have been closed. These include inequities in access, problems with motivation and engagement, a lack of structural and pedagogical preparedness, challenges for family and professional life, issues in providing support to students with SEN, and difficulties for socio-emotional wellbeing (e.g. Doyle 2020; Lochner 2020). This last item comes through strongly in research from every sector but has been particularly prevalent for children and adolescents, for whom the removal from their school and peer communities has been challenging. Now, as schools tentatively reopen or adopt blended learning approaches, teacher educators are tasked with finding ways to prepare student teachers to teach either online or in changed classroom settings and also to support them in developing appropriate pedagogical skills. Furthermore, they must adapt their modelling of caring professional relationships to the online space thus demonstrating to student teachers how connections can be maintained despite the change in circumstances.

The literature on online teaching suggests that a carefully designed approach to using digital technologies can be highly effective in overcoming many of the traditional barriers of space and time. In particular, the research highlights how the 'digital divide' (between those who have/do not have access to technology) and 'digital use divide' (those who have/do not have the relevant expertise with educational technology)

both need to be addressed, to ensure equitable design in mobile and blended learning (Hall et al. 2020).

One commonly used framework in online teaching is the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework (Mishra and Koehler 2006), which offers a theoretical underpinning for the relationship between content knowledge (CK), pedagogical knowledge (PK) and technological knowledge (TK). Another popular model among practitioners is the Substitution Augmentation Modification Redefinition (SMAR) taxonomy-based approach (Puentedura 2006). However, one of the key challenges associated with online education, which is not necessarily addressed by these models, is how to account for educational context and for the relationships between teacher, student, and content (e.g. Hamilton et al. 2016).

2.2 Online teacher education, pre- and during Covid-19

In the pre-Covid literature, the idea that online teacher education can at most be a pale imitation of face-to-face contexts is rebutted. This literature highlights opportunities for developing new approaches and priorities, with authors arguing for a more expansive understanding of how teacher educators can engage and support student teachers in online spaces (e.g. Dyment et al. 2018). A key set of findings emerging from the literature is that there does not appear to be a significant difference in terms of student engagement between online and face-to-face teacher education. Indeed, when appropriately structured, online approaches can prompt increased engagement from students, particularly in terms of dialogue and discussion (Piro & Anderson 2018; Kim & Schallert 2011). Flexibility is another significant benefit shown to be associated with online or blended programmes as such programmes make teacher education accessible to students who are either geographically dispersed or have other commitments. Research also flags issues of equity of access and student motivation (Cramp, 2015).

However, while the literature highlights the potential of online teacher education, a systematic review of the research by Dyment and Downing (2020) suggests that there is a need to pay explicit attention to the theoretical frameworks that underpin online education practice. They indicate that existing research focuses primarily on practical aspects, such as the types of platforms and software used, and point to a gap in knowledge around epistemological and pedagogical assumptions in the online space.

This gap identified by Dyment and Downing's review is clearly in need of attention in the current period and it is beginning to be addressed by the early literature emerging on initial teacher education (ITE) during Covid-19, which tends to fall into two categories. The first category focuses on the immediate context of the move to online teaching, encompassing topics such as lesson planning, course design, the effectiveness of various distance learning platforms, professional development, access and equity, and teacher and student wellbeing (e.g. Hartshorne et al. 2020; Ferdig et al. 2020; Moorhouse 2020; Trust & Whalen 2020). Meanwhile, in the second category (into which this paper falls), reflective pieces and editorials raise broader questions around what the longer-term implications of the crisis might be for education and how teacher education should respond (Allen et al. 2020; Selwyn 2020; Tranier et al. 2020).

