InFo TED International Forum for Teacher Educator Development

# Boundaries and Boundary Crossing - Further Reading

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## From teacher to teacher educator

**Field, S. (2012). The trials of transition, and the impact upon the pedagogy of new teacher educators. *Professional Development in Education, 38*(5), 811-826.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2012.701658

This study explores the tensions and challenges experienced by new teacher educators in higher education in England, large numbers of whom are coming directly from posts as schoolteachers. Although traditionally an under-researched group, recent studies have confirmed that this transition from schoolteacher to teacher educator is fraught with difficulty, and that the new professional identity is hard-won. This has been variously linked to the differing demands and culture of the two workplace settings, as well as the shifts in role, some of which are subtle but fundamental in terms of impact. Although, to an extent, the findings of this small-scale qualitative study of a group of recently appointed teacher educators do mirror those of previous studies, they also indicate that there may be an underlying key theme which has received less attention thus far; that is, the development of an understanding of the pedagogy of initial teacher education. The study suggests that new teacher educators may inevitably default to an impoverished pedagogical model in the early stages of their practice, and argues that this is an area which warrants further consideration by the teacher education community as a whole.

**Trent, J. (2013). Becoming a Teacher Educator: The Multiple Boundary-Crossing Experiences of Beginning Teacher Educators. *Journal of Teacher Education, 64*(3), 262-275.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022487112471998

This article reports on a qualitative study that investigated the identity construction experiences of one group of beginning English language teacher educators in Hong Kong. Drawing upon a theoretical framework that incorporates both identity in-practice and identity-in-discourse, and using in-depth interviews, a narrative approach was adopted to examine participants' identity trajectory as they crossed multiple boundaries from language learners, to language teachers, to language teacher educators. The study suggests that the challenges teacher educators faced at different stages of their professional identity construction reflected the negotiation of past experiences, future ideals, competency, agency, and marginalization. Implications for schoolteachers, teacher educators, and educational authorities, as well as for both future applied research and for understandings of identity, are discussed.

**Williams, J., Ritter, J. & Bullock, S.M. (2012). Understanding the complexity of Becoming a Teacher Educator: Experience, belonging, and practice within a professional learning community. *Studying Teacher Education, 8*(3), 245-260.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17425964.2012.719130

This article reports a literature review of self-studies by beginning teacher educators examining their experiences of the transition from classroom teaching to teacher educator. The authors conclude that becoming a teacher educator involves several complex and challenging tasks: examining beliefs and values grounded in personal biography, including those associated with being a former schoolteacher; navigating the complex social and institutional contexts in which they work; and developing a personal pedagogy of teacher education that enables construction agency. This study examines how teacher educators practise agency in negotiating their professional identities amid the

multiple discourses emerging from the academic context of their work. Our aim was to investigate educators' locally expressed professional agency in the context of the more global discourses that may construct teacher educator identities. In our analysis we applied thematic discursive analysis to address patterns of talk relating to teacher educators' manifestations of agency within their work as teachers and researchers. We found that professional agency was strong in the construction of their teacher-identity. By contrast, the construction of their researcher-identity was subjugated, complex, and characterized by a lack of resources. Furthermore, teaching and researching were mainly described as two separate functions. We discuss what these findings imply for the renegotiation of teacher educators' professional identities and for the development of teacher education in an academic institution.

## Teaching and Research

**Garbett, D & Ovens, A. (Eds). (2018).** ***Pushing boundaries and crossing borders: Self-study as a means for researching pedagogy*****. Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) community. ISBN: 978-0-473-44471-6.**
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**Berg, N. van den (2016). *Grenspraktijken - Opleiders en onderzoekers in ontwikkeling*. (Boundary practices – Development of teacher educators and researchers). Openbare les 20 januari 2016 in verkorte vorm uitgesproken bij de start van het lectoraat Boundary crossing praktijken van opleiders en onderzoekers. Wageningen: Stoas Wageningen, Vilentum Hogeschool.**
https://www.aereshogeschool.nl/-/media/Aeres-Hogeschool/Wageningen/Files/Onderzoek/Publicaties-en-artikelen/Niek-van-den-Berg_Grenspraktijken.ashx

