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Challenging didactic history teaching activities: a framework for change in initial history teacher education broad topic

Education of history teachers and their didactic activity

Introduction

Typically, the foundational studies of initial teacher education (ITE) include, but are not limited to, the sociology, psychology, philosophy and history of education. These fields of study, placed at the heart of teacher training programmes, represent the connection between methodology and subject expertise, and the conditions that shape the required outcomes of such programmes[1]. Greenberg contends that it is only through an examination of societal issues through the associated fields of the foundation studies, that emergent challenges in real-world classrooms can be met and that only introspective examination under intercultural conditions can facilitate development in this area[2]. Holligan suggests that the weight placed on classroom performance in ITE has removed the consideration of 'who' and 'why' and a concentration on the mechanics of 'how' to prevent explorations as 'autonomous professionals' capable of introspective investigations of their own fundamental principles[3] or to learn to 'teach against the grain'[4]. In short, to shake

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[1]   Norman C. Greenberg, "Social foundations of education", *Peabody Journal of Education* 42(5) (1965): 281–284.

[2]   *Ibidem*.

[3]   Chris Holligan, "Theory in Initial Teacher Education: students' perspectives on its utility – a case study", *British Educational Research Journal* 23(4) (1997): 533–551.

[4]   Marilyn Cochran-Smith, "The problem of teacher education", *Journal of Teacher Education* 55(4) (2004): 295–299.

off the impact of individualisation evident as didactics within secondary school history classrooms.

In many European ITE programmes, each of the foundational studies are taught as non-elective, stand-alone modules and are prerequisites for professional registration as a second level teacher. This is less common in the United States where similar high school ITE programmes offer optional engagement with the foundational studies of education, in particular the history of education. Sirotnik criticises the use of foundational studies in ITE, suggesting that trainee teachers are rarely challenged to think critically and is dismayed this problem is decades old and unrelenting[5]. It is evident that the long lamented individualisation of teachers within teacher training programmes has not been mitigated by opportunities to think critically about practice through in-depth exploration of pre-service teachers' own histories of education[6]. Despite improvements in teamwork initiatives, resultant has been a tendency towards didactic engagement without collaborative or collegiate oversight for continual improvement post-ITE and is particularly true of secondary school history teachers. This paper is specifically concerned with the role the history of education has to play in the development of innovative history teaching practices that move towards collaborative research-based learning and away from didactic traditions offering a framework that embraces the complexity of contemporary pedagogical environments.

ITE and the History of Education

This complexity informs formal discourse on the relevance of foundational studies to ITE indicates that engagement with the history of education has been in decline over recent decades[7]. The topic is considered difficult to reconcile to the practice of teaching[8]. Concomitantly, a similar decline is being witnessed in the uptake of the of history at second level education, particularly in the Republic of Ireland. Historically interventions to address engagement in this area have

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[5] Kenneth A. Sirotnik, "On the eroding foundations of teacher education", *JSTOR* 71(9) (1990): 710–716.

[6] Paul Flynn, Tony Hall, "Towards a teaching and learning model for transition in the pre--service teaching community", in *Exploring the material conditions of learning: The Computer--Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) Conference* (Gothenburg: The International Society of the Learning Sciences, 2015), 733–734.

[7] Dennis Beach, Carl Bagley, "The weakening role of education studies and the re-traditionalisation of Swedish teacher education", *Oxford Review of Education* 38(3) (2012): 287–303; Donald Kerr, David Mandzuk, Helen Raptis, "The Role of the Social Foundations of Education in Programs of Teacher Preparation in Canada", *Canadian Journal of Education* 34(4) (2011): 118–134; David Crook, "Educational studies and teacher education", *British Journal of Educational Studies* 50(1) (2002): 57–75.

[8] Flynn, Hall, "Towards a teaching": 733–734.

focused on teacher focused reflective practice[9], narrative inquiry projects[10] and the encouragement of individual students to make sense of events experienced on periods of teaching practice[11]. Consequently, negative association with the purpose of history of education as being anything other than a 'need to do' topic has emerged. At second level education in the Republic of Ireland the subject of history is valued only as little more than a tool for matriculation to higher education by a declining number of students. Didactic teaching practice predominates in this dynamic and is damaging the long-term viability of the subject at second level education. However, within this dynamic gaps exist to embed learning opportunities that can arrest the persistence of such didactics and to facilitate a movement towards problem-based learning scenarios through appropriate research activities reflective of the practice of real-world classroom facilitation. Consequently, this paper explores the possibilities afforded through a collaborative engagement with the history of education during ITE and the potential for such engagement to challenge didactic history teaching methodologies.

