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## **A study of in-service teacher educator roles, with implications for a curriculum for their professional development**

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In-service educators have a crucial role to play in meeting the professional learning needs of teachers of the future, according to the Council of Europe's 'ET 2020', although it is less clear what that role entails. This empirical study, undertaken in a university school of English language in Turkey, explores the everyday experience of a team of wholly school-based in-service educators and develops a model of their role based on an analysis of questionnaire, interview and focus group data. The results attest to the complexities of the in-service educator's role, revealing them to be more than simply effective teachers. Catering for affective needs, coaching a broad range of clients, interpreting contextual variables and providing appropriate feedback represent some of the challenges in-service educators are facing in the research context, which set them apart and suggest important lessons for the development of an in-service educator training curriculum.

**Keywords:** teacher education; teacher education curriculum; teacher educators; school-based teacher education; professional development

### **1. Introduction: the role of teacher educator**

Education is perceived to be a major contributor to future economic and social well-being by the Council of Europe whose resolutions encompass ambitious long-term goals for education (Council of the European Union 2009). They recognise the importance of developing career-long mentoring support, improved continuing professional development and life-long learning as part of improving teacher quality. Their measures include the need to ensure the quality of teacher educators, the selection criteria for which are solid practical teaching experience, good teaching competences and high academic standards (European Commission 2010). Such statements suggest that teacher educators are not identified as a distinct professional group by policy-makers, or researchers (John 2002), with their induction and professional development 'marginal topics on today's political agenda of most countries' (Swennen and Van der Klink 2009b, 1). Although substantial variation exists in the system, content, pedagogy and structure of teacher education across nations and the perception of a teacher educator's role (Snoek and Žogla 2009), teacher educators in general seem to be equated with good teachers (Murray and Male 2005; Smith 2005; Swennen and Van der Klink 2009a). However, a strong case can be made for teacher educators to be considered 'a unique occupational group with distinctive knowledge, skills and understandings' (Murray, Swennen, and Shagrir

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2009, 29). As is argued in this study, this statement is equally applicable to wholly school-based in-service teacher educators, although their role requirements may differ from those externally based.

‘Successful teachers are not all capable of making the transition to training’ according to Bolitho and Wright. They point to the wider issues ‘involved in the professional preparation and development of teachers’ (2007, 226) and stress the importance of trust, interpersonal skills and counselling, awareness-raising and reflection, professional knowledge, self-awareness and openness. Phipps conceptualises ‘teacher learning in an in-service education context’ as involving ‘an on-going dynamic interplay between cognitive, affective, experiential and contextual factors’ (2010, 168) which, by extension, has implications for the educator’s role. Fransson, Van Lakerveld, and Rohtma build a schematic picture of the many roles of ‘in-service learning facilitators’ (2009, 75), which encompasses: trainer–educator; coach–mentor–supervisor; designer–developer; and organisation consultant. Their analysis leads to a competence profile with the most important competence being ‘the capability to assess needs and expectations of the clients’ (ibid. 81). Borg (2011a) in discussing language teacher education posits that teacher cognition is central to understanding teacher development, and if taken into account, creates more effective teacher education. He points to the particular importance in in-service contexts of reflective practices which question deeply held beliefs (Borg 2011b). This literature suggests that the teacher educator role encompasses more than simply good teaching skills; however, as Borg (ibid.) points out for language teacher educators, there is a dearth of empirical studies on the identity, and required skills and knowledge of teacher educators.

Curricula and approaches for the design and running of courses for teacher educators are apparent in the literature. Bolitho and Wright base their curriculum recommendations on their experiences of working with language teacher educators in many international contexts, suggesting practice activities in the areas cited above. Malderez and Wedell offer a resource book for teachers ‘supporting the learning of other future or current teachers’ (2007, xi), which outlines what teachers need to learn and how teachers of teachers might support professional learning. Roberts points out that models of teaching determine teacher education goals; ‘an ‘operative’ model’ ... ‘implies training objectives based on mastery of a set of competencies’; a problem-solver model would ‘prepare the teacher as a free agent’ (1998, 103). Thus, teacher educator’s objectives vary with the model and the focus, viz. initial or in-service training. Graves (2009) develops a framework for planning a curriculum for second-language teacher education courses, a crucial decision for which is whether it ‘is educating teachers to replicate practice or to challenge and change it’ (2009, 121). In both Roberts and Graves, the dichotomies imply a different methodology and role for the educator. A great deal of ‘interest in more process-oriented definitions of trainer-development curriculum’ is noted by Wright; an expanded curriculum for teacher education makes high demands on the teacher educator ‘requiring a high level of self-awareness and the capacity to make tacit pedagogical knowledge available’ (2009, 108).