Niek van den Berg benoemt in Grenspraktijken verschillende ecosystemen in de wereld van onderzoek en opleiden van leraren, die van de onderzoeker, van de opleider, van de student, van de praktijk, van de wetenschap. In onze optiek belemmeren scheidingen daartussen het zoeken en vinden van passende antwoorden op de actuele praktijk(onderzoeks)vraagstukken. Die zijn complex van aard, raken belangen, en verscheidene kennisdomeinen en disciplines. Duurzaam oplossen van die vraagstukken vraagt ons inziens om andere manieren van werken dan tot op heden gebruikelijk was. Is er lering te trekken uit de ecologie? Welke veranderingen vraagt dit? Kleine veranderingen in de natuur kunnen grote consequenties hebben (denk aan een steentje dat een lawine veroorzaakt), bij grotere verstoringen verandert het in een ander systeem. Wat betekent dat voor onze praktijk van onderzoek naar leren en ontwikkelen?

## Practitioner Research and 'Academic' Research

**Rust, F.O. (2009) Teacher Research and the Problem of Practice. *Teachers College Record, 111*(8), 1882–1893.**
http://www.francesrust.com/Site/Publications_files/38_15506.pdf

In this article, teacher action research is positioned as a bridge connecting research, practice, and policy—as an important and practical way to engage teachers as consumers of research, as researchers of their own practice, as designers of their own professional development, and as informants to scholars and policy-makers regarding critical issues in the field. What knowledge informs practice? How does this knowledge become ensconced in a practitioner's repertoire? How can new knowledge change practice? To many academics and scientists, the answer to these questions lies in getting practitioners to pay attention to and use current research. To practitioners, research-informed pressure for changes in practice often seems unrelated to what is needed in day-to-day and minute-by-minute interactions. To educational reformers, these questions are critical because understanding what teachers do, how they do it, and why they do it is central to any effort at reshaping education policy around teacher education, teacher professional development, and school reform. Any effort to bring researchers, practitioners, and policy makers together in order to influence practice is what Shonkoff (2000) described as a "true cross-cultural experience"(p. 182) in that it "requires respect for their differences as well as a commitment to their shared mission" (p. 182). In this special issue of Teachers College Record, we posit teacher action research as a bridge connecting research, practice, and education policy—as an important and practical way to engage teachers as consumers of research, as researchers of their own practice who use research to shape

practice, as designers of their own professional development, and as informants to scholars and policy makers regarding critical issues in the field.

## University-based and School-based Teacher Educators

**Akkerman, S. & Bakker, A. (2011). Boundary Crossing and Boundary Objects. *Review of Educational Research,* 81(2), 1-5.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.3102/0034654311404435

Diversity and mobility in education and work present a paramount challenge that needs better conceptualization in educational theory. This challenge has been addressed by educational scholars with the notion of boundaries, particularly by the concepts of boundary crossing and boundary objects. Although studies on boundary crossing and boundary objects emphasize that boundaries carry learning potential, it is not explicated in what way they do so. By reviewing this literature, this article offers an understanding of boundaries as dialogical phenomena. The review of the literature reveals four potential learning mechanisms that can take place at boundaries: identification, coordination, reflection, and transformation. These mechanisms show various ways in which sociocultural differences and resulting discontinuities in action and interaction can come to function as resources for development of intersecting identities and practices.

**Akkerman, S. & Bruining, T. (2016). Multilevel Boundary Crossing in a Professional Development School Partnership. *Journal of the Learning Sciences, 25*(2), 240-284.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10508406.2016.1147448

This study aims to understand the recurrent challenges of professional development school (PDS) partnerships experienced by many countries. It does so by conceptualizing PDS partnerships as endeavors to cross institutionally and epistemologically developed boundaries between teacher education, schooling, and academic research. After introducing what we call a multilevel boundary crossing approach, we look at the startup years of one academic PDS partnership, scrutinizing the successive learning mechanisms that were evoked at the institutional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal levels. The case study narrative illustrates the multilevel nature of boundary crossing and reveals different learning mechanisms in different phases and at different levels. For example, whereas coordination initially occurred at all levels, transformation occurred in later years mainly at the intrapersonal level. The study sheds specific light on the intrapersonal level by showing the significant and challenging role of various brokers in establishing both horizontal and vertical connections across and within the organizations involved. Despite being important leaders of the partnerships' activities, we observed how brokers prevented others from becoming more involved. We propose that partnerships should carefully consider the sort of learning processes they aspire to and can realistically expect at different levels and moments in time and accordingly consider how they want to position the various actors.

