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1. Introduction

Choosing to become a teacher is transformative, whether it's a lifelong passion or a change of direction. The challenge lies in selecting a teaching path amidst diverse courses and perspectives on teacher development. The terms "teacher training" and "teacher education" represent contrasting views, revealing fundamental differences in expectations. Throughout the reading, we have explored these variations under the umbrella of "Initial Teacher Education (ITE)" to understand the theoretical and practical aspects involved.

2. Important Concepts Learned from Assigned Reading

Four paradigms

In his research on teacher education, Zeichner (1983) identified four paradigms that are commonly used to understand and analyze the field. These paradigms represent different perspectives and approaches to teacher education.

1. The Technical-Rational Paradigm:

   The technical-rational paradigm emphasizes the acquisition of specific skills and knowledge necessary for effective teaching. It focuses on the practical aspects of teaching and views teacher education as a process of transmitting established practices and techniques. In this paradigm, teacher educators primarily provide preservice teachers with the tools and techniques they need to succeed in the classroom. For example, a teacher education program might teach prospective teachers how to develop lesson plans, manage classroom behavior, and use instructional technology effectively.

2. The Personalistic Paradigm:

   The personalistic paradigm recognizes the importance of personal and individual factors in teaching. It emphasizes the development of teachers as individuals and encourages them to reflect on their beliefs, values, and experiences. Teacher education programs based on this paradigm often provide opportunities for self-reflection, collaborative learning, and exploration of personal teaching philosophies. For instance, a teacher education program might include activities such as journaling, peer discussions, and reflective writing exercises to help prospective teachers understand their own teaching styles and beliefs.

3. <u>The Critical Reflective Paradigm:</u>

   The critical reflective paradigm places a strong emphasis on social justice and equity in education. It encourages teachers to critically examine and challenge existing power structures and inequalities within the education system. Teacher education programs rooted in this paradigm focus on developing teachers who are knowledgeable about social issues and capable of promoting inclusive and transformative practices in the classroom. For example, a teacher education program might engage prospective teachers in critical discussions about race, gender, and socioeconomic disparities in education and provide them with strategies to address these issues in their teaching.

4. <u>The Contextual-Reconstructive Paradigm:</u>

   The contextual-reconstructive paradigm recognizes the complex and dynamic nature of teaching and learning. It emphasizes the importance of understanding and responding to the unique contexts and challenges faced by teachers. Teacher education programs aligned with this paradigm aim to prepare teachers who can adapt their teaching approaches to different contexts and engage in ongoing professional learning. For instance, a teacher education program might provide opportunities for prospective teachers to observe and practice teaching in diverse classroom settings, encouraging them to consider how their instruction can be tailored to meet the needs of specific learners and communities.

These four paradigms offer distinct perspectives on teacher education, each with its own strengths and limitations. By understanding these paradigms, researchers and educators can engage in critical discussions and make informed decisions regarding the goals, methods, and values that underpin teacher education programs.

Taylor's (2008) research into higher education institutions (HEIs) and school partnerships provides support for Zeichner's ideas regarding different perspectives on initial teacher education (ITE). Within her research, Taylor identifies four distinct approaches to describing ITE learning:

- **Cascading expertise:** This concept refers to the transmission of information and expertise from experienced teachers or experts to novice teachers. It involves the sharing of knowledge, skills, and practices through mentorship, observation, and collaboration.

Experts serve as mentors or role models, guiding novices in developing their teaching abilities.

- **Enabling students' individual growth as teachers:** This aspect emphasizes personalization and nurturing in teacher education. It recognizes that each student has unique strengths, needs, and learning styles. Teacher education programs that focus on individual growth provide tailored support and mentoring to students, helping them develop their teaching skills and knowledge. This approach often involves intensive mentoring and immersion in a specific school context to facilitate professional development.

- **Developing student teaching:** This concept highlights the learning process in which students acquire teaching skills by emulating or imitating expert teachers. Through observation, practice, and feedback, students learn and refine their teaching techniques. This approach often includes opportunities for students to engage in real classroom teaching under the guidance of experienced teachers.

- **Students as teachers and learners:** This approach to teacher education encourages a holistic and critical-thinking approach. It emphasizes that students should not only be recipients of knowledge but also active participants in their own learning. They are encouraged to think critically about both theory and practice, reflecting on their experiences, questioning assumptions, and developing their own understanding of teaching and learning.

What is ITE (Initial Teacher Education)

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) refers to the preparation and training of individuals who aspire to become teachers. It is the process by which individuals acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies to enter the teaching profession. ITE programs are typically offered at universities, colleges, or other educational institutions and provide prospective teachers with the foundation they need to succeed in the classroom.

