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Editorial

Regular readers of this journal will know that the theme for all the issues in this 40th volume of the European Journal of Teacher Education is 'Looking back, Looking forward' in relation to teacher education. Some topics have dominated thinking over a number of years and frequently recur in journal issues, such as approaches to teachers' professional development. Other topics have emerged in more recent years such as, improving teachers' digital competence. Teacher education is not static and it is interesting to note how thinking about the topics that frequently arise develops over time. New theoretical and/or conceptual perspectives challenge our previous positions and contribute to the creation of new knowledge and new approaches in teacher education. Changing political, economic and social contexts for teacher education necessitate ongoing reflection on familiar ways of working and we are continually investigating innovative ways to improve learning and teaching. This issue includes articles from six different countries – Finland, Cyprus, Netherlands, Portugal, Switzerland and Malta – the authors offer new perspectives and contribute to reflection on past and current approaches and propose recommendations to improve future practice.

The first two articles concern emotions. The first article, authored by Lanas and Huuki begins with a personal reflection on a lecture presented to student teachers in Finland about power and violence in peer-relations within youth culture. The lecture aroused emotional reactions in the student teachers and the lecturer. The authors explore the reactions and argue that it is necessary to consider the emerging emotions carefully and the wider context in which they emerged. They suggest that a holistic and in-depth understanding is needed of the emotions to provide opportunities to learn from them. Lanas and Huuki draw on feminist new materialist, poststructuralist and post-human theories to rethink discomfiting moments when engaging with sensitive topics in teacher education. Their aim is to re-theorise such an emotional event in an attempt to make visible how place, space, objects, emotion, affect and history entangle in predictable and unpredictable ways in teacher education. They propose that teacher educators should plan their teaching purposefully so that discomfiting events are not perceived as something that hinder learning but as opportunities to learn. This means accepting that discomfort and difficult emotions are a significant part of a shared learning process. The second article also causes us to consider student teacher emotions but from the more familiar perspective of the emotions experienced by student teachers in their transition to becoming a teacher. The authors, Anttila, Pyhältö, Soini and Pietarinen discuss the findings of their study which explored student teachers' emotional patterns. Their analysis revealed that these patterns were triggered by various task-related elements of teacher education: most commonly, fulfilled or unfulfilled expectations, sufficient or insufficient abilities, and experiences of social support received or not received. Anttila et al. argue it is necessary to develop understanding of future teachers' emotional patterns, not least because emotions experienced during teacher education are likely to affect not only their current learning, but also their experiences as teachers in the future. They suggest that extending knowledge about emotional patterns will also contribute to developing learning environments which are more likely to enable student teachers can flourish.

The third and fourth articles focus on approaches to professional development approaches that attempt to meet teachers' individual learning needs. In the third article, Kyriakides, Christoforidou, Panayiotou and Creemers bring together research findings from educational effectiveness research and research on teacher professional development. They emphasise the importance of examining the impact that professional development initiatives have on the quality of teaching and through that on improving student learning outcomes. Kyriakides et al. are critical of traditional competency-

based approaches to professional development that do not sufficiently accommodate the teachers' learning needs. They suggest that they fall short of providing adequate evidence of their positive effect on teaching and learning. They argue that a dynamic approach to professional development is needed that is differentiated to meet individual teacher's priorities and learning needs and engages teachers in systematic and guided critical reflection. The authors present the findings of a 3 year study with teachers inservice in Cyprus which investigates the impact that a long term dynamic professional development programme can have on the quality of teaching. Kyriakides et al. emphasise the need for an initial evaluation to find out the extent to which the teachers possess certain teaching skills and to identify their needs and priorities for improvement. The results of this initial evaluation can generate suggestions for the content of training to be offered to different groups of teachers based on their level of skill and stage of development. Louws, van Veen, Meirink and van Driel, in the fourth article, also focus on developing understanding of approaches to professional development that are more closely tailored to the teachers' learning goals and their years of teaching experience. Similar to Kyriakides et al. they are critical of professional development programmes that do not meet teachers' own learning goals or their specific needs when it comes to their development. They argue that a necessary condition for teachers to be self-directed learners is that they are able to diagnose and become aware of their learning goals first. Louws et al. present the findings of their study which explored the relationship between Dutch secondary school teachers' professional learning goals and their years of teaching experience. Various relationships between learning goals and teaching experience emerged, which reflected the different stages of development from early to mid and late career teachers. However, regardless of increasing teaching expertise, they found that curriculum and instruction remain central to teachers' continuous learning.

The fifth article continues the focus on understanding more about conditions to develop teachers' professional learning. Increasing emphasis is placed on situated professional learning and how teachers working in collaboration can extend and support each others' learning in school. In the case of this article, the authors, Castro Silva, Amante and Morgado are focused on understanding the importance of a positive school climate and more particularly on understanding the role of the school principal in developing and supporting teacher collaboration in middle and secondary schools in Portugal. From their findings the authors concluded that the school principal's support can influence or reduce teacher engagement in collaborative experiences.

Kyriakides et al.'s and Louws et al.'s articles both emphasised the importance of understanding individual teachers' professional learning needs. In the sixth article in this issue Spiteri and Rundgren aimed to do just that in finding out Maltese primary teachers' digital competence. They did this in order to understand what the teachers were able to do and to enable them to make recommendations for future development of approaches to technology integration in teaching education programmes. Similar to Castro Silva et al.'s study they identified the need to provide opportunities for teachers to develop their practice with technology collaboratively in school and reflect on it together. In accord with Castro Silva et al.'s findings Spiteri and Rundgren also emphasised the importance of school leadership in providing the space and time for the teachers to communicate and share their experiences.

In many countries teachers, particularly in the early years of schooling, are predominantly female. Keck Frei, Berweger and Buschor, the authors of the final article, aim to understand men's decision-making in considering and choosing a career in teaching. They undertook a longitudinal study in Switzerland examining male high school students' interest in teaching during transition to higher

education. They explore factors contributing to their decision-making before enrolling in teacher education. The authors' findings reveal that only a small number of male high school students are interested in teaching, however, those who are interested persist in their study choice over time. Their analysis suggests that a key contributing factor is having professional experience working with children. In addition, having a male role model who is a teacher is influential in contributing to the likelihood of men deciding to pursue a career as a teacher. This finding highlights the importance of male teacher in schools having an awareness of their function as potential role models for males interested in teaching. It also highlights the need for schools to provide opportunities for males interested in teaching to gain professional experience working with children and young people.

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