Teaching for 3Cs: Centring imagination in teacher education

Abstract

In view of globalization, bureaucratization, marketization and commercialization, the context of education has changed. In response, the critical capacities of student teachers need to be developed so that they better understand and empathize with one-another and are able to see the complexities of the world through multiple perspectives. This, in turn, necessarily requires nurturing of imagination, which we consider in relation to the 3Cs: Care, Critique and Creativity. We commence with an overview of current developments affecting education and review existing practices in teacher education. We then provide the context of a practice-based enquiry that used metaphors and objects to explore student teachers' understanding of personal experiences. We conclude with connecting the reflective process of the enquiry to the nurturing of imagination and the 3Cs.

Keywords:

imagination, care, critique, creativity, teacher education, metaphors, objects,

Introduction

> *We who are teachers have to accommodate ourselves to lives as clerks or functionaries if we did not have in mind a quest for a better state of things for those we teach and for the world we live in* (Greene 1995: 1).

Education is by definition forward looking. Its motivation, aims, content, organization and pedagogy are shaped by perceptions of the future which have resulted more recently in increasing attention being paid to the importance of imagination and its place in education. This may be attributed to thinkers in different fields realizing that the responses to the opportunities and challenges in the coming decades require the power of human imagination as much as acquisition of knowledge and skills. As Egan (2010) notes:

> Accumulation of knowledge and psychological development are neither of them the 'efficient cause' of education. The dynamic, the efficient cause, is that generative, meaning-construction, rather mysterious capacity which each of us possess, which is central to learning, and which I will, again, identify as the imagination (32).

To begin with, much attention has been paid in futuristic studies to developments in artificial intelligence and its potential impact on jobs. For instance, McKinsey's report on 'Technology, Jobs and the Future of work' (Manyika 2017) observes that though the impact of technology, and particularly, digitization, is uneven across countries and industries, "many activities that workers carry out today have the potential to be automated" (n.p.) and that "if whole occupations are not automated, partial automation (where only some activities that make up an occupation are automated) will affect almost all occupations to a greater or lesser degree" (n.p.). In most such projections, society is told that the jobs that will survive and the new ones that will be created will be those that require imagination, creativity, and human touch.

The issue, however, is not just about which jobs will survive and which will be created. It is equally about how the gains of productivity through technology get distributed when they are not disbursed through rising employment and equitable wages. As is evidenced in recent years, the consequence is that wealth gets concentrated in the hands of fewer and fewer people, leading to increasing wealth and income gap (Kramers 2017). This then has serious social and political implications, including contributing to religious and ethno-national extremisms, job insecurity and dystopic visions of the future (Panjwani et al. 2017). Politically, rising inequities adversely effects democratic processes, as the consolidated economic power leads to disproportional political influence of corporate and wealth elites (Drutman 2015). Given this reality, developing student teachers' critical capacities so that they better understand and are able to empathize with one-another and their future students, and are able to see the complexities of the world through multiple perspectives, necessarily requires nurturing of imagination.

Arguably, a more important issue than those discussed thus far is that of climate change and the human impact on it. One outcome of humans' scientific capacity is that our activities now have an agentical role in shaping the fate of the environment. Some argue that we have moved into a new geological era – Anthropocene. The advocates of this idea maintain that the modern period and climate change are born through overlapping processes, and if this is so, the question is, how do we bring these overlapping processes together in our understanding of the world? In other words, human induced climate change forces us to rethink the historic distinction between human history and natural history. Humans now wield a geological force and our resultant footprint is large. Humans began to acquire this agency during the Industrial Revolution, and it has escalated in the second half of the twentieth century and the beginning

of the twenty-first century. Given this, the distinction between human and natural histories has begun to collapse.

In ‘Humanities in the Anthropocene: The Crisis of an Enduring Kantian Fable’ (2016), Dipesh Chakrabarty argues that in this era we need to move from a human centered view of the world, which underpins formal educational systems, to a life-centric view of the world, which extends the idea of justice beyond humans to other forms of life and environment more broadly. As Chakrabarty argues, “the questions of justice that follow from climate-change science require us to possess an ability to see something from another person’s point of view” (378). The ability, in other words, to empathize, is itself a product of imagination.