Re-Positioning the History of Education in ITE

For some pre-service teachers (PSTs), the exploration of the history of education is novel and interesting. Similarly, at second level education the subject of history is viewed as interesting although ultimately far too broad to warrant the investment of time and energy required to complete the demanding second level syllabus. This is particularly true in the Republic of Ireland, where the number of students taking the subject of history for examination at the upper level of secondary school, or high school, is in decline. The subject is very often overlooked for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) alternatives[12]. High stakes examination processes have driven down initiatives that veer away from didactic teaching methods. The nature of the teaching style for history at second level education, shaped by a rigid examination process does nothing to mitigate this view of the history of education as an ITE foundational subject. This is particularly

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9   Donald Schon, *The reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action* (New York: Basic Book, 1983); Auxiliadora Sales, Joan A. Traver, Rafaela García, "Action research as a school-based strategy in intercultural professional development for teachers, *Teaching and Teacher Education* 27(5) (2011): 911–919.

10   Hannu L.T. Heikkinen *et al.*, "Action research and narrative inquiry: five principles for validation revisited", *Educational Action Research* 20(1) (2012): 5–21.

11   John Loughran, "Practising what I preach: Modelling reflective practice to student teachers", *Research in Science Education* 25(4) (1995): 431–451; Robert B. Kottkamp, "Means for facilitating reflection", *Education and urban society* 22(2) (1990): 182–203.

12   Department of Education and Skills. State Examinations Commissions National Statistics Reports 2016–2018.

true for those who may have studied history during their time at second level education. It is evident that the history of education ranks amongst the least favourable of all non-electives to ITE participants[13]. Engagement with the history of education has the potential to facilitate key learning outcomes for pre-service history teachers before they transition into in-service positions where they very often are overwhelmed by the economics of survival as a professional and can see no identifiable or tangible reason the application of the history of education in professional practice [14].

However, to dismiss the history of education as intangible in terms of teaching practice is to assume the world of the in-service history teachers, and that of the broader in-service teaching community, is contained within the walls of the classroom and such an environment is untouched by external influence. Indeed, that is to say that what is observable as a student would hold true as a teacher[15]. It is by studying the history of education, rooted in personal experience that opportunity exists to relate personal experience to the role of a history teacher and to challenge preconceptions regarding what it means to be part of the teaching community. A community where professional relationships are often covert to the observing student population [16].

Such collegiality is tacitly evident within post-ITE where trainee teachers may have studied one, or a variant of, the foundational studies as part of their undergraduate education, however, this is not the case for the majority of new entrants to such programmes. Subjects such as philosophy, psychology and sociology are new fields for new entrants to ITE and are quite surprised at the prospect of being required to study the history of education as a non-elective module. They are equally surprised that it is required for professional registration. This commonality remains tacitly true for the duration of an ITE programme and presents an opportunity to innovate with trainee history teaching cohorts.

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[13]   Ellis D. Evans, Margaret Tribble, "Perceived teaching problems, self-efficacy, and commitment to teaching among preservice teachers", *The Journal of Educational Research* 80(2) (1986): 81–85; Kenneth A., Sirotnik. "On the eroding": 710–716; Robert Floden, Marco Meniketti, "Research on the effects of coursework in the arts and sciences and in the foundations of education", in *Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education*, eds. Marilyn Cochran-Smith and Kenneth M. Zeichner (New York: Routledge, 2005), 261–308; Marie Clarke, Anne Lodge, Michael Shevlin, "Evaluating initial teacher education programmes: Perspectives from the Republic of Ireland", *Teaching and Teacher Education* 28(2) (2012): 141–153.

[14]   Brian J. Elliott, "The League of Nations Union and history teaching in England: a study in benevolent bias", *History of Education* 6(2) (1977): 131–141; Gary McCulloch, *The struggle for the history of education* (Abingdon: Taylor & Francis, 2011).

[15]   Dan C. Lortie, *Schoolteacher: A sociological study* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977).

[16]   *Ibidem*; Linda Darling-Hammond, "Constructing 21st-century teacher education", *Journal of teacher education* 57(3) (2006): 300–314.