3. Interdisciplinary conversations

The authors form part of an interdisciplinary teacher education faculty in an Irish university, where we teach across four post-primary ITE programmes in the areas of, respectively, philosophy, sociology, history, technology, psychology, and professional practice. In Ireland, schools and universities were closed on March 13th 2020, following which all teaching took place online. Our webinar, referred to in the introduction, took place six weeks later and reflected on the initial implications of the school closures, drawing on early research findings and on our own experiences. The challenge of

maintaining educational relationships emerged as a dominant theme in the preparation for this webinar and in the participant discussion during the event itself. Therefore, we decided to deepen and extend our exploration of this theme through a process of interdisciplinary conversations.

The eight authors met online for three conversations, each of which was structured around a collaborative document circulated in advance where we shared thoughts and comments on the broad theme of relationships in education. The conversations were captured by audio recording and written memos. Following the third conversation, each participant prepared a short written piece from the perspective of their respective discipline reflecting on relatedness and care in education in the context of the pandemic. The three lead authors then reviewed each of the written pieces, along with the recordings and the written memos, to draw out themes around which to structure the paper, continuing our dialogue during the writing process with three further online meetings. The paper was circulated to all participants for comment and approval before finalising.

4. Core themes arising from our conversations about relatedness and care in distanced times

4.1 Exploring conventional conceptualisations of care

Disciplinary perspectives on care and relatedness

> Are you saying that instead of accepting care as a fundamentally positive value and behaviour, we need to problematise it a bit?
> We need to conceptualise what care means. Care in itself isn't good or bad or too much or too little, it's about understanding how *best* to care.

The centrality of care and relatedness to education became particularly apparent in our discussions about the shift to distanced learning. While we had always acknowledged the centrality of care and relatedness, the sudden changes to how we socially interact

caused us to bring explicit attention to these concepts and to interrogate what we mean when we talk about 'educational relationships'. The value to both students and teachers of good student-teacher relationships is widely recognised in the literature (e.g. Hattie 2018; Claessens et al. 2017). However, as our conversations showed, there is less clarity on what exactly 'good' student-teacher relationships look like. How relatedness and care are conceptualised varies across the disciplines.

Care Theory, one of the most prevalent philosophical frameworks for theorising relationships in education, was popularised by Nel Noddings (1984, 1992). For Noddings relation is 'ontologically basic, and the caring relation is ethically (morally) basic. Every human life starts in relation, and it is through relations that a human individual emerges' (Noddings 2012, 771). Consequently, caring should not be thought of as something that happens 'on top of all the other demands of teaching', but should undergird what teachers do: 'When that climate is established and maintained, everything else goes better' (777).

Alongside Noddings' work, which has come to be widely adopted in the educational literature, particularly in philosophy and sociology, various psychological perspectives are commonly used to theorise relationships in education. Three such perspectives are Self-Determination Theory (Ryan and Deci 2000); the Humanist paradigm and neo-Humanist approaches (e.g., Positive Education; Seligman 2011); and Attachment Theory (Bowlby 1969). While these frameworks differ in some aspects, they have in common an understanding of relatedness as an innate need to feel emotional connectedness with others.

Sociologists of Education hold care and relatedness in high esteem and see them as necessary precursors to effective learning and teaching, in particular with respect to minority and disadvantaged students. Poor student-teacher relationships, and a

perceived lack of caring by teachers, underpinned by a lack of criticality in terms of ideology and pedagogy, contribute significantly to exacerbating educational disadvantage, and inequality/ies in education more widely (Freire 1997; Reay 2017). The Psychological literature supports this position. Research has shown positive teacher-student relationships are particularly important for students who have multiple risk factors in their lives (Sabol and Pianta 2012).

Care and relatedness in higher education and teacher education

> We constantly emphasise the importance of care, it's one of the core values enshrined in the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers.
> It's about striking a balance too, a lot of what being a teacher educator is about is knowing when to let go.