ITE programs vary across different countries and educational systems, but they generally include a combination of theoretical coursework, practical teaching experiences, and supervised field placements. The programs aim to equip future teachers with a strong understanding of

educational principles, subject-specific content knowledge, pedagogical strategies, and classroom management techniques.

During ITE, prospective teachers engage in a range of activities designed to develop their teaching skills. These may include observing experienced teachers, participating in teaching practicums, designing lesson plans, implementing instructional strategies, and reflecting on their teaching experiences. The programs also cover topics such as educational psychology, curriculum development, assessment and evaluation, inclusive education, and understanding the needs of diverse learners.

The duration and structure of ITE programs can vary. In some countries, ITE programs are integrated into undergraduate degrees, while in others, they may be postgraduate programs or combined with a period of classroom-based teaching practice, commonly known as a teaching internship or a teacher induction year.

The primary goal of ITE is to ensure that aspiring teachers are well-prepared to meet the demands of the teaching profession. By providing a solid foundation of knowledge, practical experiences, and pedagogical skills, ITE programs aim to develop competent and reflective educators who can create engaging and effective learning environments for their students.

Transmission approach

The transmission approach, also known as the traditional or behaviorist approach, in education refers to a method of instruction where information is transmitted from the teacher to the students. It is characterized by a one-way flow of knowledge, where the teacher is the central authority and the students are passive recipients of information. This approach places emphasis on the teacher's role as a knowledge holder and the students' role as passive learners.

The transmission approach typically involves lectures, teacher-led presentations, and rote memorization of facts. The focus is primarily on the transmission of information, with little emphasis on student engagement, critical thinking, or active participation. Assessment in this approach often involves standardized tests or quizzes that measure the students' ability to recall and reproduce information.

Student teacher-centred approach

The student teacher-centered approach, also known as a learner-centered approach or student-centered approach, is an instructional method that places the learner at the center of the teaching and learning process. It emphasizes the active participation, engagement, and autonomy of student teachers in their own learning and development as future educators.

In the student teacher-centered approach, the role of the teacher shifts from being a sole transmitter of knowledge to that of a facilitator and guide. The focus is on creating a learner-friendly environment that promotes collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-reflection. Student teachers are encouraged to take ownership of their learning, set goals, and make decisions about their educational experiences.

This approach recognizes the individuality of student teachers and their diverse learning needs, backgrounds, and experiences. It acknowledges that student teachers come to initial teacher education programs with varying levels of prior knowledge, skills, and understandings. Therefore, the student teacher-centered approach aims to personalize instruction, providing opportunities for differentiation and tailoring the learning experience to meet the unique needs of each student teacher.

Benefits of the student teacher-centered approach include increased student engagement, motivation, and a deeper understanding of teaching and learning concepts. It fosters the development of critical thinking skills, creativity, and independence. Moreover, the student teacher-centered approach helps student teachers develop a sense of agency and responsibility for their own professional growth.

The student teacher-centered approach prioritizes the active participation and autonomy of student teachers in their learning journey. It recognizes their individuality and seeks to create engaging and meaningful learning experiences. By shifting the focus from the teacher to the student teacher, this approach aims to foster a deep understanding of teaching principles, skills, and dispositions necessary for their future careers as educators.

A longitudinal study of student teacher's Reflections

A longitudinal study of student teachers' reflections allows researchers to explore the dynamic process of professional growth, the development of reflective practices, and the factors

influencing the trajectory of student teachers' development from pre-service to in-service teachers.

Hagger et al. (2008) conducted a longitudinal study focusing on student teachers' reflections on their learning experiences. Their research revealed that student teacher responses could be categorized into five distinct dimensions. Hagger et al. (2008)
Intentionality: Taylor (2008) found evidence that effective learning occurred when student teachers actively set their own learning schedules and influenced the implementation of their learning. However, Mutton et al. (2010) noted that a lack of power to experiment with alternative teaching approaches could hinder effective learning, which may be a criticism of traditional or reactive approaches to initial teacher education.

- **Frame of reference:** Hagger et al. (2008) found that effective student teachers drew on a range of information sources in their learning. However, Maldrez et al. (2007) highlighted that some student teachers considered theoretical studies as peripheral to their teaching, although they might unconsciously incorporate them. This aligns with the Enquiry Orientation (Zeichner, 1983) and the development of students as teachers and learners (Taylor, 2008), which emphasize drawing on diverse sources of learning.
- **Response to feedback:** Caires et al. (2012) and Hagger et al. (2008) demonstrated that student teachers value feedback that supports effective learning. Effective feedback, according to Caires et al., involves sharing experiences, exploring beliefs and perceptions, and constructing meanings together. Additionally, Mutton et al. (2010) found that student teachers appreciate feedback that raises questions and issues rather than providing solutions.
- **Attitude to context:** Hagger et al. (2008) noted a difference between student teachers who can leverage their context for learning and those who perceive the context as limiting. Taylor's (2008) research also identified students who recognized the diverse opinions and opportunities that different contexts offered for their learning. This openness and willingness to accommodate different perspectives contribute to continuous learning and the exploration of new ideas.
- **Aspiration:** Hagger et al. (2008) defined aspiration not only in terms of becoming effective teachers but also as a commitment to being lifelong learners. Taylor (2008)

supported this notion by emphasizing that students make connections between theory and practice, reflecting on the impact of teaching on education, schools, and children's learning. This dual identity of learner experts and expert learners underscores the importance of ongoing personal and professional development.