Why has much of formal schooling not responded to these challenges? The answer lies partly in the ways in which schooling has been shaped in recent decades. Let us take the United Kingdom as an example, though the underlying trend is widespread. Over the last two decades, the educational landscape within the UK has changed drastically. Where previously schools were governed in local education authorities, there are now new cohorts of schools that are run in trusts. These trusts are autonomous and therefore make decisions relating to curriculum, governance and teaching. They are still funded with public monies, but in effect they are partially commercialized business enterprises. In order to obtain funding, schools have to demonstrate their business viability and the value they add to their pupils. With funding being calculated on the basis of pupil numbers, schools are in direct competition with one another. Teachers are pressured to demonstrate their pupils are improving and learning. Regular tests and baseline data are used to predict grades that pupils should be achieving. And if they are not, then the belief is that teachers and schools have not pulled their weight, have failed to add the expected value to each pupil, the consequence of which is rescinded funding and pay. This neoliberal, performance-driven commercialization, marketisation and bureaucratization has come to shape much of the Western educational context (Tilak 2008; Gewirtz & Cribb 2013).

Based on these socio-economic shifts, we argue that current theories and practices in teacher education are not sufficiently geared to help teachers prepare their students for the kinds of futures they are likely to grow into and help shape. In particular, there is a need to give importance to the nurturing of imagination to help develop what we call the three Cs of education: Care, Criticality and Creativity. As we globally enter a new phase of digital and technological revolution, there is a need for bringing in new considerations to bear upon teacher education programs. One such consideration is to give centrality to educating imagination. We propose that drawing on social theories related to imagination will help design more effective teacher education research and practices, better preparing teachers and, in turn, students for the demands of our current and future world.

Focus on theory: 3Cs and Imagination

The inescapable growth of interconnections and interdependences among and between human beings and other forms of life means we are capable of both helping and harming each other and the natural world. Educationally, this means we need a formative aim of nurturing an attitude of care, the first of the 3Cs. Rabbi Hillel says, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? But if I am only for myself, who am I? If not now, when?" (Perkei Avot 1:14). The practice of care, in ethical terms, "implies that there is moral significance in the fundamental elements of relationships and dependencies in human life" (Sander-Staudt n.d, n.p.). It involves learning about, feeling and meeting the needs of the self and the other. The other, in our context, includes not only those of immediate significance but also strangers (Apiah 2007) as well as the environment (Chakrabarty 2016). Though care is often associated with feminist theory, and in particular with the works of psychologist Carol Gilligan and philosopher Nel Noddings, the notion is to be seen in a wider framework including social and environmental concerns. In this regard, the definition of care proposed by Tronto (1994) seems to be most appropriate: "a species of activity that includes everything we do to maintain, contain, and repair our 'world'

so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves, and our environment" (103).

This definition sees care as a practice that would entail empathy, the cognitive and affective elements of identifying the need for care, the motivational aspect of willingness to care and a capacity dimension of ability to care. Empathy, the ability to see matters from another perspective is rooted in imagination. A fertile imagination allows a person to understand the perspective and, to a degree, feel the suffering of another being. Applied to the educational context, care relates to the immediate classroom full of pupils but also the wider society, which teachers are a part of and must take into consideration. As education is not happening in a vacuum, so teachers need the capacity of care and critical empathy (Boler 1997) to better understand the tensions between societal challenges and demands and the needs of children and adolescents who themselves are complex beings.

Despite its central importance, care is not sufficient as an educational goal because glorification of care, particularly outside the immediate context of family and friendships, can be seen to aid perpetuation of systems, ideologies and power relations that create victims who then need care. Further, one must be attentive to "empathic fallacy", as Delgado and Stefancic (2012: 33) argue as empathy alone cannot change the world. This limitation of care leads to the second C – that of Critique – to ensure that while care remains the fundamental relational mode, it also inspires questioning of systems, discourses and practices.