Much discussion of the teacher educator’s role naturally appears framed within national training institutions entrusted with the training of new teachers to the profession, as in Koster et al. (2005). However, less is heard from ‘school-based teacher educators’ (Korthagen, Loughran, and Lunenberg 2005), who are charged with intentionally contributing to the professional development of colleagues, which may

be without the support of a teacher education institution. The European Commission has found 'little evidence of systematic efforts to update their competences' (Commission of the European Communities 2010, 4). The lack of focus on in-service educators may represent an important omission given the current importance attached to teachers as life-long learners as a result of endemic professional change (Fransson, Van Lakerveld, and Rohtma 2009).

In-service provision covers a broad spectrum of post-appointment teacher professional learning on a continuum between external or school-based practices, constituting 'some form of an initial teacher-preparation process' or 'an ongoing development of the teacher who is already a "professional"' (Villegas-Reimers 2003, 56). External institutions tend to be involved more in teacher-preparation courses, which may include institutional partnerships involving practicum and mentoring components (ibid. 2003); however, the relevance of external institutions' involvement to individual teacher needs may not be guaranteed (Legutke and Schocker 2009; Sandholtz 2002). Continuous professional development programmes for certified and longer serving teachers involve a range of different types of in-service activities across the continuum, with school-based strategies considered the 'most effective for enhancing instructional strategies' (Luneta 2012, 368). For Legutke and Schocker, 'school-based practice must be an integral part of teacher education' (2009, 209). The research reported here targets the school-based end of the continuum in which teacher education is handled entirely within the institution by members of staff of that institution.

## 2. Background and research questions

This study arose in response to a request from the Turkish Ministry of Education to give a trainer training course to a cohort of around 100 English language teachers who had been identified as potential in-service teacher educators. The Ministry is keen to improve its provision of English language teaching in primary and secondary sectors (Kırkgöz 2009). The request-receiving institution, a School of English Language in an English medium university, has a team of 17 school-based in-service teacher educators who support the professional development of approximately 300 teaching staff. Teachers are provided with a range of in-service learning opportunities which include induction, formal training and a mentoring system. Staff are also provided with an in-service Masters programme, incorporating the Cambridge ESOL DELTA, or an in-house certificate in Teaching English for Academic Purposes.

The in-service educators are members of the teaching body, with a reduced teaching load. Their training time is given up to group training sessions, observation and feedback cycles, one-on-one coaching, assignment marking and feedback, mentoring in response to specific needs, and, recently, supporting research (Harrison and Yaffe 2009; Livingston, McCall, and Morgado 2009), creating 'new knowledge in and about teaching' (Smith 2005, 178). They are also expected to work closely with the accountability system in the school, providing help and support for poor performance.

This study was undertaken with the aim of clarifying what might be the needs of the Ministry of Education's in-service educators. The researchers wished to deepen understandings of the in-service educator's role based on the experience of in-service educators in the School of English Language. Specifically, the research questions were as follows: how do in-service educators in the context under study

perceive their role, its key elements, challenges and indicators for success; what does the underlying model of the teacher educator's role look like; and, what are the implications for the training of in-service educators suggested by the model? Stage two of the study, not reported here, studied trainee<sup>1</sup> perceptions of their in-service educators' roles in the light of the developing model.

### 3. Methods

The researchers adopted an exploratory approach; inductively developing understandings of the in-service educator's role grounded in empirical data (Strauss and Corbin 1998). In the first instance, a questionnaire was circulated to all 17 teacher educators, answered anonymously, requesting some demographic data and open-ended written responses to 11 questions. The response rate was 88% ( $N=15$ ). All respondents were teachers in the school, with an average teaching experience of approximately 10 years, and an average of 7 years as in-service educators. Their opinions were sought on: what they considered to be the most important aspects of their roles as educators; the challenges and rewards they had experienced in that role; teacher educator characteristics which had impacted on their own professional development; how they worked with experienced teachers; the challenges encountered in observations; motivation and resistance; and general advice to in-service educators. Responses were collated and codes were generated independently by the two researchers using a qualitative data analysis tool, HyperResearch®. Concepts reflecting the in-service educator's role were then developed and grouped into categories which became the key elements of the model presented here. The researchers in consultation formulated the final model with reflexive iteration (Srivastava and Hopwood 2009).

