

The changing work of teacher educators in Aotearoa New Zealand: A view through activity theory.

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Abstract

The study of recruitment practices for teacher educators in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) universities reveals the academic category of teacher educator along three related trajectories: a professional expert (not required to research), a traditional academic (not required to hold a teaching qualification or teacher's practicing certificate), and one who is dually qualified, to teach (as a registered NZ teacher) and to research. It is the dually qualified type of teacher educator who can service the full scope of university based initial teacher education (ITE). Recent recruitment practices have however focused on employment of professional experts and traditional academics.

Drawing from document analyses and interviews we present a picture of changing teacher educators' work. Our study argues that policy environments and universities' responses are changing objects, rules and divisions of labour in university based ITE. We comment on the evolution ITE in NZ, its likely trajectory, and its potential for development.

Keywords: Teacher education, New Zealand, Cultural Historical Activity Theory, Teacher Educators.

Introduction

Whereas the work of academics in the university and the work of teacher educators (TEs) in former state funded Colleges of Education in Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) occurred historically in related but parallel systems of activity, the shift of much of initial teacher education (ITE) to the university sector in NZ has caused an expansion to universities' activity systems to include the many objects of teacher education within university based academic work. The shift has brought with it opportunities for research, development, and new lines of academic inquiry, affordances we think will likely impact positively on education in the longer term. However, it has also meant that ITE has faced challenges to remain relevant, connected to the profession, and accessible to a diverse population of prospective future teachers. In this context we are studying the work of TEs in order to understand what it means to *do* ITE within the university. Our long-term aim is to contribute to understandings of ITE as an activity of the academy and its contributions to the development of education overall.

The NZ context

The New Zealand Government, along with government bodies the world over, have long regarded the quality of a nation's teachers critical to the success of an education system. But attending to the conditions within which teachers learn to teach has been far less a visible concern. In the 1990s, NZ based ITE was deregulated, leading to a proliferation of qualifications and pathways to teaching. The market approach brought with it variable standards, high degrees of institutional competition, and qualification inflation. Colleges of Education began merging with local universities and in 2004 a moratorium on the development of new ITE programmes was announced (Mallard, 2004). The situation steadied. At that time it was estimated that over 90% of New Zealand's primary and 96% of secondary teaching graduates were educated in university-based ITE (Kane, 2005). For teachers in early childhood education, university-based programmes graduated approximately 45% of newly qualifying teachers. The shift of ITE into mainly university-based provision marked a significant change in provision of ITE in NZ. Concurrently TEs work, now also constituted as academic work in the context of the university, changed. Demands for

research-based teaching coupled with the imperative to publish ensued, particularly since 2003.

In 2010 the Ministerial report into the education workforce, *A vision for the teaching profession* (Ministry of Education, 2010), recommended several strategies for improving the status and effectiveness of the teaching profession if it were to meet the changing demands of education in the 21st century. Including a recommendation that ITE qualifications move to post-graduate (PG) status. Two years later, *Budget 2012* announced that as part of the government's 'raising achievement agenda' new PG qualifications would be introduced as a minimum (Parata, 2012). Following from this, the Ministry of Education funded initiatives at the PG level in secondary and primary ITE. In 2016, trial PG Māori Medium and early childhood ITE programmes will also be funded.

University-based Initial Teacher Education

World governments are intensely interested in questions of how best to educate teachers, which kinds of institutions should host teacher education, and from whom prospective teachers should receive their education (Darling Hammond, 2010, NZ Ministry of Education, 2010; Murray, 2008, OECD 2005, 2010). Despite some countries supporting a shift of programmes of teacher education out of the university sector - a trend in England and Scotland (McNicholl & Blake, 2013) as well as the United States (Townsend & Bates, 2007; Zeichner & Pena-Sandoval, 2015) - others have retained and/or strengthened university-based provision. For example, in Finland ITE is university-based, results in a four-five year Masters degree, and aims for graduates to be able to integrate research and theory with practice (Toom et al., 2010). Likewise in Norway, from 2017 a Master's degree will be the basic ITE qualification. The Norwegian change towards entry-level teacher qualifications, with an emphasis on research, theory and practice, has led to a National Research School for Teacher Education being established. Therein, new TEs in universities and colleges are funded to complete a doctoral qualification as part of their transition into higher education (see, <http://nafol.net/english/>). Teacher education in Canada is also firmly embedded within the university sector (Walker & Bergmann, 2013) with TEs being doctorally qualified and many graduate level teaching qualifications offered. Within Australia teacher qualifications are mostly at the undergraduate degree level

