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Trends in Teacher Education: a review of papers published in the European Journal of Teacher Education over 40 years

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Introduction

The journal of the Association for Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE) was first published in 1978. At that time it was known as *Revue ATEE Journal* (1978 - 1982). It began by inviting members of the association to publish papers and by inviting authors of note-worthy papers presented at the ATEE Annual Conferences to submit papers to the journal. In 1982 the journal became known as the *European Journal of Teacher Education*. For the purposes of this Special Issue, which is the last issue focused on the theme of all the issues in the 40th Volume of *EJTE – Looking back, Looking forward in Teacher Education* – we have undertaken an analysis of all the papers that have been published since the inception of *EJTE*. The analysis has given a fascinating insight into the topics of the papers published, the context(s) in which the particular topic was considered and the methodologies used in the research reported in the papers. We were particularly interested in the trends emerging: similarities and differences in the topics considered over the 40 volumes of the journal; topics that were re-visited and those that were not; changes within and across countries in Europe and beyond; and similarities and differences in the methodologies used.

A total of 917 papers were published between 1978 and 2016 and formed part of our analysis. The abstracts that were available for each paper were read by both of us. We begin by discussing the countries that were identified as the context for the research presented in the papers published and the methodologies utilised. The analysis of topics is discussed and we present our views on emerging trends in teacher education over the 40 year time period of the publication of *EJTE*.

Countries

The focus of the *European Journal of Teacher Education* is, as readers would expect, on teacher education in Europe. However, many of the issues in teacher education extend beyond the boundaries of Europe and it is therefore important to be aware of and learn from research that is conducted world-wide. While the focus in each issue is predominantly on research in teacher education in European countries many papers are accepted from authors beyond Europe. For this reason across the years in most volumes of *EJTE* there are papers concerning teacher education from countries across the world.

In our analysis of the 917 papers only 714 mentioned explicitly in the title and/or in the abstract the context for the research. The table below indicates the spread of countries where the author(s) did indicate the context. It is important to note that in some papers more than one country may be identified as they draw on joint work of contributors from various contexts.

Table 1. Countries

Countries	Number of papers
UK	157
The Netherlands	96
Turkey	37
Spain	37
Germany	36
Ireland	35
Finland	34
France	33
Belgium	30
Norway	30
Greece	27
Sweden	26
Portugal	23
Israel	20
USA	19
Australia	18
Canada	13
Italy	13
Denmark	10
Malta	10

Most of the authors come from European countries. The UK is the top country with 157 papers (which includes papers from researchers in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) followed by the Netherlands (96), Turkey (37), Spain (37), Germany (36), Ireland (35), Finland (34), France (33), Belgium (30) and Norway (30). It is important to note that countries from outside Europe are also included in the high contributing countries (more than 10 papers published in EJTE) as is the case of USA (19), Australia (18) and Canada (13). Also of interest is the spread of countries located in northern but also southern and Eastern Europe.

Other countries (with fewer than 10 papers) include Austria, Slovenia, Cyprus, Estonia, Switzerland, Russia, Switzerland, Romania, Poland, Czech Republic, Egypt, China, Latvia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Hungary, Nigeria, Lithuania, Iran, Croatia, Japan, Singapore, Albania, Barbados, United Arab Emirates, Iceland, Taiwan, Algeria, Jordan, Luxembourg, Hong-Kong, South Africa and Saudi Arabia.

Research Methodologies

A diversity of methodologies was used in the papers published over the last 40 years in EJTE. The papers fall into three main categories: empirical study papers – which include papers describing empirical research (using all kinds of methods, quantitative and qualitative or mixed-method); theoretical/reflexive papers – papers describing personal reflections or theoretical reflections on given topics. This category also includes reflections on specific teacher education programmes in a

given institution; and reviews of literature – papers presenting a literature review or systematic reviews of studies.

It was however also possible to identify other kinds of papers such as personal accounts on one's own professional trajectory, summaries/reports of meetings within the ATEE, etc., especially in the early years of the journal.

Most of the papers published in the EJTE over the last 40 years are empirical study papers (433) and theoretical/reflexive papers (353). Only 8 papers focusing on a systematic review of literature were identified (see Table 2).