In order to validate the model and collect further potential insights into the in-service educator role, 6 of the 15 respondents were stratified according to their experience as teacher trainers and the type of in-service provision they were involved in, and interviewed at length. In addition, two focus group interviews were carried out, one comprising teacher educators more involved with newly qualified teachers or those having only one or two years of experience ( $N=5$ ), the other with educators dealing with more experienced teachers ( $N=9$ ). All interviews were recorded, transcribed, coded and analysed independently by the researchers, and then synthesised.

### 4. Results

The results of the research are summarised in the form of a model in Figure 1. The analysis is then extended by highlighting issues brought up in the interviews and focus groups. A further study triangulated educators' perceptions with an analysis of questionnaire and interview data from teachers in the same institution.

#### 4.1. The model

The model suggests five main categories which characterise the teacher educator role in the context under consideration: Developing Trust; Active Counselling; Responding to Practice; Imparting Knowledge and Experience; and Establishing Role Identity. Each is considered separately below; the windows connecting the categories are discussed in the Section 4.2.

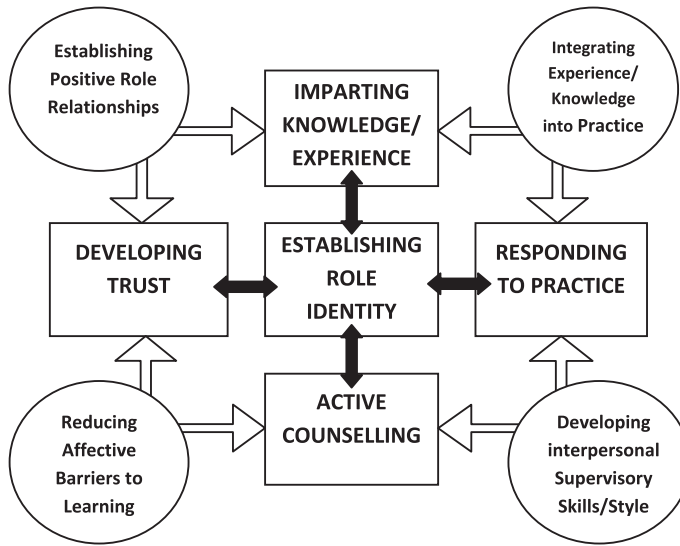


Figure 1. A model of the in-service educator role.

#### 4.1.1. *Developing trust*

'Developing Trust' encompasses a set of trainer characteristics which, according to the data, contribute to the establishment of an affective relationship with trainees, grouped under three orientations. The first, a truth orientation, posits that effective in-service teacher training depends on developing a relationship with the trainee, which is genuine, sincere, frank, objective and honest. The second, a self-esteem orientation, posits that the in-service educator should respect and value the individual trainee as a person. This involves showing faith in their potential, respecting and valuing their experience and knowledge, displaying a non-judgemental stance, treating the trainee as a colleague, and respecting confidentiality. The third, a humanistic orientation encompasses the ability to show genuine interest and empathy, to display mutual respect, be tactful, to understand the psychological disposition of a trainee, and be supportive and collegial. The latter may be imparted through body language, friendliness and ease of communication, sensitivity and emotion, likeability, or a sense of humour.

#### 4.1.2. *Active counselling*

In-service educators are involved in the day-to-day life of teachers for a year or longer in the work context under study. Trainees may face challenges caused by personal problems, job requirements, institutional issues, formal assessment, to cite a few. The data suggest that in-service educators have to deal with trainees' stress, insecurity, threats to self-esteem (e.g. failure in formal assessment), resistance to professional development, or difficult adaptation to a new school community. Educators' roles also involve inspiring, creating interest in development and convincing of the rewards, displaying passion and enjoyment, and promoting open communication. A third subcategory suggests that the educator has a wider responsibility to develop

the trainee as a person and make a difference in their lives as a whole, through a process of guided self-discovery, based on mentoring skills, which might include counselling; mentoring and counselling 'are both helping relationships concerned with personal change and development', with counselling adopting a more 'Rogerian person-centred orientation' (Stokes 2003, 36). Mentoring suggests a professional relationship between an experienced mentor and less-experienced protégé (Anderson and Shannon 1988). Rogerian counselling focuses on developing the quality of a relationship as a prequel to personal development, involving 'creative, active, sensitive, accurate, empathic, and non-judgemental listening' (Rogers, Lyon, and Tausch 2014, 71). However, the distinction between mentoring and counselling remains far from cut and dried, and may be more fruitfully conceptualised as being at opposing ends on a continuum.