The literature on higher education points to the lack of value placed on care; indeed, Lynch (2010) argues that 'a logic of care*less*ness' is pervasive. Internationally, neoliberal and related managerialist policies, combined with inadequate state funding, have led to a commercially-driven system. This system is characterised by high student numbers, heavy staff workloads, the prioritisation of research over teaching and student support (and caring), significant inequalities in terms of access for under-represented student groups (HEA 2018a) and contractual security and promotion for staff, particularly women (HEA 2018b). One could point to the increased provision of student support services such as counsellors and personal tutors as evidence that there has been a growth in attention recently to the importance of pastoral care in higher education, certainly in comparison to academia's traditional emphases (cf. Becher and Trowler 2001) on objectivity, formality, hierarchy, and student independence. Arguably, however, the parallel growth in the importance attributed to student satisfaction surveys and evaluations suggest that even this increase in care is tied into accountability and performativity discourses.

Teacher education, which suffers from a 'status problem' (Labaree 2008) in universities relative to other disciplines, occupies a somewhat liminal space in HE. It is governed by and must work within the requirements of managerialist performativity, and yet, like other professionally-oriented disciplines, connections to and relationships with the community (in ITE's case, with schools, teachers, and students) are fundamental to its ethos and practice (Heinz and Fleming 2019). As student teachers establish and develop their professional identities during ITE, they are faced with a myriad of contexts and experiences, all of which have a lasting impact on how they engage in their practice (Flores and Day 2006). Teacher education seeks to centre and model caring professional relationships; mentorship and supportive relationships with peers and teacher educators have been shown to have positive benefits for students as they negotiate the uncertainty which accompanies learning to teach (Goldstein and Freedman 2003). There is, however, a delicate balance between providing essential support in the early phases of ITE and judging when to step back and encourage student teacher autonomy and self-sufficiency (Le Cornu 2013). Relationship work has, in the context of COVID-19, been challenged by physical distance and the 'newness' of teaching in the online space.

4.2 Repositioning care in the disembodied online space

The humanising effect of distanced 'private' spaces

> This might be a perfect opportunity for developing more equal and authentic educational relationships with our student teachers and with the teachers and schools supporting them on their placements.

Some of us felt that the unique emergency pandemic context within which we were working – and coping – had resulted in more authentic lecturer-student relationships.

Whilst the campus environment may allow for more interaction and spatial closeness, we noted that HE pedagogy was, traditionally, characterised by a sense of formality, and, ironically, 'distance'. In stark contrast, we saw the possibility that 'emergency remote teaching' could facilitate a new type of 'levelling' and reciprocity. As Roll and Ventresca (2020) observe, academics and students have been brought into each other's home spaces. What one sees there can be drastically different from the neutral space of a lecture hall or seminar room: a family member making tea behind a student's desk, an unmade bed in the background, an academic with no childcare rushing to rescue a toddler while online teaching.

Whilst it is important to consider issues around professional boundaries and self-protection (cf. Macfarlane 2004), we have gained a new perspective regarding the potential benefits of teacher self-disclosure. Such benefits may include 'equalising power relationships between lecturers and students' (Macfarlane 2004).

In our discussions, we wondered if such potentialities might be particularly important for students from minority and disadvantaged backgrounds as they may be at particular risk of an absence of presence. The emergent research on the effects of school closures points to an exacerbation of educational inequalities (e.g. Doyle 2020) and we emphasised in our discussions how maintaining supportive relationships may be particularly important in mitigating this risk. A teacher educator's cautious self-disclosure may be particularly beneficial for student teachers from disadvantaged backgrounds who may be less confident in their career choice due to personal negative schooling experiences (Keane, Heinz, and Lynch 2018).

However, we acknowledged that some of our students, and lecturers, and, possibly, some students from disadvantaged backgrounds in particular may prefer the

‘neutral’ college space as it may offer a protective anonymity and freedom to be, or become, what they want.

Shifting positionalities - sharing uncertainty and learning together

> We will all be in the same boat – we don’t know what teaching and learning will look like. What will happen to social constructivism? Will teachers have to teach from the top of the class? Will group work even be possible?