By understanding these dimensions, researchers can gain insights into the complexities of student teachers' reflections and their learning experiences. These findings have implications for teacher education programs, emphasizing the importance of intentional, diverse, feedback-driven, contextually aware, and aspirational approaches to student teacher development.

3. Utilization of Key Concepts Learned, at and within Workplace Contexts

Four paradigms

Considering Zeichner's and Taylor's perspectives on teacher education, it becomes evident that these differences can have implications for various aspects of classroom practice, including behavior management. Behavior management is a multifaceted issue that requires careful consideration and an understanding of the complexities involved.

Firstly, Zeichner's paradigms shed light on how different approaches to teacher education may influence behavior management strategies. For example, the technical-rational paradigm may focus on providing specific techniques and strategies for behavior management, emphasizing a standardized approach. This could involve implementing predetermined behavior management plans or utilizing behavior charts and rewards systems.

On the other hand, the personalistic paradigm, which emphasizes personal growth and reflection, acknowledges the importance of student teachers' characteristics, beliefs, values, and relationships in managing behavior. This paradigm recognizes that each teacher brings their own unique qualities and perspectives to the classroom, influencing their approach to behavior management. Teachers trained under this paradigm may focus on developing strong relationships with students, understanding their individual needs, and employing strategies that align with their personal teaching philosophies.

Taylor's research, which highlights the importance of individual growth and the influence of school partnerships, aligns with the personalistic paradigm. It emphasizes the need for student

teachers to be aware of their impact on behavior management situations. This awareness involves recognizing how their own characteristics, beliefs, values, relationships, and identity influence student behavior. Student teachers are encouraged to develop their understanding of themselves as teachers and to personalize their approaches to behavior management accordingly.

In terms of the positive and negative aspects, the personalistic paradigm and the focus on individual growth can have positive implications for behavior management. Teachers who are aware of their own impact can adapt their strategies to suit the unique dynamics of each class and each situation. They can foster positive relationships with students, create a supportive classroom environment, and employ approaches that align with their students' needs.

In summary, the differences in teacher education paradigms, as discussed by Zeichner and supported by Taylor's research, have implications for behavior management in the classroom. The personalistic paradigm and the focus on individual growth align with the need for student teachers to be aware of their impact on behavior management situations. This highlights the importance of recognizing the complexity of behavior management, embracing personal growth as a teacher, and adapting strategies to suit the unique needs of students and the context of the classroom.

Longitudinal study of student teacher's Reflections

The findings of longitudinal studies of student teachers' reflections can have implications for teacher education programs, informing the design of curriculum, pedagogy, and support systems. It can shed light on the effectiveness of specific teaching approaches or interventions in fostering reflective thinking and professional growth among student teachers.

Student-centered Approach -

In a student teacher-centered classroom, various instructional strategies and methods are employed to engage student teachers actively. These may include collaborative group work, problem-based learning, inquiry-based learning, discussions, project-based assignments, and self-directed learning activities. The teacher acts as a facilitator, providing guidance, support, and feedback as needed.

4. Potential Challenges Faced in Implementing these Concepts at the Workplace

The transmission view of learning can be criticized based on the following factors:

- **Transferability of knowledge in teaching:** The transmission approach assumes that knowledge can be reliably transferred from the teacher to the student. However, teaching is a complex and dynamic process, and what works in one context may not work in another. The transmission of a specific solution or approach as the "right way" to teach can be counterproductive if student teachers encounter situations where the suggested solution is ineffective.

- **Complexity and context specificity of teaching:** Teaching is highly complex and context-specific. Schools have their own unique principles, beliefs, and values that shape their teaching practices and expectations for teachers. When teachers move between different contexts, they may find that a particular approach or strategy that was effective in one context is not effective in another. The transmission approach may overlook the importance of understanding and adapting to the specific context in which teaching and learning occur.

- **Variations in student teachers' knowledge, skills, and understanding:** Student teachers enter initial teacher education (ITE) programs with varying levels of knowledge, skills, and understandings of pupil learning. The transmission approach may neglect the individualization of the learning process for student teachers. It assumes a one-size-fits-all approach to instruction, failing to recognize and address the unique needs and prior experiences of each student teacher.