#### 4.1.3. *Responding to practice*

The data show that the educator role requires a specific skill set when observing and responding to classroom practice. The set includes establishing clear criteria and carrying out a written commentary on a lesson while observing, which necessitates negotiation with the trainee, familiarity with effective teaching criteria and teacher developmental processes, prioritising issues for feedback as a class observation progresses, and an awareness of the environment as well as class and learner characteristics. Post-observation conferencing skills also involve a string of complex behaviours including selecting clear points for discussion, understanding the teacher's perspectives and rationale, dealing with a lack of awareness, and distilling and explaining the 'truth'. The whole needs to be constructive, with a use of appropriate trainer language, avoiding negative emotional overtones or inappropriate body language.

The concept of the educator as a catalyst arose from the data, which entails them being able to encourage trainees to analyse their teaching effectiveness, to explore and organise long-held beliefs about teaching and learning, and to articulate their needs and wants. Informants indicated that this requires an inductive, open-minded and non-directive stance based on getting trainees to adopt an exploratory mode, to experiment and take risks, and to reflect critically and challenge their beliefs. This may include collaborative learning involving mutual observation and team teaching, sharing expertise and models of practice, and collectively sharing stories (ideas, experience and knowledge).

#### 4.1.4. *Imparting knowledge and experience*

The teacher educator's practitioner knowledge remains important and includes familiarity with the literature on teacher development, giving sessions which are challenging and interesting, matching teacher profiles to their level of experience, responding with suggestions at the appropriate level of challenge, and bridging the perception gap between the teacher and educator's perceptions of performance. The data likewise underline the importance of the teacher educator being a good classroom practitioner encompassing knowledge of the literature and research surrounding language teaching, familiarity with resources available, an arsenal of teaching suggestions, practice of formal assessment and an understanding of the teaching context.



#### 4.1.5. *Establishing role identity*

The data illustrate that in-service educators face challenges in establishing their identity. They need to act as models both inside and outside the classroom. They have to actively display openness and avoid adopting a knower stance as trainees may be more knowledgeable about some areas of teaching and the context. It may happen that in-service trainees have been in the profession or the school context longer than the trainer, or, that newly graduated teachers are more updated as to current trends. They need openness to observation, to team teaching, to continually questioning their relationship and trainee perceptions, and to be seen to be interested in their own professional development.

The educator role requires dealing on a personal level with the challenges associated with certain unrealistic expectations on the part of trainees: the perception that they must know everything; the tendency for them to be considered as *the* perfect model; the need to be motivating, inspiring, knowledgeable, creative, supportive, while at the same time challenging the trainee; the establishment of a clear role distinction between assessor friend, and colleague; and rationalising an acceptable supervision style.

Finally, educators need to adopt certain desirable personal characteristics such as: self-confidence; patience; active listening; thinking on the spot; professional curiosity; objectivity; and the ability to surmount negative experiences, through perseverance, reflection, discussion with colleagues and the seeking of new ideas.

### 4.2. *The workings of the model*

The five quadrants in Figure 1 are variables in the in-service role, mediated by the educator's own developing identity. The tentative model, with accompanying explanation, was made available to interlocutors prior to the interviews and focus group meetings. They were asked to appraise the model as an acceptable conceptualisation of their roles, and to comment further.

#### 4.2.1. *Reflections on responding to practice*

Informants alluded to the difficulty of marrying their roles as professional developer, personal developer, carer and formal assessor when formal qualifications were part of in-service training; formal course requirements lead some trainees to play safe by producing standard lesson types. When in-service courses are mandated by an institution, the extent of 'buy-in' by trainees was a further complicating factor. A related dilemma involved potential 'spoon-feeding' by educators to help trainees meet external criteria, rather than pushing them to perform outside of their professional comfort zone.

A second area raised concerned the range of levels of experience in an in-service context which makes judging the appropriate response to individual teachers a challenge. The starting point for development varies from person to person and there are no stable landmarks by which to sail. New recruits might require a more deductive approach, with direct messages; the more experienced might need a less directive, more inductive approach. Whatever the starting point, however, a key element of the educator's role remains the development of the trainee's confidence in decision-making and problem-solving as part of developing their practice (cf. 4.1 above).