with graduate entry pathways resulting in diploma level qualifications for student teachers already holding a university degree (Brennan & Willis, 2009). Given the NZ situation and policy initiatives described earlier which bring with them imperatives for doctorally qualified and research active TEs who are also qualified, registered and certified to teach¹, our own Government and universities will soon be facing questions over how to retain capacity to provide ITE in the future, should PG entry to teaching become the norm. Furthermore, as the NZ initiatives also include an expanded practice-focused role for schools and early childhood settings within ITE, questions are emerging about the qualifications and postgraduate experiences of the school- and early childhood centre-based teachers who will participate in ITE going forth.

Research and scholarship about university based ITE and TEs has centred on a range of professional and academic matters. Studies have considered processes of transition from teaching in schools to teaching in universities (Saito, 2013), identity development of TEs (Davey, 2013; Izadinia, 2014; Swennen & van der Klink, 2009), TEs' induction and professional development needs (Murray, 2005, 2008; Smith, 2003), and the place of research in TEs work (Hill & Haigh, 2012; Livingston, McCall & Morgado, 2009). Accompanying this is an emerging scholarship around the kinds of work that university based TEs do (Murray, 2008; Ellis, McNicholl & Pendry, 2012; Nuttall et al. 2013).

An enduring theme is one of challenge – relative to both the work and the workforce. In England, Ellis, McNicholl and Pendry (2012) describe how it is possible to interpret TE as a troublesome category of academic worker by virtue of universities' contradictory expectations of TEs and their work. Reinforcing this sentiment is a sense that TEs may be considered reluctant researchers (Saito, 2013), or that they work under conditions where research is difficult to conduct (Brennan & Willis, 2009) or in situations where their capacity for research is still to be built (Hill &

¹ Recent changes (1 July 2015) in NZ have added a requirement for teachers to possess an ongoing certification to teach. Previously, a teacher would hold a recognised qualification and be registered. Now teachers will hold a qualification, apply for registration, and once registered, maintain an ongoing teachers' practicing certificate. TEs who supervise students in practice, are required to be qualified, registered and to hold a current practising certificate (Education Council, 2015).

Haigh, 2012). Murray (2005) mentions a sense of teacher education as “the impossible job” (p.82), pointing to the complicated work of addressing both professional and academic audiences. Ellis, McNicholl & Pendry (2012) refer to the TE as “super-teacher” (p.691), someone assumed to be a successful school-teacher practitioner who sustains high enthusiasm and resilience. A great deal of responsibility is leveled at the TE in terms of an expectation that she or he will be instrumental in addressing education systems’ underperformance (OECD 2005, 2010) and contribute to new knowledge through research and transformation.

In bringing ITE under their remit, NZ universities are offered an opportunity to support the kinds of system improvement the Government desires, but to do so with a largely inherited workforce who may not all share the vision and who have had an expansion to their work objects largely imposed (notably, the object of research). This is not to dismiss that many TEs have welcomed the change and are actively and successfully negotiating professional and academic domains of university based ITE. However as TEs ourselves who are working within the system, we (the authors) are wondering how institutions are managing potential contradictions within the activity of university based ITE and with what consequences. Therefore we set about exploring the relations between institutional constructions of the university based TE and TEs’ own accounts of their work. From this we can think more cogently about what implications might arise for NZ based university ITE. Our argument speaks to processes of change as NZ universities and TEs respond to a fluid policy environment and expansions to ITE work.

Method

Our study is one of several in an international collaboration involving scholars in England and Scotland (UK), Australia, NZ and Canada. Collectively we are researching the work of teacher educators (WoTE) in university-based ITE although each of our countries iterations of the work is distinct and inclusive of local questions and contexts. WoTE-NZ is concerned with understanding how teacher education as an activity of the academy is related to the institutional contexts within which it sits and how cultural historical analyses might reveal ITE practices to be flexing and growing. We are also interested in understanding ITE from the perspective of student teachers as they learn to teach.