These criticisms highlight the limitations of the transmission approach in acknowledging the complexity, contextual nature, and individuality of teaching and learning. They emphasize the need for teacher education programs to adopt more nuanced and personalized approaches that consider the diverse contexts and learner characteristics within the teaching profession.

Implementing the student teacher-centered approach can present challenges. It requires a shift in the traditional teacher-centered paradigm, which may be unfamiliar or uncomfortable for both

student teachers and educators. It demands careful planning, instructional design, and ongoing assessment to ensure that the learning outcomes are met effectively. Additionally, it requires teachers to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment that values student teachers' voices, perspectives, and contributions.

It is important to note that conducting longitudinal studies of student teachers' reflections requires a long-term commitment and resources to track and collect data over an extended period. However, the insights gained from such studies can provide valuable information for improving teacher education practices and enhancing the preparation of future educators.

The personalistic paradigm-

The personalistic paradigm also presents challenges. The complexity of behavior management requires teachers to continuously reflect on their own practices and adapt their approaches. What works well in one situation may not be as effective in another. This necessitates ongoing professional development and a willingness to learn from both successes and failures.

Overall there are many other challenges, to name a few - A potential challenge is the *resistance to change*. Educational institutions and workplace environments often have established practices and cultures that may be resistant to adopting new approaches. Implementing paradigm shifts in teacher education requires a willingness to challenge traditional norms and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Another challenge is the *availability of resources and support.* Teacher education programs that aim to incorporate the four paradigms and the student teacher-centered approach may require additional resources, including time, funding, and personnel. Providing comprehensive support and mentoring to student teachers as they navigate these new approaches can also be resource-intensive.

Additionally, *ensuring consistency and coherence across different workplace contexts* can be challenging. Teacher education programs often collaborate with multiple schools and education settings. Aligning the implementation of these concepts across diverse contexts requires effective communication, coordination, and collaboration among various stakeholders, including universities, schools, and mentoring teachers.

Furthermore, *assessing and evaluating the impact of these approaches can be complex.* Traditional assessment methods, such as standardized tests, may not capture the full range of competencies and skills developed through these paradigms and the student teacher-centered approach. Developing robust and comprehensive assessment strategies that align with the goals of these approaches is essential but can be challenging.

Moreover, *the readiness and openness of the teaching community to embrace these concepts* can vary. Some educators may be more receptive and enthusiastic about adopting new approaches, while others may be skeptical or resistant. Building a supportive and inclusive professional community that values ongoing professional development and encourages experimentation and reflection is crucial for successful implementation.

5. Conclusion

Teacher education encompasses various paradigms and approaches that shape the preparation and development of educators. Zeichner identified four commonly used paradigms in teacher education: the Technical-Rational Paradigm, Personalistic Paradigm, Critical Reflective Paradigm, and Contextual-Reconstructive Paradigm. These paradigms provide different perspectives on teacher education, focusing on skills acquisition, personal growth, social justice, and contextual adaptation, respectively. Building upon Zeichner's work, Taylor explored four approaches to describing initial teacher education (ITE) learning: cascading expertise, enabling individual growth, developing student teaching, and students as teachers and learners. Each approach emphasizes different aspects of the learning process, such as mentorship, personalization, practice, and critical thinking. Longitudinal studies of student teachers' reflections further shed light on their professional growth, intentionality, frame of reference, response to feedback, attitude to context, and aspiration. Understanding these dimensions is crucial for designing effective teacher education programs that foster reflective practices and support the development of aspiring educators.

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Statement of participation

Serene Fallon Wentzel

has completed the free course including any mandatory tests for:

Learning to teach: making sense of learning to teach

This 5-hour free course explored approaches to teacher education and the implications of students' experiences of learning to teach.

Issue date: 5 July 2023

www.open.edu/openlearn

COURSE CODE: **LTT_1**

Learning to teach: making sense of learning to teach

Course summary

This free course, Making sense of learning to teach, is the first of four courses which comprise the course Learning to teach. It draws on what we know about how people learn to become teachers. It explores the different approaches to teacher education and the different routes into teaching. It will help you to understand the philosophical and practical differences between the different approaches. It draws on research about students' experiences of learning to teach and considers the implications of this in designing teacher education programmes.

Learning outcomes

By completing this course, the learner should be able to:

- know the differences in opinion about what Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is trying to achieve
- understand the differences in perception of the student teachers' role in ITE
- recognise some of the ways in which these differences manifest themselves in the UK
- understand effective student teacher learning and how students themselves perceive the process of learning to teach.

Completed study

The learner has completed the following:

Section 1

Views of learning to teach

Section 2

Different routes into teaching in the UK

Section 3

Qualifications

Section 4

School experience

Section 5

What students say about learning to teach?

Section 6

Conclusion