The data also signalled the vicissitudes of working within an organisation, requiring educators to reflect institutional policies and culture, as part of an accountability structure. Educators may need to ease newly recruited personnel's integration through formal induction processes, or as part of their developing role relationship. The educator may need to adopt a mediator role in issues which arise as part of the socialisation process to an institutional culture, or its rules and regulations; this may include 'smoothing' issues that new teachers experience with colleagues, students, or workload deadlines. Educators might need to broach delicate matters openly with a line manager, or use their knowledge of the institution and its members to raise issues less openly and formally. The potential for jeopardising the trainer-trainee relationship might be high if such initiatives on the part of the educator were made public. Educators were at times confronted with institutional practices, either administrative or teaching-related, which presented them with a dilemma. As one interlocutor expressed it, 'things keep changing ... and it causes a lot of tension and stress ... you can't help them (the trainees) anymore because (of) somebody somewhere else' ... 'I think it is very difficult teaching them (trainees) to what extent they can be flexible'.

#### 4.2.2. *Reflections on active counselling*

Interlocutors indicated that the approach to active counselling depends on the level of a teacher's confidence and their professional needs. If a teacher is still struggling with standing up in front of students, as opposed to needing practical ideas and some awareness-raising, then the style adopted will differ. The former may need substantial confidence building, whereas the latter a more methodological focus. Individual differences was one of the challenges of the role, in particular dealing with entrenched professional practice, calming threats to existing beliefs and routines, especially amongst the more experienced.

Educator involvement in trainees' personal issues raised some debate. Educators need to engage with the trainee, show an interest and actively listen, as 'most people respond to the affective side better'. The need to create trust was seen as a prerequisite, but trust developed further over time through class visits and related activities. However, a fine line was discerned between the educator's availability and the trainee exploiting that relationship through being overly dependent; the potential for the educator to take upon themselves responsibility for the personal problems of others was raised, with this negatively affecting their own peace of mind.

Although a person-oriented approach was seen as necessary, professional development remained the focus. 'Active Counselling' goes hand in hand with 'Responding to Practice'. The overall aim was expressed as wanting to help trainees explore and attune their beliefs, to develop their reflective skills, and their self-confidence and self-esteem as teachers; a strong link exists between a trainee's personal and professional values. As one interlocutor phrased it, 'if we are not moving ideas and beliefs in teaching forward, then a good atmosphere serves no purpose'.

#### 4.2.3. *Reflections on developing trust*

Developing trust was reported as being the major challenge of the educator's role, and maintaining trust over time as changing conditions may undermine it. Trust covers not only the training relationship but can relate to other players within an

institution such as administrators and, even, students. Trust was considered the cement which linked the model together into a coherent whole. Confidence in the educators' knowledge of teaching can inspire trust as can the style adopted in counselling or observing. For many the interpersonal skills needed for the establishment of trust were not trainable – a case of nature not nurture. Connecting as a person, particularly with novice teachers, can be very important as they can feel 'really lost and lonely' in the face of new personal challenges such as fear due to their feelings of ignorance in a new context.

A challenge under this category remained the potential need to share information about a trainee within an institutional context. A further challenge involved working in a context with staff from different national backgrounds. Difficulties associated with establishing trust may be compounded by differing expectations and understandings, in particular where an educator and trainee belong to different cultural groups. In a mono-lingual language teaching context such as the one studied here, for example, culturally inappropriate behaviours need to be signalled by educators without taint to the developing trainee–trainer relationship; educators with other cultural backgrounds would need to recognise and accept such behaviours as inappropriate.

#### *4.2.4. Reflections on imparting knowledge/experience*

Effective teaching skills were considered necessary but not sufficient. Imparting them in a practical and humanistic way was a needed adjunct, as was relating them to the context. Good teachers, it was said, do not necessarily make good trainers but good teaching skills do transfer, along with other skills such as the ability to assess needs. Particularly valued aspects of teaching experience were the ability to deal with the unexpected and to look at things from different angles.

In this context, teacher educator's practitioner knowledge was developed using means such as combing the literature; individual or group meetings at which discussions, case analyses, reflection, curriculum development and evaluation took place; peer or joint observation and feedback; think-aloud protocols for critical awareness; discussing running commentaries on observed lessons; and focusing on trainer language use through recording. In general, informants recognised the power of collective experience and collaborative two-way learning; engaging with the trainee was also a potential source of development for the educator as well.

#### *4.2.5. Reflections on establishing trainers' role identity*

The challenges of juggling their different roles were brought out in the data. For example, informants were not necessarily comfortable with an assessment role, causing stress for some when informing trainees of assessment outcomes. However, it was rationalised as one of the challenges of the in-service educator's role within an institutional context as it contributed to trainees' developing careers. Some informants indicated that encouraging flexibility in teaching approach might run counter to the methods advocated by the institution; therefore, operating within institutional requirements meant compromises as to how they chose to advise the trainee.