Guided by second and third generation cultural-historical activity theory - CHAT (Engeström, 1987, 1999, 2001), the study is in two phases and is presently ongoing (2014-2015). Our research design emulates that of the WoTE studies in the UK and Australia (Ellis, Blake, McNicholl & McNally, 2011; Nuttall, Brennan, Zipin, Tuinamuana & Cameron, 2013). The original UK study (Ellis, et al. 2011) used sociocultural discourse analysis followed by 3rd generation CHAT to examine how the academic category of TE was constructed and maintained within higher education. The initial discourse analysis of job advertisements and other position documentation revealed tensions within the activity system of university based ITE, particularly over the object of research. Ellis et al. then employed a work-shadowing method with several TEs whom they observed for a day at work. Interim interpretations were work-shopped with participants who described the “almost defining characteristic of their work” (p.3) as relationship maintenance. TEs were observed using material artefacts from professional settings extensively with student teachers (for example, resources used in teaching and curriculum related texts). The student teachers perceived these rather instrumentally, as something you ‘do’ when you teach, thus revealing a different object motive within the activity system from that of the TE who perceived such artefacts as opportunities for student teacher learning.

Because activity systems are by definition multi-voiced and ITE spans multiple institutions involving many objects and subjects (student teachers, mentor teachers, TEs for instance), CHAT provides acknowledgement of the dynamism of context and culture, offering a view of the situatedness of a particular activity (Engeström, 1999) including how various subjects within activity systems might pursue common objects diversely. For us, activity systems analysis helps reveal the mediating factors within a TE’s experience of her or his work. It can show how the perception and pursuit of common objects may be contradictory within the system (as indicated in the work of Ellis et al. 2011). WoTE-NZ has explored the cultural-historical production and maintenance of the category of ‘teacher educator’ as academic worker revealing three institutional constructions of TEs and their work (Gunn, et al. 2015). Now, in phase two of our study, we are exploring how TEs work is performed. This article reports selected data from both phases of the project. Approval for the project was sought

and granted from the ethics committees at the two institutions in which the authors are employed.

Data gathering

In phase one of the project, eleven of 37 job advertisements for education faculty from a national university recruitment website were identified as ITE related during the six months 1 October 2013-31 March 2014. These were selected for analysis. In addition, named personnel from the job advertisements who were identified as position contact persons were invited to participate in a telephone interview. Seven gave informed consent to do so. A semi-structured interview with them explored the origin of the advertised position, the development of the advertisement and associated documents, the skills and attributes of the desired appointee, and the nature of the work involved. Phase two saw the recruitment of 15 TEs from two institutions – seven from West University and eight from East University. These TEs consented to participate in four types of data gathering activity: professional life history interviews, work diaries, work shadowing, and a participatory data analysis workshop (which at the time of writing this article had not yet been undertaken). Data from pre-work shadowing interviews are drawn from in this paper.

Data analysis

Phase one data were subjected to two main forms of analysis: one linguistic, the second discursive. The linguistic analyses took the form of membership categorisation analysis (MCA) coupled with a linguistic annotation strategy (LAS) and the identification of key-words-in-context. A comprehensive discourse analysis (CDA) following Gee (1990) was also completed. The CDA involved close reading of gathered texts to attend to how people talked about TEs work in order to explore how the category of work was understood. These analyses identified three major constructions of the work: the traditional academic type TE who may never have qualified to teach, the professional expert who may never have qualified to research and the TE who is dually qualified to teach and research (for further details see Gunn, et.al, 2015). Now that the project has moved into phase two, we are able to combine data from across both phases of the study, to engage with CHAT, and to begin to understand more about what ITE work looks like through its institutional

constructions in combination with the perspectives of people who occupy the academic category of TE.