We shared concerns regarding both the content and delivery of our programmes. While some well-established practices will require only small adaptations, we will be ‘in the dark’ for quite some time regarding the impact of distance on learning environments and student engagement. Many of the core pedagogical principles underpinning our programmes are jeopardised, or at least in need of significant reconfiguration, with no time for testing, let alone researching, adapted or new approaches. How will we prepare our students for a new context we know so little about? Do we need to ‘Covid question’ and ‘Covid proof’ everything we have been teaching? Will we introduce our students to the same theories and pedagogies adding a BUT? How will we guide them regarding the HOW? What is our responsibility regarding how they understand, and act within, the ‘new normal’?

The suddenness and significant scale of change made us feel isolated, vulnerable and insecure – the firm ground supporting our practices seemed to be giving way. However, alongside the challenges we also considered the potential benefits that might result from diminished confidence regarding our expertise. Any certainty we had in our teaching identities is challenged by the need to re-examine and develop our practice. In this process of learning and reflecting, hierarchies shift and we are placed alongside our students as we adapt to a new context.

More than ever before, we are compelled to act as co-learners. Uncertainty will be our companion and sharing our vulnerabilities a necessity. But how much uncertainty can students endure at the beginning of an already challenging and often stressful journey? Finding the right balance between caution, uncertainty and confidence in our relationships with student teachers will prove challenging. While embracing new opportunities related to collaboration and co-learning we need to remember the needs of our student teachers who are experiencing significantly higher levels of uncertainty, and related anxiety, at the beginning of a new career (Murray 2020). Indeed, we need to keep a much closer eye on our students' needs as they may well change significantly.

From knowingness to knowing-less

> What are good educational relationships anyway? How do we know that we are caring in the right way? (Why) Are we assuming that face-to-face relationships are superior? When does caring become controlling?

As we started to interrogate our understandings regarding the centrality and nature of care in teaching we began to wonder whether the conventional theories, concepts and empirical evidence (presented in section 4.1) had fuelled perfectionist aspirations regarding the development of caring student-teacher relationships. We interrogated Noddings' (2012) approach and, in particular, assumptions about care as something that can be 'completed' when the cared-for shows they have 'received it' (772), and 'empathy' as accurately realisable with sufficient commitment (773). We wondered whether embodied environments were indeed necessary, or unquestionably beneficial, for both carer and cared-for to reach through space and connect via such means as 'smiles and nods' (772). We felt that small group activities, as envisaged by Noddings

(ibid.), could only be poorly simulated in the online space (even when using break out rooms) and/or in sparsely populated static classrooms.

While we initially sought ways to salvage Noddings' project, our deepening conversations began to focus on ways in which perfectionist and performative conceptualisations of care were problematic and unrealisable in ways that extended beyond the new obstacles. We considered Emmanuel Levinas' (1976) account of alterity and the significance in his philosophy of the face of the 'Other'. For Levinas, relationships are built not on recognition or completion, but an acknowledgement of 'otherness' and 'lack'. His observation that 'knowledge seizes hold of its object denying it possession and independence of being' and his description of the shocking experience of the Other's face when that face resists the violation of the desire to know and possess, triggered reflections on assumptions regarding how well we know our students. What may look like 'caring' in Care Ethics might really represent epistemic violence, or misuse of power, in its drive towards completion and perfection. Williams and Standish (2016) note that for Levinas 'the face signals an interiority that I can never reach or subsume; it directs me toward the impassable distance between me and the other person that not even the closest spatial proximity could transverse' (365).

Embarking on our journey into online ITE provision means that techniques requiring close spatial proximity – which may do violence to the 'Other' – are denied. Zoom meetings quite literally do not allow us to look the 'other' – *our students* – in the eye. We are not able to 'show how much we care' or to 'manage classroom behaviour or engagement' through physical proximity and/or positioning. Perhaps this 'loss of spatial closeness' (and with it 'control') houses an opportunity for better, more cautious, and more equal educational relationships. Online teaching may help us and our student teachers to refrain from assuming we 'know' our students or, indeed, the nature of our

relationship with them. We are reconsidering the 'taken for granted' and developing a deeper, more cautious, sensitivity.