Informants recognised that they are not omniscient and may themselves experience problems in the classroom; thus, being a role model and inviting trainees to observe their lessons was not always easy. Further challenges included teachers who

did not wish to be on courses which were required, or moving forward trainees who play safe. Keeping a separation between personal and professional issues also proved an area for challenge, as did resisting the temptation to provide easy answers at the expense of creating opportunities for reflection. Challenges also sprang from the relationship amongst the training team itself. Differences in style and professional preferences amongst members of the team were potential sources of conflict.

#### 4.2.6. *Extending the model*

The model delineates the four principal categories involved in a teacher educator's role, with a fifth quadrant at the centre constantly interacting and forging the educator identity as they deal with institutional, professional and personal domains. Affective and interpersonal factors, apparent in three of the five quadrants, were reported as essential mediator variables to the effectiveness of the practice-related elements of the role. The dynamic nature of the interaction of the in-service educator with trainees, which is subject to development and change, is apparent as is the range of factors within each quadrant, which impinge on the training relationship.

The four windows which connect the quadrants emphasise the interplay between the different elements of the model, with each potentially providing a major training goal for in-service educators: developing interpersonal supervisory skills and style; establishing positive role relationships; reducing affective barriers to learning; and integrating experience and knowledge into practice.

## 5. Discussion

The model underlines the centrality of affective factors and interpersonal skills in the in-service teacher educator's role in the context under study, a critical dimension of the role not supported in Council of Europe documentation (Council of the European Union 2009), although it is gaining recognition in professional circles (Hawkey 2006; Liston, Whitcomb, and Borko 2006; Smith 2003). The data suggest that the in-service educator is required to act as a professional coach (Joyce and Showers 2002) 'providing expertise and guidance to help clients improve themselves' ... 'Reassure and help clients build and maintain self-confidence and a positive attitude in the face of difficult challenges' ... 'and help clients think differently to break out of mental mindsets and be innovative' (Stern 2008, 5). In the model, 'Developing Trust' is the lynch pin both for establishing successful role relationships and for developing a successful supervisory style; as Brooks and Rickman (2010) agree, trust building is a fundamental trait of the charismatic advisor, although trust may vary according to context (Czerniawski 2011). The affective elements in the model act as mediator variables, not always acknowledged as important (Lasagabaster and Sierra 2011), without which professional skills may not be developed effectively. The recent surge in interest in professional coaching (Grant 2008) suggests that coaches can be trained in needed interpersonal skills, although informants in the study were less sanguine about the possibility of training personality traits. A taxonomy of core coaching competences for in-service educators, as Stern (ibid.) does for executive coaches, would be a useful addition to the field, along with approaches to help educators acquire them, and as such would be a first step in developing a curriculum for the training of in-service educators, given the importance of the affective elements in the model. However, in line with the European Commission's thinking

(European Commission 2010), the model does agree that effective teaching skills are a necessary part of the teacher educator's role, but, on their own, insufficient. The underlying personality traits required make the selection process for in-service educator positions crucial; a pre-requisite to any training course would be a procedure which distinguishes essential personality traits, along with a means of determining a candidate's ability to teach well.

As the data attest, a second area which characterises the in-service educator role is the institutional context. The constraints and requirements that membership of the same organisation brings to the role differentiate it from pre-service contexts. In this study, teacher educators are involved in the socialisation of trainees to the organisational culture through involvement in induction and probation processes and counselling related to institutional requirements (Farrell 2006; Harrison, Dymoke, and Pell 2006; Zeichner 2005). They may have to smooth the acculturation process by contacts with organisational members in case of need. In addition, their involvement may include career development and planning and carrying through the policies of an institution in these areas. In fact, in-service training may be regarded as an integral part of an institution's learning processes in which the in-service trainer may be accorded a role in the organisational structure as part of an organisational learning perspective (O'Dwyer 2008). In the current context, teacher educators are recognised as 'positions of responsibility holders'. Such a role may bring with it responsibilities in determining the future of trainees as part of liaising with other key figures in the structure, e.g. departmental heads, or being involved in the delivery of formal courses which involve assessment and decisions as to quality of performance. The data further suggest that the educator may experience tensions in relation to some of their institution's practices or policies, which represents a role dilemma as to how to act. Fullan sees the educator as potentially a powerful change-agent at the level of the individual and the institution 'in a system which is more likely to retain the status quo' (1993, 12). Price and Valli are unequivocal in their stance when working with pre-service teachers: 'teacher educators must be prepared to help students examine and reframe assumptions about themselves as teachers and change agents as well as examine taken-for-granted school practices and processes' (2005, 71). The educator, therefore, is in a privileged position to adopt the mantle of catalyst for change, both through the manner in which they explore with their trainees the 'pedagogical tensions' (ibid. 2005, 51) in a school context and the manner in which they tackle entrenched practices they perceive while exercising their role. The organisational aspect of the educator role, not given a separate category in the model, could be considered as the ether in which the model sits and, given its ubiquity, might be well represented by the larger rectangle surrounding the elements of the model. Training in-service teacher educators would thus involve developing an in-depth understanding of the policies of an institution and its systems, clearly defined roles with respect to institutional expectations, an understanding of human resource issues within an organisational context, and an awareness of their potential role in shaping positive change at the level of the individual teacher and the organisation as a whole. Important selection criteria for in-service teacher educators would then be familiarity with the context and experience in the institution. This differentiates the in-service educator significantly from the pre-service or external institution counterpart.