CHAT seeks to be both developmental and explanatory (McNicholl & Pendry, 2012). It affords us a means of learning about collective processes undertaken in pursuit of an explicit goal (or outcome). Through CHAT we can perceive relations between an individual's activity, outcomes of systems of activity within which individual's act, and factors of influence therein, notably the interactions of goals, motives, subjects, objects, actions, cultural tools, in the context of activity (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). The activity we're exploring is university based ITE – consequently, we focus on objects and rules of TEs' work as described institutionally (in phase one) and as reported on by practicing teacher educators (from phase two). We ask, what are the objects and reported rules of TEs' work in university-based ITE across three categories of TE work (as constituted institutionally within university recruitment processes)? Through this we strive to understand more fully the affordances and constraints of ITE, consequences for TEs, and how elements of the activity system of university-based ITE influence its capacity for development in the longer term.

Objects and rules within CHAT

Within CHAT the concept of object is taken to mean the objective of the activity as understood by the person or person's working on it. Objects are cultural entities. The object-orientedness of actions are thought key to understanding *what* people are doing within a given community and *why* (Engström, 2001). Many objects may be being worked on simultaneously in an activity system. Actions associated with an individual's pursuit of objects are characterised, as Engström describes, by ambiguity, surprise, interpretation and change. Objectives are directed towards an outcome – in our case, university based ITE; they provide motivations for actions and are mediated by other important components of the activity system, including rules. Rules too afford and constrain activity by governing *how* people work (Engström, 1996). Rules are culturally bounded. They may or may not be taken up by individuals. They provide insights into the historical evolution of a shared activity (like ITE) and they help explain actions of individuals or groups within a given multi-voiced and multi-layered community (Engström, 2001). To explore university-based ITE, we elected to examine rules and objects invoked by research participants as they talked about

potential and actual work of TEs. We understand that in an activity systems approach there is a dynamic relation between objects and subjects (Stetsenko, 2005) and the relative positioning of subjects with a system carries implications for objects and tools. The concept of subject may also hold consequences for the ways rules, communities and divisions of labour regulate the actions of individuals and groups (Daniels & Warmington, 2007). Data from three TE participants, each an incumbent of one of the institutionally constituted categories of TE identified in phase one of the study (traditional academic, dually qualified, and professional expert) are presented and discussed in the following section. Objects and rules of their work identified as part of the institutional production of the category of TE are compared with objects and rules identified in reports of their actual work. Through the analysis we can see how competing constructions of the work of university-based teacher educators in NZ have emerged historically and are informing the practices of ITE in the present.

Findings

Bailey

As identified through our phase 1 analysis, the professional expert type of TE is one who is qualified, registered, and certified to teach in schools or early childhood settings. The work of the professional expert is largely constituted as provision of support to academic work, delivery of content designed by more qualified others, working under supervision, and maintenance of collegial relationships between the university and the profession, such as teachers in schools. Our participant Bailey had only recently taken up this category of work; previously Bailey had been a TE of the dually qualified type,

“yeah so I was a senior lecturer before... I’m a kind of legacy staff member dating from the days when we were the College of Education and then we were merged, amalgamated with East University... there wasn’t a particularly good match between the nature of the work we did and how that fitted into a very research oriented university, so for a time I was on a contract that included... research time, but the difference between that and a [professional expert] contract is... I’m no longer entitled as a right to a research component in my workload” (Bailey, pre work shadowing interview, 1.34-46).

The objects of a professional expert TE as evidenced within our phase one institutional constructions substantiate Bailey's account. They are: to teach; to bring a currency of practice to the ITE programme (either in a specified sector or curriculum area); to deliver content planned by others; to possess strong practical skills in tikanga and te reo Māori²; to bring strong professional connections to the university; and to visit/assess student teachers on professional practice experiences. No research is included or expected of this kind of TE.

The NZ data suggests that in partial response to the research quality assessment exercise of the *Performance Based Research Fund* (PBRF), universities are tending to take a bifurcated approach to the recruitment and management of the teacher educator workforce (Gunn et al. 2015). This is manifest in the employment of more nationally and internationally recognised researchers (traditional academic type researchers) and professional experts to current positions in ITE over those who are dually qualified (as teachers and researchers). The re-designation of TEs' work such as Bailey experienced, advances the same object – by having professional experts attend to the work of teaching while others attend to the imperative to research. McNicholl and Blake (2012) noted that some Scottish universities too were changing the job designations of TEs if they were deemed underperforming in research.