Table 2. Categorisation of papers

Type of papers	Number of papers
Empirical study papers	433
Theoretical/reflexive papers	353
Review of the literature	8

In regard to the systematic review of the literature, the 8 papers focused on issues such as the mapping of research on partnership in teacher education, teachers' use of research, students' misconceptions, practicum experience, teacher educators' identity, teaching for diversity, final thesis models in European teacher education and university teacher roles and competencies in online learning environments.

The theoretical/reflexive papers are abundant and they address normally issues related to given specific programmes or features in teacher education. Examples of these kinds of papers include the development of theoretical frameworks on professional development of teachers, models of teacher education, multiculturalism, professionalisation of teachers, global perspectives on education and on teacher education, the discourses on and in teacher education, professional learning, etc. Included in this category - theoretical/reflexive papers - are also reflexive papers focusing on the nature of change in given teacher education programmes, the master level in teacher education, issues of literacy, social justice and research in teacher education, theory and practice in teacher education, bilingualism, etc.

As far as the empirical study papers are concerned, it is possible to identify different kinds of research designs: i) quantitative studies using questionnaires with large samples, ii) qualitative through the use of interviews the most recurring of which is semi-structured interviews, iii) mixed-method designs, which combine both quantitative and qualitative approaches; iv) exploratory and pilot studies which focus on a small sample; v) longitudinal studies. In general, small-scale studies are prevalent, usually following a qualitative design, but it was also possible to identify quantitative studies and mixed-method studies. However, the samples are, in general, small, with some exceptions, focusing, in many papers, on case studies. Although quantitative, qualitative and mixed-method studies can be found, small-scale studies are the most recurrent ones. Less frequent are action research methods, meta-analysis and self-study designs. Comparative studies are also identified although less frequently.

In the majority of the studies questionnaires and/or interviews are the most recurrent methods. Less frequent are life history accounts, document analysis and less traditional research methods such as storyline and image-based methods such as drawings and videos. Also of relevance is the fact that, although few papers do include observation methods, this is one of the less recurrent methods in the papers published in EJTE over the last 40 years.

As for the research focus, not surprisingly, student teachers and new teachers are the most recurrent focus. Most of the studies focus on student teachers' perceptions, views and experiences most of which are related to the practicum and to their experience during initial teacher education. Also, many studies draw on the transition from student to teacher and include the perspectives of new teachers. The third category of participants is teachers. In this case practicing teachers are the focus of the research including their views on different aspects such as continuing professional development opportunities and inservice, collaborative work, professionalism, use of instructional designs, use of ICT in the classroom, etc. It is also possible to identify other kinds of participants such as teacher educators. The focus is on their identity and development and on their practices as teacher educators. Less recurrent participants are pupils, doctoral students, policy makers and veteran teachers.

There is a need, in our view, to develop larger studies with bigger samples using mixed-method approaches. Also of relevance is the design and implementation of comparative studies in teacher education, especially focusing on the effects of the Bologna process in European universities. There is a need to undertake more reviews of existing research literature on teacher education in order to provide researchers with a more systematic perspective of teacher education internationally. In addition, it is important to include the perspective of various stakeholders in order to bring together issues of research, policy and practice in teacher education.

Emerging Trends

It is not possible in the scope of this paper to discuss the review of all the topics identified rather a selection of topics is made. We acknowledge that the topics we have selected to discuss are our interpretation of what we view as making a contribution to stimulating thinking about the development of teacher education and/or topics that surprised us. We offer this selection only as a snapshot of the array of topics discussed by the authors. Our selection does not do justice to the richness and diversity of the authors' research findings and views. Nevertheless, we hope that it stimulates reflection on the trends and on how better use may be made of the research already carried out. We hope future researchers and authors will build from the research presented in the papers to further develop teacher education in the future.