A third area which characterises the role of the in-service educator reflects the variability in the client base and a lack of homogeneity in terms of needs. Trainees

may be novice or experienced and, as indicated by the data, may require differing approaches in both affective and professional domains. Therefore, the in-service educator, in addition to relationship skills and an in-depth knowledge of the institution, should be able to analyse needs and cater for a broader range of response in terms of counselling, knowledge and skills than might be expected with pre-service teachers. The fact that the in-service relationship may not be a master/apprentice one, and that the in-service trainee is a fully fledged member in the institutional context, is a source of increased pressure on the educator. The educator needs to maintain a foothold in teaching in the institution, be familiar with the curriculum, take on an active modelling role by opening up their classroom, exhibit desirable behavioural traits and deal with the different parameters amongst the trainees. Role identity might not present such a challenge in a pre-service context where roles might be clearly defined in the qualification stakes, although identity issues are reported in such contexts (Pillen, Beijaard, and den Brok 2013). Thus, where the trainees and educators share similar students and are colleagues, the need to maintain professional credibility in the day-to-day of an institution takes on a different perspective. Training teacher educators on how to deal with such complexities represents a quandary. An in-service educator team, where it exists, is a formidable source of expertise in the absence of formal training.

The study began with the need to develop a series of workshops for in-service educators. The findings point to the many facets of the school-based in-service educator role and suggest that a workshop approach might not be sufficient to develop the complexity of response and breadth of experience to cover, let alone train, the educator skills observed in the current context (Çimer, Çakı, and Çimer 2010; Tomlinson 1988). A workshop may serve as an initial intervention to raise awareness as to the complexity of the role, but in-service educator skills development would need to involve working with trainees in a real institutional context, the classroom and with affective bonds. In the context studied, educators have to conceptualise and respond appropriately to stages in a teacher's professional growth as well as detect individual characteristics and needs. Korthagen's 'onion model' of teacher development posits inner and outer levels of 'fundamental importance to the professional development of teachers'. He stresses that 'educators must be capable of intervening on all levels' (2004, 93) and be able to switch between levels and foster core reflection in teachers. Our model supports the need for educators to be able to move between the outer levels of 'environment, behaviour, competencies' and the inner levels of 'beliefs, identity and mission', while respecting 'the private lives of their students' and avoiding 'a therapeutic role' (ibid. 92); the ability to flip between what Freeman calls '*teacher training* and *teacher development* ... the strategies by which teachers are educated' (1989, 37).

Clear implications arise from the study for the design of a training course for school-based educators, a precondition for which would be selection based on teaching ability and desirable personality traits. Interestingly, the educator personality traits in the study overlap with Leithwood et al.'s subcategories of the four core functions of non-administrator school leaders: 'setting direction, developing people, redesigning the organisation, and managing the instructional programme' (2007, 55); this suggests that the educator's organisational role is a leadership one, and that a training course should recognise the fact. Based on the data, the curriculum objectives for a course for school-based educators need to focus on the following abilities: detecting and meeting teacher development needs in relation to career position and