Central to critique is the capacity of students to think critically. In the tradition of critical theory associated with the Frankfurt School, critical thinking is a mode of thought grounded in a belief in the equality of human beings, their right to live life to their full potential and awareness that social and economic relations are shaped by power which can deny individuals and groups this equality. Further, it seeks to challenge dominant structures by exposing the

social, political and economic arrangements that create and perpetuate inequities of opportunities and experiences. Alongside these elements, critique also requires a vision, an image of a better state of affairs, a better world. As Terry Eagleton (2000) observes, the point about '"Utopia is not to go elsewhere, but to use the elsewhere to critique here and now" (33). Critical thinking and the ability to critique is crucial within teacher education contexts for several reasons. Teachers need to become more aware of the heightened power differentials between themselves, their pupils, and other stakeholders in their pupils' education, including parents, guardians, government representatives and other interest groups. Additionally, given the social, technological and environmental developments and inequities, as well as the rise of bureaucratization and marketisation in education, forces are at play that also play out in classrooms. This does not mean that teacher education becomes a form of politicizing. It does, however, mean that through considering and critiquing a variety of viewpoints, teachers demonstrate critical thought and foster that in their own pupils.

But critique alone is not sufficient. The circle needs to be completed with creative solutions and transformations. Imagination is most commonly associated with the third C, creativity. It is important to note that creativity is not the same as imagination. While both involve thinking alternatives, they differ insofar as creativity involves intentionality and has a social dimension too (Runco & Pina 2013). Creativity is realized through knowledge, control of materials and systematic application of imaginative capacities. Creative education thus involves a balance between teaching knowledge and skills and fostering innovation. Here an important consideration is the distinction between being creative as problem-solving and being creative as building a paradigm. The former refers to creativity that is applied to improve existing products, systems and processes. For example, we get new models of mobile phones every few months. Each new model represents creativity as a problem solving. Creativity as

building a paradigm, on the other hand, is rare as it aims to change fundamental/dominant ways of thinking, knowing, and doing.

In light of this, what links the 3Cs to each other is the underlying human capacity of imagination. Care requires empathy which is an act of imagination; Critique requires a conception of a better state of affairs, and Creativity entails socially useful novelty. Thus, we need to consider this human capacity in greater detail.

Imagination

Increasingly, it is recognized that imagination is not a faculty of mind but a diffused capacity that is involved and woven into other mental acts such as recall, perception and emotion. The word comes from *imaginationem*, in Latin, and is derived from *imago* "an image, a likeness". Definitions vary from more simplistic to more elaborate ones such as advanced by Warnock:

> There is a power in the human mind which is at work in our everyday perception of the world and is also at work in our thoughts about what is absent; which enables us to see the world, whether present or absent as significant…and this power….is not only intellectual. Its impetus comes from the emotions as much as from the reason, from the heart as much as from the head." (Warnock 1976: 196)

In our discussion of the 3Cs, we draw on Hunter's definition of imagination:

> "the ability to form mental images, phonological passages, analogies, or narratives of something that is not perceived through our senses. Imagination is a manifestation of our memory and enables us to scrutinize our past and construct hypothetical future scenarios that do not yet, but could exist. Imagination also gives us the ability to see things from other points of view and empathize with others" (Hunter 2013: 113)

Given the wide-ranging role of imagination in human life, scholars have distinguished between the applications of imagination in various facets of life. Collingwood (1994), for example,

explores the role of imagination in historical consciousness and thinking. Egan (2010) explores its role in what he calls the deep learning, a proposal to create right balance between breadth and depth of knowledge in school settings through particular use of project work whereby children area assigned a topic to learn about throughout their school life. For our purpose, the two most relevant forms of imagination are sociological imagination and narrative imagination.

Sociological imagination is the ability to see the familiar routines of our daily lives with fresh and critical perspective. It is the capacity "to grasp history and biography and the relations between the two within a society" (Mills 1959: 5); "the vivid awareness of the relationship between experience and the wider society". Mills (1959) states it is "the capacity to range from the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most intimate features of the human self and to see the relations between the two" (7). It requires imagination to pull oneself away from the immediate situation and grasp it from an alternative wider point of view which can then lead to understanding and evaluating the effects of social relationships, structures and forces on agency. In *The Sociological Imagination*, Mills argues for recognizing how individual experience and worldview are products of both the historical context in which they sit and the everyday immediate environment in which an individual exists. He argues that reflection on personal troubles, such as inability to pay bills, can provide insights into how individual biography is related to wider social structures. But, such thinking can be applied to any activity. Take for example, buying an item of clothing. It can be shown that buying an item of clothing is more than fulfilling a physical need. It is rather part of a social ritual called shopping which can sometimes be as important as the act of particular purchase. Further, there is a whole socio-economic dimension of social and economic relations. A whole chain of production, marketing, finance and distribution is involved in the making of the clothing one buys. This is also linked to fashion and to symbolic statements therein. All of these are rich areas of investigation, developing critical understanding of how society is organized. A person