**Burn, K. (2007). Professional knowledge and identity in a contested discipline: challenges for student teachers and teacher educators. *Oxford Review of Education, 33*(4), 445–467.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03054980701450886

This paper focuses on the challenges to their professional identity encountered by both experienced and beginning teachers in the course of research and development work intended to develop

student teachers' pedagogical content knowledge. It reports findings from a collaborative action research project within a well-established initial teacher education partnership that was intended to develop more effective ways of supporting student teachers' learning in relation to two controversial aspects of the secondary school history curriculum: historical enquiry and historical interpretation. The tight focus on procedural concepts at the heart of the discipline made it possible to explore the challenges presented to the student teachers' identity as subject specialists as they sought to develop new forms of professional knowledge as subject teachers. Simultaneously the research and development process itself also revealed profound challenges to the school-based teacher educators' sense of identity—both as teachers and as mentors—that highlighting such contested concepts could pose. In seeking to address these challenges two apparently contradictory, but essentially complementary, approaches seem to be called for. The first is a proper acknowledgement of existing knowledge and expertise—that of the beginning teachers as well as that of their mentors. The second is the forging of a new form of professional identity for mentors: an identity which depends not merely on existing knowledge, but on the capacity to generate new professional knowledge; an identity which includes a role as learner, not merely one as an 'expert' teacher.

**Finlay, I. (2008). Learning through boundary-crossing: further education lecturers learning in both the university and the workplace. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 31*(1), 73-87.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02619760701845024

This paper reports on a research project that sought to gain a deeper understanding of the contribution that universities make to the professional learning of teachers. The particular case studied was a group of learners who were engaged in an in-service teacher education course for further education (FE) whilst also working as lecturers in FE colleges in Scotland. The paper develops the narrative of learning across boundaries (Saunders 2006) drawing on the work of Engestrom (1987, 2001). The claim made is that the learning that takes place across the boundary of the workplace and university has the possibility of helping learners to resolve issues that the workplace alone does not provide them with the resources to resolve.

**Jackson, A. & Burch, J. (2016). School Direct, a policy for initial teacher training in England: plotting a principled pedagogical path through a changing landscape. *Professional Development in Education, 42*(4), 511-526.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2015.1052090

This paper explores the role of teacher educators in schools and universities in England and the changes that have arisen within the field of initial teacher training (ITT) as a result of the Coalition Government's (2010–2015) School Direct initiative. The discussion which follows and the conclusions suggested are live, current and of pivotal interest to all universities with ITT programmes, as well as all schools involved in the delivery of ITT, and to all parties with a policy interest in the supply of effective teacher education. After setting the context, the discussion starts with a critical examination of ITT policy in England over the course of the last 20 years. We then consider troubling binaries inherent in teacher education and go on to explore insights from research: the importance of beliefs; the problem of enactment; and the theory/practice divide. These insights are then used to craft the enabling constraints for third-space activity designed to set in motion a hybridisation process from which a new breed of teacher educator could emerge. We suggest that university and school colleagues working together in collaborative partnership can provide a principled pedagogical path through a changing landscape of education policy.

**Postholm, M.B. (2016): Collaboration between teacher educators and schools to enhance development. *European Journal of Teacher Education.***
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2016.1225717

The article focuses on school-based development and how collaboration between teacher educators and leaders and teachers can promote development in teacher education, in school and in the collaboration site in school where both parties meet. The data were collected in Norway through qualitative interviews with groups of teachers and leaders at three schools, and with a group of teacher educators. With the Cultural Historical Activity Theory as the framework, central concepts within this theory have been key elements in the study. The findings reveal that collective collaborative learning is a positive form of enhancing the professional development of teachers and that both structure and culture should interact when fostering development in school. The study also shows that the development of teacher educators' research competence can enhance development and learning both in teacher education and in school, and also improve the developmental transfer between these two arenas.