Bailey talked about pursuing two of the objects of the professional expert TE noted in our institutional constructions: teaching and professional practice visiting. However, a significant amount of faculty based committee work was also part of what Bailey did. Such work was an expected element of the ongoing support of ITE that professional expert type TEs were employed for. Bailey was motivated also, it seemed, by long-standing personal interests, "...I have an interest in the qualification as a whole, so I'm on the qualifications advisory subcommittee for the [programme], it's part of my work" (Bailey, pre work shadowing interview, 1.624-626).

Few clear rules about professional experts' work were discerned from the recruitment data analysis but those that were resonate with the objects above. We found that strong practitioners were required, that teacher registration and certification was expected (so that student teachers could be visited and assessed on professional

² Māori language and culture

practice in line with the rules of the teacher registration body in NZ), and the ability to work within existing programmes, structures, and courses – that is, to deliver ITE designed by other categories of TE, was essential. Although no research was included as part of the role, it didn't prevent professional expert TEs from being involved. For instance, Bailey explained: "...I'm getting to the end of... a lengthy period of part time doctoral study, so I'm writing a doctoral thesis at the moment... I'm interested in continuing my own learning and my own qualifications" (pre work shadowing interview, 1.764-771).

In contrast to the relatively few institutionally constituted rules around professional expert TE work, Bailey, who'd recently come to occupy this kind of position spoke of many: no entitlement to research; an expectation of increasingly larger classes; of teaching with reduced student contact hours; the expectation that office hours and email would be used to manage student contacts; the rule that generic university metrics, that perhaps didn't account for the professional nature of the qualification, would determine teaching hours in a course; that programmes and university departments would be in conflict over workload determinations for staff; that the university metric for determining Bailey's workload was fixed at 80% teaching 20% service; that broader institutional policies held sway over needs of programme and students. Given Bailey was a TE who'd experienced a significant amount of recent change (an institutional amalgamation and a changed job designation) this account of the work is perhaps unsurprisingly replete with perceptions of rules. New divisions of labour and concurrent shifts in objects of Bailey's work held consequences for Bailey's senses of subjectivity and agency.

Gabriel

Gabriel occupies the category of TE we have called 'dually qualified'. From our analysis in the study's first phase, we found this category of TE to be one considered an effective, qualified, registered (and certified) teacher; with good community linkages; who engages in research; who can build knowledge; and who can publish work of and in their field. Dually qualified TEs are expected to work in both professional and academic spheres of ITE. Indeed, it is the dually qualified category of ITE worker who is able to service the full range of objects within the activity system of university-based ITE: teaching, research and service. These are all objects

of the work Gabriel described. Interviewed near the beginning of the academic year and recently appointed, Gabriel was asked what work had characterised these early first weeks,

“...so far I’ve been writing lectures..., but I’ve also been working on... a couple of papers, and I gave a conference paper a couple of weeks ago... and also finishing off a research funding application... I’m an ethic’s advisor... so I’ve looked at two ethics applications this month as well” (pre work shadowing interview, l. 48-79).

Recruitment information from phase one of our project indicated that to be a person able to occupy this category of TE there are expectations of qualifications (qualified and registered teacher plus qualified to research, i.e., holding a doctoral qualification³), and rules around conducting and publishing research. Strengths in particular curriculum areas and strong professional involvement is also desired. Thus we can see that expectations upon TEs occupying this category are substantially the same as those of the professional expert, with the addition of objects of research and publishing. Gabriel’s reflections on the rules of the position illustrated how one was meant to divide up time to serve the range of teaching, research and service,

“...we work on a [formula of] 40, 40, 20”,

“okay so that’s 40% teaching, 40% research, 20% service”?,

“yeah...” (Gabriel, pre workshadowing interview, l. 131-135).

Indeed, it is possible to see that Gabriel’s account of the work in the first few weeks of the year reflected the rule. And despite a sense of the teaching work within the specific ITE programme that Gabriel was working in as being “a bit heavier on the [student] contact” (pre work shadowing interview, l.141) to a previously held role in another ITE sector, the work remained interpreted by Gabriel as very privileged.