with sociological imagination will want to "know what is going on in the world, and to understand what is going on in the world and to understand what is happening in themselves as minute points of interaction of biography and history within society" (Mills 1959: 7). However, to be a critically engaged citizen in an increasingly globalized world, it is not enough, Nussbaum observes, to gather knowledge about people, we must also "cultivate in ourselves a capacity for sympathetic imagination that will enable us to comprehend the motives and choices of people different from ourselves, seeing them not as forbiddingly alien and other, but as sharing many problems and possibilities with us" (Nussbaum 1997: 85). Sympathetic imagination necessarily requires empathy, the capacity to understand and feel circumstances from another person's perspective. It "involves an imaginative reconstruction of the experience of the sufferer" (Nussbaum 2001: 327). Narrative imagination is thus the ability to be an intelligent reader of another person's story (Nussbaum 1997: 11), the ability to put oneself into others' shoes. Teachers cannot demonstrate critical thought unless they incorporate the diverse viewpoints of those involved in educational contexts. Similarly, without the perspective of others, they will not be able to develop their own and their pupils' abilities to care for wider socioeconomic, environmental and personal issues and the like. In short, there is an urgent need to develop and nurture imagination in order to enhance our empathetic capacities to relate to strangers with kindness, our critical capacities to grasp the complex social and economic arrangements that shape individual life chances, and our creative capacities to think differently. In what follows we make the case for centering imagination in teacher education.

Existing practices in teacher education

Within most western countries, teacher education focuses on two major elements: subject-specific content knowledge and pedagogical instructions. Whilst the subject-specific content knowledge is largely provided through relevant university degrees in specialist subjects, the

pedagogical instruction tends to be divided between theorization of child development, pedagogical content knowledge and the practical element of practice teaching through school placements. Within the UK, teacher education programs have seen a drastic shift, due to the introduction of a wider range of school-based, salaried routes available to student teachers. The advantages for student teachers are clear: being in paid employment and engaging in all aspects of school life while completing the relevant teaching qualifications. The disadvantage however, is that student teachers experience fewer opportunities to engage with scholarly debates and theorizations, necessary for more critical awareness, wider knowledge and deeper understanding of concerns and issues that may not necessarily pertain directly to teaching activities, but are vital to understand the increasing complexities of classrooms.

Given current and future global challenges, teacher education programs fall short as their practices strongly emphasize practical activities, teaching methods and behavioral management strategies (for example Johnston et al. 2007; Buehl 2017). This may indicate a response to the demands of existing curricula and dominant modes of assessment, which in turn suggest the continued influence of neoliberal globalization on education that has led to a disproportionate emphasis on instrumental interests of reason, thereby privileging certain forms of knowledge over others. The forms of knowledge fostered in this sense certainly do not relate to or consider the wider-reaching challenges and impacts of society. In many respects, teacher education programs reproduce dominant paradigms of teaching and learning, and thus dominant knowledge systems. After all, the teacher education classroom is viewed as a community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), where student teachers learn with and alongside experienced teacher educators. In many teacher education contexts, student teachers are assigned to peers, experienced teachers, mentors and teacher educators in order to learn from them, often re-inscribing dominant and sometimes damaging educative practices.

For student teachers, learning to teach in the classroom can be a solitary endeavor, although co-created knowledge and co-constructed learning are possible (Avalos 2011). However, collaborative and co-constructive approaches are often only used in connection with reflective practices. Indeed, reflective practice in its firm anchoring in Dewey's (1938) definition, has become more prominent within teacher education over the course of the last decades. To "reflect is to look back over what has been done so as to extract the net meanings which are the capital stock of intelligent dealing with further experiences" (Dewey 1938: 86). Reflections in this sense are intrinsically linked with the evaluation of one's own practice and the identification of strengths and weaknesses. In turn, this evaluative reflection should inform a detailed action plan for steps to take in order to improve and better oneself (Gibbs 1988). Thus, within teacher education, reflective practice is understood as a tool to improve personal practice and to further professional development and growth.