**Reynolds, R., Ferguson-Patrick, K., & McCormack, A. (2013). Dancing in the ditches: reflecting on the capacity of a university/school partnership to clarify the role of a teacher educator. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 36*(3), 307-319.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2012.755514

This paper used the data collected from reflective diaries, semi-structured interviews and surveys to identify and examine common themes identified in the roles required and/or perceived for teacher educators by both teachers and teacher educators. Collaboration, discussion and critique enabled personal reflection as teacher educators worked as partners to schools in a state-sponsored teaching and learning skills project. We have termed the collaboration in such an interactive project as one of 'dancing in the ditches', often requiring both groups to get out of their comfortable spaces and engage with each other in constantly moving situations. The teacher educators were required to be change agents at the interface of theory and practice and their experiences reflected individual journeys, but their reflections have ongoing implications for clarifying and professionalising the role of teacher educators.
*Keywords: school partnerships; teacher educators; teacher professional development; action research; role of teacher educator*

**Tsui, A.B.M. & Law, D.Y.K. (2007) Learning as boundary-crossing in a school–university partnership. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 23*, 1289–1301.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.06.003

This paper points out that globalization has raised fundamental questions about knowing and learning and that it is essential for educators to engage in collective knowledge generation by crossing community boundaries. Drawing on the theoretical framework of Activity Theory, this paper reports on a study on the expansive learning that was afforded by a school–university partnership as university tutors, mentor teachers and student teachers engaged in a new activity system mediated by lesson study. The study showed that in the course of resolving contradictions that were inherent in the boundary zone, they negotiated the mediating tool and consequently, the activity system was transformed from helping student teachers learn to teach into learning for all participants. This paper concludes that it is essential for teachers and teacher educators to develop the capability to engage in expansive learning through tackling ill-defined problems in boundary zones.

**Williams, J. (2014). Teacher Educator Professional Learning in the Third Space: Implications for Identity and Practice. *Journal of Teacher Education, 65(*4), 315-326.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022487114533128

This article reports on the results of a research project in which 18 teacher educators in three countries—Australia, The Netherlands, and United Kingdom—were interviewed about their experiences of working in the so-called "third space" between schools and universities, particularly in relation to the practicum, or field supervision. Most teacher educators have previously worked as teachers in schools or other educational settings, and when they become teacher educators in universities, they are often involved in the supervision or mentoring of preservice teachers in the field. The research reported in this article examined how university-based teacher educators manage the challenges inherent in working with mentor/cooperating teachers after having been or when still practicing as teachers in schools. Findings from the study showed that for teacher educators, working in the third space involves managing shifting identities between teacher and teacher educator, responding to changing perspectives on learning and teaching, and negotiating sometimes finely balanced and difficult relationships.

**Zeichner, K. (2010). Rethinking the Connections Between Campus Courses and Field Experiences in College- and University-Based Teacher Education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(1-2), 89-99.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022487109347671

This article examines a variety of work currently going on across the country in newly created hybrid spaces to more closely connect campus courses and field experiences in university-based preservice teacher education. It is argued that the old paradigm of university-based teacher education where academic knowledge is viewed as the authoritative source of knowledge about teaching needs to change to one where there is a nonhierarchical interplay between academic, practitioner, and community expertise. It is argued that this new epistemology for teacher education will create expanded learning opportunities for prospective teachers that will better prepare them to be successful in enacting complex teaching practices.

## Teacher Educators Moving Into New International Contexts

**Williams, J. & Berry, A. (2016): Boundary Crossing and the Professional Learning of Teacher Educators in New International Contexts, *Studying Teacher Education*.**
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17425964.2016.1192031

In this collaborative self-study, two teacher educators examine their experiences of working in new international contexts and the impact of those experiences on their professional learning and identities. Mandi moved from a major research university in one country to another, while Judy co-led a group of pre-service teachers on an international practicum for three weeks each year for three years. Using the concept of boundary crossing as a theoretical and analytical framework, each teacher educator identified a boundary-related critical incident or experience that occurred during her work in new international contexts. Through individual and collaborative analysis of their critical incidents, they found that working as a teacher educator in new international contexts involves the crossing and recrossing of multiple personal, professional, linguistic and cultural boundaries. Working in these boundary spaces involved learning how to negotiate new kinds of relationships with

colleagues and students, manage changed roles and responsibilities and, ultimately, a search for a renewed sense of self, as each sought to understand herself differently within a new professional context.