In reviewing the abstracts of papers published during the 40 year period over 60 topics were covered. For example, these topics included:

- teacher education curriculum/structure/pedagogical approaches/assessment/evaluation
- a country's education system/teacher education system
- comparative analysis of teacher education in two or more countries
- European Union collaboration between countries
- approaches to teaching a subject (mathematics/science/language/history etc)

- approaches to school experience (including collaboration or lack of it between universities and schools)
- mentoring/supervising student teachers/teachers
- analysis of the relationship or lack of it between theory and practice
- routes into teaching/different contexts for teacher education
- continuum of teacher education (induction, initial teacher education, career-long professional learning)
- teacher/teacher educator identity, beliefs, attitudes, confidence, roles and responsibilities
- internal/external control/evaluation of teacher education
- teacher meta-cognition/reflection
- use of technology in education/teacher education
- conceptualization of knowledge/knowledge mobilization
- enquiry approaches to teaching and learning/use of data
- inclusive education/multicultural education
- assessment approaches
- defining and evaluating quality in teaching
- leadership approaches/training
- teacher anxiety/stress/burnout
- student teacher/teacher attrition

More recent topics, over the last 15 years, have seen a focus on teacher professional learning, research and enquiry in teacher education, partnerships in teacher education, linking research and the use of data to teaching, teacher leadership, intercultural and multicultural issues, inclusive education, diversity, mentoring, reflective practice, digital competence, teacher portfolios, teacher retention, identity, motivation for teaching and teacher educators.

In our review of the papers we were surprised to identify several topics that have been raised by authors in the 1970s and have recurred in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. Topics such as the theory/practice relationship, collaboration between universities and schools in teacher education, external control of teacher education, mentoring/supervising arrangements during school experience placements, language teaching and learning, the roles and responsibilities of teachers, inclusive education and the use of technology in education are a sample of topics that have persisted over time. One could argue that researchers and authors of papers should pay closer attention to previous publications in the journal to ensure that what they present adds to knowledge about teacher education. While that is the case in some instances closer analysis shows that many topics in teacher education continue to be 'wicked issues' or provide evidence of 'troublesome knowledge' over time and ongoing attention to them is necessary. Our review has demonstrated that there are enduring issues in teacher education that have demanded and deserved a strong focus across the 40 years of the journal.

Roles and functions of teachers

There has been an ongoing quest to identify what teachers should know, be able to do and care about. Many of the issues that persist in relation to how to take decisions about the curriculum content and structure for teacher education programmes, the balance between university and school study and the expertise required of teacher educators, stem from different views about how

best to educate teachers. This was evident as we reviewed papers in the period from 1978 through to 2016. Authors of a paper published in Volume 1, Issue 2, were concerned to identify the objectives of teacher education and urged readers of the journal to consider the objectives not only in the context of the present but to consider what would be relevant for the future. Olgers and Riesenkamp (1978, p67) said:

What is urgently needed is detailed information about what is clearly of importance for a teacher-to-be and what can be readily dispensed with because of the small relevance it seems to have in the actual teaching situation. In other words: which objectives should we attempt to achieve in a teacher training programme? These objectives should include a statement about the skills, knowledge and attitudes required for a teacher to fulfil to the optimum his role in the classroom, the school and the school system, not just of the present day, but surely of the future system as well. This would imply that the teacher training institutes are to anticipate to a certain extent the changes to be expected.

This quest to identify the professional learning needs of teachers at the initial teacher education stage all the way through induction to career-long professional learning still prevails. There has been a language shift from teacher training to teacher education alongside philosophical and political shifts in beliefs about the role of teachers in the 21st century. This includes shifts in expectations about the contribution education makes to the economy and society and what contribution teachers make to improving student learning. The challenge for those of us involved in teacher education over the years has been the complexity of learning and teaching as a social, moral, political and economic endeavour. How teacher education should respond to the many and changing challenges and the different voices of stakeholders has been a constant concern over the 40 year period.

Ling in her first paper in this Special Issue, *'Australian Teacher Education: Inside-out, Outside-In, Backwards and Forwards?'*, emphasises that how one looks at teacher education needs to be an iterative process rather than a linear one and needs to be backwards, forwards, inside-out and outside-in somewhat simultaneously, because it is complex, recursive and has multiple layers. She draws on Barnett's work as the basis for her theoretical framework saying that the broader issues faced sit within a supercomplex 21st century knowledge society, where the future is not only unknown but unknowable, and that the frameworks by which we make sense of our world are moving, blurring and shifting as well as being highly contested and contestable. Many of the questions we, as teacher educators, ask and many of the topics we explore may remain similar but the contexts within which teacher education is planned, implemented, governed and evaluated locally, regionally, nationally and internationally constantly changes. Teacher education for the status quo will not prepare teachers for the unpredictable uncertain future. What we can and should learn from the past and how we support teachers in the present, while being mindful of preparing them for an unknown and unknowable future, will continue to require discussion, debate and critique.