Given that reflections are an integral part of teacher education and although reflective practice is notoriously difficult to teach (Mena-Marcos et al. 2013; Toom et al. 2015), student teachers and students within education studies are nonetheless required to experiment with and apply models of reflections. On the one hand, these models are meant to provide a systematic approach and structure, and to ensure that reflections go beyond the initial descriptive narrative of what happened. On the other hand, reflective models also ensure that the stages of evaluation and action planning are adhered to. Reflective models according to Gibbs (1988), Rolfe et al. (2001), Kolb (1984) and Brookfield (1995) are commonly applied and the concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schön 1983) are regularly used buzzwords in student teaching environments, but these practices do not necessarily require deep and critical engagement with issues of power and inequities in education.

Over the decades, various models of reflective practice have been critiqued for superficiality (Fook et al. 2006) and lack of theoretical engagement (Thompson & Pascal 2012), as these "simplistic understandings are a far cry from the sophistication of genuinely reflective practice" (Thompson & Pascal 2012: 312). Concerns have also been raised regarding the effectiveness of reflective practice in relation to improving beginning teachers' practices and ultimately students' learning, as for example "teachers were not, for various reasons, able to carry through their ideas into practice, or felt that their possibilities of action and development were limited" (Mälkki & Lindblom-Ylänne 2012: 39). Nonetheless, reflective practice remains as one of the predominant approaches in teacher education, with the intention to provide student teachers with strategies that they may be able to continue using in their personal learning journey beyond the formative years of initial teacher education.

The concern with this approach to teacher education is that the transmission of subject knowledge lies at its heart. Student teachers are provided with technical skills to improve classroom management, develop their subject knowledge, and improve their teaching practices to become more effective. In the UK, the focus on productivity, league tables and teaching excellence frameworks has, however, detracted from concern with ethics and empathy and the understanding of education as the holistic development of children. Critically relevant pedagogy appears to attempt to redress this situation, yet, fails to do so because of its continuing focus on reflective practice – the betterment of the teacher as an individual practitioner.

There have been calls to shift teacher education practices by contextualizing reflections within the social of the classroom and wider communities (Beauchamp 2015). In the educational context of the United States, for example, teacher education is reconsidered, as the lack of professionalization in teacher education (Darling-Hammond 2006) and changes to demographics within society (Gay & Howard 2000) have been identified as the main reasons for the poor levels of preparation and low retention rates amongst beginner teachers. Being a

reflective practitioner, it is argued, cannot be sufficient, if beginning teachers are not prepared well-enough to face the challenges of culturally and racially diverse classrooms. Teachers must have critical understanding of a wider range of social concerns and societal developments if they are to be able to navigate potentially difficult and emotional situations resulting from diversity, cultural differences, racial issues and/or gendered experiences within schools. While there are efforts through the use of culturally relevant pedagogy to manage these situations, a continued reliance on reflective practice limits the capacity of teachers to employ imagination as a means to critically interrogate social structures and processes that marginalize some students and privilege others (Howard 2003).

Context of the practice-based enquiry

Given the importance of imagination in education, we describe our work with student teachers from a customized Secondary Teacher Education Programme which aims to meet the needs of an international religious community. The program is unique in that all student teachers are international, recruited from all over the world to undertake a two-year course in London before returning to their home countries where they are employed as teachers in community-based schools. One of the most challenging and fascinating aspects of the program is that students come from a variety of backgrounds ranging from metropolitan cities of Europe and North America, to remote towns of Tajikistan and Pakistan, and everything in between. Almost all of the student teachers have to learn the intricacies of education in the UK context and the philosophical and pedagogical foundations of teacher education therein. At the same time, they bring rich experiences from elsewhere and in the process generate both critical and creative outcomes through these intellectual interactions. As the student teachers are preparing to teach in their home countries, they are required to be more than merely subject-teachers, in that they are viewed as important members of their communities taking up pastoral duties and

responsibilities. We use the concept of imagination and the notion of the 3Cs to explore the experiences, attitudes, personal opinions and emotions of the teacher candidates as they prepare for their professional lives.