4.3 A more expansive understanding of relatedness

> It's education's role to help us live critically and compassionately, and not only in respect of each other but of the planet.
> So does that therefore extend the idea of relatedness to the planet as well? Because if we're talking about relatedness do we have to include that as opposed to just relatedness between humans?

What applies to human relations can be equally pertinent as regards our relationship to what is not human. As the pandemic brought home to us, our certainties about our place in the world can very quickly collapse in the face of a crisis outside of our control. The disturbance of the self and an increased attentiveness to Otherness calls forth the explorer within us, as we notice, maybe for the first time, how little we can comprehend of that which we thought we knew. This new appreciation of alterity has the potential to bring about a more expansive view of the world and of our relation to it and to others within it. Our new awareness of our human vulnerability in the face of the pandemic prompts us to reflect more deeply on our relatedness to, and dependency on, the world around us. Today's children and young people face a future in which much is uncertain about the world which they will inhabit. Intergenerational responsibility demands that, rather than shying away from this uncertainty and attempting to return to 'normal', we take this opportunity to redirect our priorities and consciously place our relationship to the world around us at the centre of what we do in teacher education (Goodwin 2020). Climate justice, ecological justice, and development education, heretofore add-ons to what was considered the core business of teacher education,

should inform how we design our modules, what content we include, and which questions we ask.

Adopting this more expansive view of our relatedness and extending it to that which is not human raises questions about our relationship to technology. Undoubtedly, digital technology's already firm foothold in education has increased during this crisis. The development and positioning of influential organisations in relation to education during the pandemic has focused on the intersections of education technologies and education policies (Williamson 2020). In the rush to provide for emergency remote teaching, decisions that would previously have been mulled over were made almost overnight. We saw commercial digital technologies make rapid inroads into schools and educational institutions, whilst concerns about data sharing and security were swept aside. Prolonged screen time, formerly a maligned vice, became an imperative. Most social interaction took place through the medium of technology.

Of course, we acknowledge that without technology teaching and learning would most likely have stalled entirely. Yet, while cognisant of its value, we wonder where our relatedness to educational technology might imply. Here, it is not enough merely to see ourselves as *users* of educational technology, we also have to consider how it mediates our experience of the world. As technology encroaches further into educational contexts, it brings with it powerful vested interests and orthodoxies that may not always align with what is sound educationally. For example, the drive towards measurement, profiling, and algorithmic prescription in the name of increased efficiency and better outcomes arguably fuels the perfectionist desire to 'know' that closes off alternative potentials and possibilities in education. In this context, the comfort in leaving questions of technology to the educational technologists is no longer acceptable or conscionable. The well-established literatures on educational technology,

data governance, and algorithmic teaching and learning must inform our programme design more explicitly if we are to uphold our responsibility to educate student teachers for the world in which they will find themselves.

5. Discussion – Reconceptualising relatedness in distant times

Triggered by the urgency of the Covid-19 pandemic, we engaged in interdisciplinary conversations that initially focused on how we could 'preserve' the good relationships that characterised our work. However, the experience of being unmoored and uncertain in a changed present prompted us to look more critically at what we had so recently taken for granted. As hierarchies of expertise and knowledge shifted under the common newness of the experience of distance learning, we found ourselves interrogating the nature of these student-teacher relationships and our responsibilities as teacher educators within a changed world. Where once we might have hoped to 'get to know' our students so as to 'create good relationships', we developed an appreciation for cautiously 'knowing less' about our students, choosing, instead, to aim for more considered, less controlling and more holistic ways of relating with them. The enforced distance of the online space prompted us to reflect on the power dynamics inherent in student-teacher relationships and to recognise how, by respecting distance and alterity, we could model caring professional relationships and resist the urge to control or to smother. Seeing our common vulnerability and uncertainty in this new space as an opportunity for change rather than an obstacle to overcome could allow us to build more equal, human, and collaborative learning relationships with our student teachers.