University-level teacher education

A major change across many countries has been the location of teacher education and a change in those holding responsibility for it as it shifted from teacher training in colleges to university-level teacher education. The implication of this shift has been the focus of papers particularly in the 1980s

and 1990s. For example, Osnes, writing in 1982 in the 4th volume of the journal, undertook a review of changes in teacher training in the Nordic countries. He said, 'The pattern differs slightly from one Nordic country to another but everywhere there is a tendency for teacher training to be more closely associated with the universities' (1982, p192). He reminds us while the trend towards university status has been a general one in many countries this does not mean that the reality in each country is the same. As we consider trends that appear to be similar across Europe and countries beyond, local interpretations of that trend are likely to be very different. In the relation to the Nordic countries Osnes (1982, p192) said,

Though there are many trends common to all Nordic countries, teacher training systems can still vary quite considerably. This is because each country has its own distinctive educational traditions and administrative structures and its own social and cultural environment. In addition to national differences there are also quite considerable variations in the organisation of teacher training within each country.

This shift to teacher education at university level was linked by authors of papers from the late 1980s onwards to other emerging topics that have sustained over time. These include ongoing debate about different routes into teaching, the professionalisation of courses with greater emphasis on pedagogy to provide greater relevancy to practical experience in schools and to improve 'scientific underpinning', greater attention to research to meet the requirements of the degree status of teacher education and provide a stronger relationship between theory and practice. The authors of a paper published in 1982 (Vol. 5, No.3) provide an example of the theory/practice argument that has recurred over time. Davis and Roper argued that many teacher education courses are unsatisfactory, as they divorce the theory and practice of teaching which lead to one-sided courses for the preparation of teachers. They propose an analysis of 'theory' and 'practice', as a dialectical unity of opposites. The authors suggest that theory is a guide to practice and that practice is a test of theory and should be built into the course process as such. As Ling suggests in her Denouement in this Special Issue this debate about the relationship between theory and practice has persisted regarding teacher education, in a rather surreal manner as the challenges of the theory/practice relationship identified by David and Roper continue to be revisited in papers 10, 20 and even 30 years later.

Control and accountability

A topic which has been the attention of authors over several years has been control, responsibility and accountability in teacher education. In 1987, the papers published in Volume 10, Issue 1 had a particular focus on control and responsibility. For example, Hallett (1987) in his paper entitled, '*Teacher Training Under Pressure*', argued that the education and training of teachers is distinctively different from the other activities of higher education, and is the subject of greater external management and control. His view was that coercive external intervention does damage to quality of teachers and teaching and that the profession has its own capacity for quality control. These views continue to echo through more recent papers in EJTE.

Cochran-Smith, Baker, Burton, Chang, Carney, Fernández, Keefe, Miller and Sánchez, writing in the context of USA, in the second paper in this Special Issue, emphasise the impact of the rise in accountability regimes on teacher education in the USA and in other countries. This highlights the

continuing need for issues of control and accountability to be the focus of our attention and critique. Cochran-Smith and her colleagues say that the current rise of accountability reflects the broad shift to a global and competitive knowledge society shaped by principles and policies derived from neoliberal economics and from the business world. Indeed accountability and the application of systems and principles from the business world have been another trend we noted in our analysis. However, as Cochran-Smith et al. point out there is not one approach to accountability in teacher education, and they add 'holding teacher education accountable' is not a single or unitary concept. They also emphasise the complexity of the contemporary accountability landscape saying 'there are multiple co-existing accountability strategies and initiatives, and there are multiple—sometimes competing—accountability demands and expectations'. In the last 20 years authors of papers in EJTE have been signalling the emergence of neoliberal policies that have impacted particularly on governance, financing and quality assurance of teacher education. What the implications of these policies mean for student-teachers, teachers and teacher educators need to be understood in the context of different countries, regions and local communities. Authors have investigated the same topic but through very different lenses, further highlighting the complexity of teacher education. This ever increasing complexity, or super-complexity as Ling suggests, in teacher education means it is challenging to learn from the past when the present is so dynamic and the future uncertain.