Autonomy was valued,

“I think academic life is a privilege... I can come and go pretty much as I want, I can work at home if I want to... no one’s clocking me in or out, there

³ There is no actual requirement to possess a doctoral qualification in order to do research as an academic worker in a NZ university. However, the cultural norm of doctoral qualification prevails and, as evidenced in our phase one analysis, is increasingly seen as a basic requirement of appointment to positions within university-based ITE (with the exception of professional expert teacher educator roles).

aren't bells ringing, as long as I continue to get papers published and turn up to my classes all will be well... and the freedom to just decide what you're going to do in terms of your research is quite incredible when you think about it" (Gabriel, pre workshadowing interview, l. 344-354).

Negotiating the shifting terrain of ITE was clearly not as challenging a process for Gabriel as it had been for Bailey. In part this was due to the value placed on the position of dually qualified TE that Gabriel expressed in comparison to Bailey's re-designated role. The rules for Gabriel were interpreted as freeing, a privilege. As long as the publications kept coming and the teaching was done the systems objects would be achieved and Gabriel left alone. Despite the fact that most of the exact same kinds of institutional rules existed for Gabriel as they did for Bailey (for example, class size and teaching time metrics, student management via email and office hours, programme and university department politics, conflict over divisions of labour, broader institutional policy influences) and that additional objects of research and publishing existed, they were not read in the same way. In Gabriel's case, they seemed more of a help for the realisation of the workload rule (40/40/20) reified in the dually qualified TE category, which allowed for the pursuit of the research and publishing objects of this category of TE.

Chris

Chris is a dually qualified TE currently operating as a head of school. By virtue of the role's demands Chris's work reflects the traditional academic type of TE previously identified. The category is clearly research and leadership focused. Work objectives of academic development, research leadership and funding, management, representation of the school/institution, and capacity building for teaching and research abound. Some teaching and research supervision is also typical of TEs occupying this category. There is however no requirement or expectation that traditional academic TE will be, or will necessarily have been, a qualified, registered, and certified teacher. People in this category of ITE do not therefore have student teacher visiting on professional experience as an object of their work.

Chris is in fact a qualified and registered teacher. However undertaking student teacher visiting work within the role Chris occupied was impossible,

“I don’t do teaching practice visiting any more you know, something had to go and it’s not that I don’t want to do that, but it’s the travel time just eats into my day too much, so I can’t, especially in [this city] I can’t afford to be driving all around the city, so something had to go, so I don’t do teaching practice visiting anymore” (pre work shadowing interview, l. 301-305)

The work Chris talked about reflected the range of objects identified as associated with the traditional academic category of worker from our earlier analysis. It involved having oversight of courses, staffing, budgets; representation of the school via university committee work; research student supervision and course teaching; mentoring academics in research and writing; management of one’s own research, including writing and publishing. Chris also sat on many external committees and journal editorial boards.

A major rule of the work, as a senior academic within ITE who is also in a leadership role, was that Chris would pick up jobs that were under-serviced within the school, “...because I’m head of school I sometimes pick up courses for people who’ve gone on leave...” (pre work shadowing interview, l.112-117). Other prominent rules concerned the objects of research. Chris was expected to mentor junior academic staff and to introduce doctoral students to academic work (particularly in research). This mentoring had manifest in a recent book publication, “because I’m a senior academic, part of that is I have to mentor other academics, so I have to... organise... edited collections with my junior staff and my doctoral students get an opportunity to publish...so that’s part of the role as well” (Chris, pre work shadowing interview, l. 197-223).

A consequence of having taken up a leadership role meant that Chris was confronted with an expanding set of work objects related to research and leadership, but also a loss of student teacher practice visiting. The university head of school role meant Chris effected a shift in the division of labour involving new objects and rules. Such changes in senior academics’ work objects aren’t particularly rare, but for TEs who have already negotiated shifts in identity during the transition from teacher to ITE academic (Davey, 2013; Izadinia, 2014; Swennen & van der Klink, 2009), this re-transitioning into a narrowing of work objects and arguably more distanced relation to

the profession, is of note. Any desire to remain present in both professional and academic spheres may present a challenge. Our data suggests that universities seem to be responding by working on the scale of the collective TE subject. Meeting the full scope of university-based ITE work by introducing new divisions of labour and rules of employment for TEs. As we have argued elsewhere the approach is open to criticism for the way it supports dualisms of theory/practice, research/teaching and academic/professional to flourish (Gunn, et al. 2015). In our view, such practice does little to develop ITE within the academy and innovate practices of education and ITE.