Our framing of the current context in this way developed alongside, and often in response to, a proliferation of tutorials, webinars, and emerging literatures that focused on the 'smooth' running of the online education space. Guided by the gap in the online

teacher education literature identified by Dyment and Downing (2020), we take a moment to step back and ask what assumptions are at work in these efforts to keep uncertainty at bay. Perhaps the most powerful of those assumptions is the idea that maintaining as much 'normality' as possible in education is necessary so as to enable a seamless return to things as they were. What is problematic here, of course, is that a return to normal is not necessarily entirely desirable or good. Little changed in education following the previous, comparable global pandemic, the misnamed 'Spanish Flu' (1918-20). The rush to reclaim normality resulted in a missed opportunity to rethink what education could or should be. We need to ensure that we do not make the same mistake and miss an opportunity to re-examine our assumptions, taken-for-granted practices and priorities.

The rupture to normality brought about by the pandemic highlighted to us how our everyday practices are shaped by powerful discourses of perfectionism. Indeed, these perfectionist aspirations did not abate during the crisis, but merely shifted towards, firstly, the need to appear professional and in control in the online space and, secondly, a performative acceleration and intensification of productivity. Our current lived experience further highlights the way in which our personal and professional lives are shaped by structures of power and discourses of performativity in a 'careless' higher education environment. We question on whom the 'burden' (or pleasure?) (Lynch et al., 2009) of care and relatedness will fall in our efforts to meaningfully engage our students online while also caring for our own children and elderly relatives? What of the academy's responsibility to care – in a meaningful way - for its staff shouldering multiple unsupported roles in the context of a global pandemic?

6. Conclusion – A new set of orienting priorities for teacher education

As we stated at the outset, this paper does not pretend to have answers or neat solutions. Rather, it is an urge to resist the rush back to normality and, instead, to take the moment of discombobulation offered to us to develop a new set of orienting priorities for teacher educators. In this, it will be imperative that we resist the siren call to perfectionism so characteristic of the 'old normal' and address the moment in a cautious and questing spirit.

We have been prompted to bring a new attentiveness to the operation of power and control within conventional models of care in education. We have also been called to become more critically alert to the increasing power of digital technologies in educational contexts. Furthermore, we have argued that relatedness in education expands beyond the local towards fostering a common sense of global and environmental responsibility. Conceptualising relatedness in education in a more holistic way brings with it a moral imperative to develop more critically-oriented teacher education programmes that reach beyond local contexts and human relationships to foster social justice and a meaningful 'global' mindset (Cochran-Smith 2020; Goodwin 2020).

Our conversations have demonstrated the value of deep interdisciplinary engagement and of pausing to explore the 'taken for granted'. They have also highlighted the need to develop a new set of orienting principles for our teacher education programmes. The realisation of globally informed and responsible teacher education programmes will require a transformation of our teacher educator identities, regular confrontation with new dilemmas and a significant expansion of our role (Heinz and Fleming 2019). Of course, these are grand, even idealistic, statements that we will need to flesh out further at the level of practice.

In this initial phase we have, together, developed a more expansive concept of relatedness in education that spans across classrooms, beyond borders and beyond the human. Realising our vision will challenge us as teacher educators to explore new perspectives and to develop new competencies and deeper understandings, particularly in the fields of global relatedness, ecology, technology and data science. University-based teacher education offers us the opportunity to build relationships with colleagues with expertise in these, and other, areas. Developing practical wisdom – *phronesis* (Aristotle, *Nic. Eth*., Book VI, 1141a) – in the new and uncertain context will require close observation, careful perception and strong commitment to experimentation and interdisciplinary collaboration, both with colleagues within teacher education and across the university. Perhaps one of the most important first steps is to call on education policy makers, higher education colleagues and global organisations to recognise the importance of, and better support, interdisciplinary, justice-oriented and globally responsible teacher education.

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