Different stages of teacher education reform and different structural issues

Another layer of complexity was evident in our analysis of papers published by authors from different countries. Many authors over the years have provided an insight into their country's education and teacher education systems. The countries, large and small, that were described by the authors were at differing stages of teacher education reform. Some systems were described as centralised and some as de-centralised with differing amounts of control/autonomy held nationally and locally. Some of the papers we reviewed present country accounts which at first sight appeared disappointing as they were mainly descriptive. However, further consideration of the papers show they made an important contribution as an historical account of teacher education at a particular moment in the reform and development process in that country. In the period 1984 - 1988 there were 26 papers that had the title, 'Teacher Education in ...'. For example, in 1984 there was a paper entitled 'Teacher Education in Yugoslavia', and another entitled, 'Teacher Education in Czechoslovakia'. These countries no longer exist as boundaries have shifted. This illustrates the importance of capturing these historical accounts as countries are re-shaped with different identities and governance arrangements and advocate different approaches to teacher education.

European collaboration in teacher education

We reviewed papers that are comparative as authors from more than one country worked together to investigate a topic. The launch of the journal came only 2 years after the establishment of the ATEE itself and the emphasis was on collaboration between members from different countries to share knowledge and ideas about the development of teacher education. This period in the late 1970s coincided with growing emphasis on collaboration in the field of education across the European Union. In 1977 the European Commission offered grants for study visits in member states to enable teachers and staff from higher education institutions to undertake collaborative studies on aspects of education and teacher education. These grants enabled authors of papers in the 1980s and 1990s to work with colleagues from other countries to explore various aspects of teacher

education. For example, in 1983 authors from England, France and Germany published a paper concerning approaches to school-based teacher education.

Papers with a comparative focus have continued, in the period since the inception of EJTE, to enable authors to reflect together on different topics and perspectives of teacher education. In this Special Issue the fifth paper, written by Mentor, Valeeva and Kalimullin, takes a comparative view of politics and teacher education in Russia and England. The authors consider 'post-communism' and 'neoliberalism' and their respective impacts on political systems and implications for teacher education.

Spotlight on key topics of interest at particular times

EJTE has had a number of editors and guest editors since its inception. Special Issues have been a feature of EJTE over the years and have enabled the editors to highlight a topic that has appeared to be of particular general interest to readers at a moment in time. Calls for publications or invitations to authors enabled a topic to be considered from different perspectives by authors from different countries. Some of the Special Issues have provided readers with an insight into processes of change in teacher education in their country and/or personal accounts of how the unfolding changes had implications for their work as teacher educators. This Special Issue provides readers with insights into both country level and personal accounts of change. For example, O'Neill in the third paper in this issue, McCall in the fourth paper and Smith in the sixth paper provide insights into changes in teacher education in the countries in which they work or worked but also personal perspectives on the changes experienced over time.

In the last 40 years there have been many special issues or issues that included papers that mainly focused on a particular topic. Again it is not possible for us to discuss in detail all the topics rather we have selected 3 to consider because these topics not only had dedicated Special Issues they recurred in numerous papers published across the years -, technology in education, foreign language teaching, and the roles, identity and professional development of teacher educators.

Technology education

A surprise for us was identifying a paper, written by Perusse, Décamps, and Pécot, back in 1980 (Vol.3. No.3), who argued strongly for greater attention to be given to preparing teachers for technology education. The authors were emphatic saying that 'the training of teachers simply must develop' and suggested that this development was thwarted by the conservative attitudes of education. Their belief was that the introduction of educational technology, the technical and psychological integration of new teaching practices and the latest products of audiovisual research, together with the computerised communications systems could provide the opportunity for the necessary break between the past and the present. According to them,

The resulting modification of relationships between those who teach and those who are taught, the new definition of tasks (...) will make possible an opening towards the outside world and the coming into existence of a school of responsibility through responsibility. The first experiments show that we still have a long way to go before that aim is achieved.