In our research, we employ a form of a participatory practice-based enquiry, where student teachers as participants are also co-producers of knowledge. The practice-based enquiry described in this chapter was carried out with two cohorts of international students. All students were obliged to take part in the classroom activities but were given opportunities to opt into the actual research element of the enquiry. Cohort one of this enquiry consisted of 45 students, whereas cohort two consisted of 28 students. Having been provided with the information sheets and consent forms, 38 students opted in to the project across the two cohorts.

The starting point for this practice-based enquiry was the student teachers' need to truly understand reflection and reflective work, whilst at the same time developing their deeper understanding of the role and responsibilities of a teacher in the midst of complex and diverse learning contexts. Instead of requiring student teachers to record observations, analyses and action plans, the students responded to questions such as “What does your learning journey look like?” and “Who are you as a teacher?” through creative tasks such as a river drawing activity, model-building with LEGO® and the use of objects (Brown et al. 2018; Brown et al. forthcoming). This approach is based on the notion that human life and language are closely connected with metaphors and as humans we cannot escape the metaphorical (Lakoff & Johnson 1980). Once student teachers have creatively expressed their experiences using metaphors, they take an active role in the meaning-making process by taking responsibility for the interpretation and analysis of the metaphors. Research in the context of higher education demonstrates that this kind of metaphorical work allows for deeper reflections and easier expressions of more holistic experiences (Brown 2018; Brown & Leigh 2018). As has been outlined already, traditionally, reflective work in teacher education programs relates to the

analysis of what happened in a classroom, which steps were taken and what could be done differently in order to improve teaching practice and avoid similarly difficult situations in the future.

The reflective practice suggested here focusses on a student teacher's overall and general understanding of classrooms and not on single incidents. The student teachers are required to reduce their holistic experiences to such an extent that they find the core or essence of that experience. In effect, student teachers apply imagination to their own reflective practice, representing it through a metaphor, which subsequently helps elaborate the introspection and projection Mills (1959) and Nussbaum (1997) refer to. Through regular engagement with this kind of reflective practice and the application of imagination, student teachers' imaginative capacities are developed. The ultimate aim is for student teachers to be able to carry out their responsibility of understanding their pupils, helping them grasp the relationship between individual and society. Fostering and regularly practicing imagination and creativity with student teachers is therefore central to the teacher education we practice, as it can provide the grounding teachers require to more critically, with care and compassion, understand the complexity of their pupils' lived experiences and their corresponding needs in today's world.

In the following, two figures exemplify the work undertaken to date with student teachers. Figure 1 is an assemblage of objects student teachers have created in response to the question "What is your experience of your teaching placement?", whereas Figure 2 is an assemblage answering "Who are you as a teacher?".

Fig 1: What is your experience of your teaching placement?

Fig 2: Who are you as a teacher?

The full details for all objects would go beyond the scope of this chapter but suffice it to say that student teachers are able to express specificities in ways they are not able to within the context of traditional reflective work. For example, the rubber bands and clocks in Figure 1 highlight the changes in time and the subjective experience of time rushing and dragging

throughout the placements. In Figure 2, the American football represents the student's interpretation of being a coach and facilitator of learning whose work is constrained by external factors, policies and guidelines so that the American football is not fully inflated, but partially deflated.

The assemblages exemplify the student teachers' depth of reflections and their keen engagement with the reflective process. Through opening up the conversation around reflective practices to allow for imaginative expressions, student teachers are able to practice and practically experience the 3Cs. Our concern with this approach to and emphasis on fostering imagination and promoting imaginative capacities through playfulness and creativity is two-fold. On the one hand, critique of this holistic approach includes criticism of the use of playfulness and creativity as childish and unscientific activities and methods. However, it is exactly this playful, creative, child-like attitude that we need to foster more openly and carefully in our students to engage them with and in imagination. An approach like this one cannot be introduced without the context of scientific grounding or without explaining the "paradox of intentionality" (Statler et al. 2011) that playful, fun activities can and do lead to serious outcomes. On the other hand, teaching and practicing this engagement with imagination and creativity requires time and commitment on the part of the interaction between educators and student teachers, but also on the part of the student teachers themselves. Since the reduction of the holistic experiences leads to deeper reflections, student teachers need to readily engage with what lies beneath. Simultaneously, time is required for the student teachers to extrapolate learnings from their experiences and for the teacher educators and their students to make sense of the experiences presented, as the objects and assemblages cannot stand by themselves entirely. Although it is possible to interpret some of the metaphorical representations, we cannot fully make sense of their meanings for the individual student without verbalization and elaboration on the phenomenon.