individual characteristics; encouraging reflection, as a mentor or coach as appropriate, without transcending personal barriers; switching seamlessly between intervention types depending on teacher characteristics and needs; fostering the characteristics and requirements of the teaching environment both at the level of the classroom and the organisation; and, adopting a leadership role within an organisational learning perspective. Firstly, then, an element of a training course for school-based educators should focus on how to analyse needs, both institutional and individual, as well as how to 'capitalise on ... needs and to foster individual responsibility for professional growth' (Sandholtz 2002, 826). Given that institutions and individuals change over time, part of this would be to develop the 'capacity to adapt and respond to shifting organisational priorities and needs' through, for example, 'performative evaluation' (O'Dwyer 2008, 254). Secondly, a course should look to developing coaching and mentoring skills to cater for the affective domain in the model, while adjusting the approach to account for individual teacher needs and career orientation. Thirdly, a course should concern itself with supervisory skills for classroom observation, both technical for recording and selecting feedback and affective for creating the conditions for effective 'intake' and 'uptake' (Pennington 1996), again relative to the teacher's characteristics and background. Fourthly, the model places the school-based in-service educator firmly within a specific environment in which they have a leadership role. Therefore, a course should pay particular attention to developing educator identity in this wider organisational perspective through a focus on leadership and responsibility taking as part of a learning community.

Realising these course objectives clearly implies embedding training in its context, although some off-site activity may contribute to the development of awareness and strategies to support on-site practice. Darling-Hammond and Richardson suggest that an appropriate methodology to support effective teacher learning in schools provides, amongst other things, 'opportunities for active, hands-on learning, enables teachers to acquire new knowledge, apply it to practice, and reflect on the results with colleagues'; the approach should be 'collaborative and collegial ... intensive and sustained over time' (2009, 49). Research into conceptual change (Posner et al. 1982) suggests that, for in-service teachers to change their deeply held beliefs and routinised teaching practices, they need to see practical examples of how alternative practices work in their own context (Phipps 2010). For teacher educators giving feedback on teaching, there is a recognition that teachers do not always teach in line with their deeply held beliefs due to contextual and affective factors. A course for teacher educators needs to confront these issues and, therefore, teacher educators need to be very familiar with the day-to-day teaching context of their trainees (Phipps and Borg 2009). A school-based teacher educator who followed a training course for educators as outlined above would be well positioned through their knowledge and familiarity with the context to contribute effectively to the professional learning of their colleagues.

The findings have clear implications beyond the context of the study. The role of the wholly school-based in-service educator, as shown in the model, encompasses a broad set of complex interpersonal and professional skills, which are inextricably bound together. Good teaching skills are necessary but not sufficient for the role, contrary to policy-maker perceptions. Firstly, then, if ambitious in-service learning goals are to be met, school-based in-service educators require specific training for their role. Therefore, professional education providers external to schools need to

research ways of developing and delivering school-based training capacity, for which the model and curriculum specifications above may provide pointers. Secondly, the professional development of school-based in-service educators should be firmly embedded within the context in which they operate as they need to respond to a changing institutional landscape. Thirdly, successful in-service professional learning is dependent on creating a supportive professional learning environment founded on a trusting peer relationship between in-service educators and trainees, tailored to individual needs. Fourthly, the model signals the importance of developing the in-service educators' capacity for peer mentoring or coaching, perhaps initially with the support of external institutions as in Livingston (2012), along with the ability to encourage reflective practice. The in-service teacher educator needs to be a catalyst, engaging teachers cognitively and encouraging them to explore and develop their beliefs and practices. Finally, selection for a leadership role in an institutional context brings with it the need for wholly school-based educators to confront a new role identity. Both external providers and those in leadership roles within schools should not underestimate the challenges this brings. The establishment of collaborative structures for in-service educators would encourage the sharing of experiences and perceptions as part of identity development, with inter-school networks created for those working in smaller institutions.

## **6. Conclusion**

The study attests to the job complexity of the entirely school-based in-service educator who has to adopt a coaching role, support trainees within a defined organisational context and culture, and respond to a broad range of client professional experience. Simply equating the role with the good teacher belies the intricacies of the job. A broad skill set is needed to meet the requirements of the role in the context under study and establishing role identity represents a unique set of challenges. In-service teacher development recognises the need for effective coaching over time, an understanding and facility with contextual variables, and feedback to skills in action with a broad range of clients. More research on the workings of the model from the trainee perspective will provide a yet broader and richer picture of the role of the school-based educator, as will further empirical work on how the different facets of the role impact on teacher learning in different contexts.

## **Note**

1. The term 'trainee' has been used throughout this text but inadequately describes those engaged in in-service professional learning, many of whom are qualified and experienced teachers. A similar inadequacy surrounds the terms 'teacher educator' and 'trainer' both of which exude differing perspectives, methodologies and connotations. Nonetheless, these terms have been retained.

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