The messages about the lack of innovation in the use of technology have continued since Perusse et al's paper in 1989. The surprise for us was realising that 37 years have gone by since that paper was published yet the messages about the lack of innovation in the use of technology have not been sufficiently heard. Even though many classrooms are now well-equipped with technology the pedagogical developments have lagged behind. Many teachers still feel ill-prepared to make full use of technology to transform learning and teaching and push back the walls of the classroom and use technology to broaden and deepen the learning experiences for their students.

Foreign Language Teaching

The challenges of language teaching have been another constant across the years. In 1979 (Vo.2. No.4) Meriting said 'for over 20 years applied linguistics has especially been engaged in problems connected with foreign language acquisition and learning. He suggested it appeared as an inter-discipline of psychology, pedagogics, sociology and linguistics. However, in 1979 he believed it was gradually finding a place among the subjects taught in the university, forming its own cadre, defining its field and its research methods, and presenting results in the field of language learning. Over 30 years ago he argued that the moment has come for applied linguistics to be considered in the training of language teachers. He acknowledged in 1979 that language teaching had moved on considerably and there was a focus on communicative approaches yet many challenges remain for language teachers. Again as authors over the decades return to the same points about language teaching the messages have the quality of a recurring dream!

The complexity of teacher education was often demonstrated in papers we analysed as the authors grappled with the interconnection of more than one topic in the context for their research. This often highlighted the challenges of making the connections between aspects of the teacher education programmes 'delivered' to student teachers separately, often by different departments. The connection between language teaching and intercultural awareness is one example of the importance of supporting teachers understanding of inter-related topics. While there have been many papers that dealt with multicultural/intercultural issues in their own right there have also been papers that considered the interdependency of language learning and cultural awareness.

Roles, identity and professional development of teacher educators

The roles and identities of the teacher educators took greater prominence in papers published in the 1990s. Volume 13, Issue 1 was devoted to papers related to the appointment and professional development of teacher educators/teacher trainers. Key questions considered in the papers included, 'Who trains the trainers?', 'What post-appointment staff development is needed in a university?' and 'What are the appointment and induction arrangements for initial teacher educators?'. The topic of teacher educators' roles and functions and professional development recurred in a number of issues of the journal in the 2000s. For example, see 2007 (Vol. 30, No. 4), 2008 (Vol. 31, No. 2) and 2010 (Vol. 33, No. 4). As raising the quality of teachers increasing became an issue for policy-makers the focus also increased on the quality of teacher educators. Questions remain about definitions of quality in terms of what makes for a 'good teacher' and what makes for

a 'good teacher educator'. Different answers to those questions uncover different beliefs and values about learning and teaching and the education system in general.

Teaching standards

Another surprise for us was to discover the first paper on teaching standards published in EJTE was in 1982 (Vol. 5, No. 3). The article examines the view that open-mindedness, which is seen as a critical weapon in a teacher's armoury, is endangered by the movement to establish objective standards in education generally and in teacher education in particular. It is interesting to note that papers that have a specific focus on standards were next published in 2001 and standards have continued to be a significant focus through the 2000s.

Innovation and the school of tomorrow

Based on the analysis of the papers published over the last 40 years in EJTE, it is possible to identify persisting challenges but also issues that deserve further examination. The role of research in teacher education needs to be better understood as do the ways that quality teacher education is understood and developed in different contexts. These are two aspects that need further discussion and critique to understand different interpretations of a high quality research-based teaching profession. Our analysis of papers published in EJTE has highlighted to us that teacher and teacher identity and collaboration in various forms, such as between university and school, between teacher education institutions and other agencies within and across countries) feature prominently. However, further research is needed in regard to preservice teachers' identity development during initial teacher education and career-long professional learning. Similarly, further comparative research could help us consider the different implications at a national level of global trends impacting on teacher education.

As we have seen there are many persistent issues that suggest elements of the past will continue to be inherent in future thinking about teacher education but elements of an unknown future are increasing. This calls for new skills, new ways of thinking and innovative approaches to view the interaction of teaching and learning. This heralds an exciting era of teacher education where what it is to be a teacher will dynamically change as will what it is to be a learner. This will undoubtedly bring new challenges for teacher education but openness to new possibilities will also be needed to embrace the new possibilities of the future.

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