Focus on theory: from disciplinary silos to transformative imagination

The longstanding expectation to create a population with functional or advanced literacy and numeracy skills is no longer sufficient if we are to respond fruitfully to current and future socio-economic, political, inter-personal, technological and environmental challenges. In the most recent past of increased activism around school shootings, terrorist attacks, gang stabbings and the #MeToo movements[1], there has been recognition that education and school communities play a role that goes far beyond mere subject instruction. Schools are no longer merely the location for developing skills and imparting knowledge on pupils so that they might successfully engage in work-life. Instead, schools are now also communities of political engagement and social activism. As such, there is a significant need to move beyond the transmission of knowledge, through teaching practice oriented by creativity, critique and care. A renewed and revised approach to reflective practice is urgent so that reflections are not performance management tools or means to improve the technical skills of teaching and learning for the purpose of bettering standings in league tables or scores on standardized tests. Instead, this new kind of reflective practice needs to be aligned with the concept of imagination in Mills' (1959) and Nussbaum's (1997) definitions. Thus, broadly speaking, reflective practice needs to enable introspection, critical engagement with the experience of others and wider world-views. Reflections therefore cannot focus on individual incidents within the classroom, but need to consider the teachers' own assumptions, biases, emotions and experiences within a broader socio-economic-political context. Teacher education programs must become less subject-specific and more open to inter-, multi- and trans-disciplinary learning, shifting away from disciplinary silos to more holistic understandings and engagements.

[1] The #MeToo movement is a movement against sexual assault and sexual harassment. For more detailed information, please check https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Me_Too_movement

Naturally, shifting the focus from subject-specific knowledge and behavioral strategies to promoting imagination requires a more comprehensive conceptual shift within teacher education programs. Pedagogical skills and behavioral management strategies on their own will not be enough to enable teachers to help their pupils deal with the everyday demands of life. The capacities that teachers require far exceed the curriculum of many teacher education programs: teachers need to care for their pupils but also about them; teachers need to be able to engage critically in the circumstances and contexts of their teachings, classroom environment and the wider societal implications in order to support their pupils with critical approaches to life experiences; and finally, teachers need to be creative to balance the many needs within the classroom and beyond. Ultimately, what teachers need are the capacities to care, to critique and to create.

Conclusion

In a globalizing world, with potentials and challenges posed by increasing connectivity, technological developments, environmental crises, and exacerbation of inequalities, it is important that education concerns itself with the 3Cs of care, criticality and creativity, all of which are underpinned by the human capacity of imagination. In this chapter, we argued that in order to adequately prepare student teachers for their tasks of educating and supporting pupils a renewed approach to teacher education programs is required. We suggest that socioeconomic, demographic and political changes necessitate an intense emphasis on the 3Cs *Care, Critique and Creativity*.

By drawing on and returning to the basics of the human condition, imagination and metaphorical representation, our experiences as teacher educators lead us to believe that student teachers will become more aware of wider issues that influence their educational and societal settings. In turn, this critical awareness will enhance the ability of these future teachers to enact

care, critique and creativity with their own pupils, fostering the capacities of imagination we have argued are necessary if we are to move beyond merely a technical-rational approach to education. We are not suggesting drastically overhauling teacher education programs, merely adjusting their foci and emphases. As has been argued, time and commitment are required to allow for the increased creative engagement with metaphorical representations.

Considering the dominance of performance-related audits and league tables, this will certainly be a difficult task. It is all too easy in the everyday hustle and bustle of school communities to concentrate on firefighting through behavioral management strategies. However, regardless of whether teacher education is provided through school-based, salaried routes or through university-based degree and teaching certificate programs, student teachers and educators need to be provided with ample opportunities to step back, evaluate and reconsider their practice within broader socio-political-economic structures and forces. As such, we openly call for slowing down the classroom to allow for deeper and more critical reflective practices, debates and discussions with and amongst all participants in that very classroom.

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