Discussion

Stetsenko (2005) reflects on the activity system relation between object and subject arguing that as we work on objects, they in turn work on us, contributing to our subjectivity and how we then go on to work further on the object. Within university based ITE such recursive processes hold a great potential for expansion of the activity of ITE – if the system manages to remain present in both professional and academic domains of the field. Policy influences too, such as the ways in which the university sector is funded for research and teaching as well as the regulatory framework for ITE within NZ, provide constraints (Cross, 2009) within the activity system of university-based ITE. Components of activity systems can play out as both contradictions and opportunities. Indeed, the same constraints may be felt differently by groups and individuals. For example, in our data, the lack of research capability had changed Bailey's recognised work objectives to teaching and service only while the same policies provided both pressure and opportunities for the others to increase their research.

Our analysis suggests that research is a key factor of university based ITE activity systems (Hill & Haigh, 2012; Livingston, McCall & Morgado, 2009; Toom et al., 2010). As we have shown, universities' have been creating new divisions of labour for some TEs that in turn have brought about different material conditions of work for all. In the post-PBRF environment research is a privileged object of the activity system and acts to drive divisions of labour even, as shown in this article, to change both Bailey and Chris's work objects. For Chris, the professional activity (student visiting) has been discarded in order that research and leadership work can be achieved. In Bailey's case, the rule of research activity has been enforced to the

extent that Baily is no longer ‘entitled’ to research. Using this analysis of human activity we see how macro-cultural historical influences (such tertiary funding policies) transform what is possible for whom within the system (Cross, 2009). Despite this, as Stillman & Anderson (2015) have also shown, the TEs in this article have agency to use their sense of self – who they want themselves to be – “to engage in acts of appropriation and authorship vis-à-vis the policies and policy-related tools” (p.1). For example, Bailey was engaging in research, completing a PhD, an activity that is a valued object of the university even though not an institutionally required object of the job.

The TEs working in the system are therefore experiencing significant change to the objects, rules and conditions of their work as universities’ expand to account for the complex system of ITE. For Gabriel, a dually qualified TE, the shift was allowing a generally positive recursive shaping of both the work and the subject. At the point of the year during which we collected data, the work was manageable in terms of a daily reality – it remains to be seen, when Gabriel’s teaching work expanded to encompass student teacher visiting, if this would remain the case.

It was different for Chris and Bailey where shifting objects and rules effected undesired limits upon their work (for Chris, no visiting, for Bailey, no research). Bailey counteracted this by engaging in research outside of work time (with likely consequences for ongoing work-life balance) and Chris simply had to settle for the loss of professional practice visiting while being a head of a university school. The consequences of these accommodations mean that prospective teachers are less likely to see TEs like Bailey engaged in research, and TEs like Chris’ have their work removed one step from regular encounters with the profession and therefore open to challenges of relevance and currency.

As explained earlier in this article, ITE in NZ has moved into the university sector and government initiatives have recently signaled an intention to use ITE as a means of raising educational outcomes through introducing PG level entry qualifications to teaching. Such policy changes, and associated others, are causing expansions to the activity of university-based ITE and bringing consequences for subjects within that system. As well as the research imperative, TEs must retain the professional expertise

and registration status needed for practice-based ITE. Results from phase 1 of our study suggest that university administrators are bifurcating the TE workforce by recruiting individuals into either professional experts or traditional academic type work. Ironically this introduces a major contradiction to the activity system of university-based ITE. PG study by definition involves university TEs in research and research supervision. The practice component requires TEs to be qualified, registered and certified to teach. If NZ is to raise the level of initial teacher education as countries such as Finland (Toom et al., 2010) and Norway (<http://nafol.net/english/>) have begun to, then our universities must strive to grow a workforce able to service the full range of objects within university based ITE work.

Conclusion

In this article we have argued that due to shifting policies for ITE and funding streams for universities, the work of NZ TEs is changing rapidly. Furthermore, through the use of activity theory, which allows us to glimpse the ITE activity system's objects, rules, and divisions of labour, we have demonstrated how ITE work is categorized, controlled, and conducted, including how within this TEs change, and are changed by, the influences of policy to which they are subjected.

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