A Framework for Engaging with
the History of Education

It is clear the history of education as a foundational subject within ITE is often viewed as irrelevant to the practical aspect of teaching by new entrants to such programmes[17]. The following outlines a framework that has the capacity to reveal, not only the relevance of the subject, but also the capacity of the subject to facilitate real-world skill development so fundamentally important to modern day history teachers. This framework centres around the development of a technologically supported collaborative engagement with the history of education for in-service community development. It is complex, diverse and each component is dependant on the other and this is reflective of the reality of teaching in a 21st century history classroom.

Establishing community relationships by exploring and relating a shared history is not a new concept. The development of such practice is evident in the roots of civilisations around the globe. The Aboriginal people of Australia share, tell and retell stories and embed their sense of the world within their constructed narratives passing on valuable lessons to generation after generation where everyday occurrences are explained in the stories they tell[18]. The effect therefore is the legacy, contemporary presence and future engagement of a community exists through the construction of historical narratives. Ellis, Bruckman & Satterwhite in their research project[19], The Palaver Tree Online, established an online forum where young and old could share their experiences[20]. In this online space participants came to understand that despite their differences and points of view that they were a community[21] rather than a collection of individuals with a shared history, contemporary community identity and that they have a future together as a community. They came to understand they had a shared history allowing them to both explore and realise that concept. A concept they had perhaps taken for granted or allowed to become silent.

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[17]   Flynn, Hall, "Towards a teaching".

[18]   Lynore K. Geia, Barbara Hayes, Kim Usher, "Yarning/Aboriginal storytelling: towards an understanding of an Indigenous perspective and its implications for research practice", *Contemporary nurse* 46(1) (2013): 13–17.

[19]   Jason B. Ellis, Amy S. Bruckman, Robert C. Satterwhite, "Children and elders sharing stories: lessons from two online oral history projects", in *Proceedings of the 1999 conference on Computer support for collaborative learning* (International Society of the Learning Sciences, 1999), 17.

[20]   *Ibidem*.

[21]   Jason B. Ellis, Amy S. Bruckman, "Designing palaver tree online: supporting social roles in a community of oral history", in *Proceedings of the SIGCHI conference on Human factors in computing systems* (Montreal: ACM, 2001), 474–481.

Creating the Conditions for Sharing History

Such collaborative engagements demonstrate the power of communicating our individual histories in the pursuit of a common purpose, even if that purpose is only tacitly evident. It is the collaborative process that facilitates the construction of this shared sense of community, expanded on the continuum of past, present and future – mediated by the negotiation of a collaboratively constructed environment[22]. The role of social learning theory in the development of collaborative practice is one of fundamental importance where the situation of internal dialogue in a social, collaborative process may open up possibilities for new meanings to emerge[23]. Collaborative activities in ITE are largely based on the completion of task oriented projects where the goal is to complete the task rather than result in a shared meaning or the development of a community. Indeed such interactions are often guided by efforts to resolve such internal dialogue through reflective practice by participating in a collaborative activity[24]. Problematically, the collaborative activity is rarely a collaborative process and consequently the meanings are not shared, undermining the social theory that underpins the validity of the designed process. Ultimately such activities become cooperative rather than collaborative. Consequently, efforts to tackle the established individualistic nature of history teaching become frustrated at the very point of entry in to ITE where it may be possible to challenge such practice. Often it is perceived absence of commonality that scuppers efforts. However, the tacitly held individual histories of education that belong to ITE participants are grounds upon which communities can be developed. A scaffolded, collaborative reflection on such experiences has the capacity to facilitate meaningful engagement with content, each other and to explore alternate experience of historical teaching practices held by other trainee history teachers.

Contemporary learning outcomes for student teachers are often centred around reflective practice and the development of the reflective practitioner[25]. However, without contrast in the form of a designed collaborative process the individualistic reflections can often result in a dearth of intersubjective challenge and instead become part of the process of extending the individual practice of the teaching profession. In addition, it is apparent that such activities rarely extend beyond the ITE environment. The pointed end of collaboration is often

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[22]   Gerry Stahl, "Supporting situated interpretation", *Proceedings of the Cognitive Science Society* 17 (1993): 965–970; *idem*, "A model of collaborative knowledge-building", in *Fourth international conference of the learning sciences* (Mahwah: Erlbaum, 2000), 70–77.

[23]   *Ibidem.*

[24]   *Ibidem.*

[25]   Donald A. Schön, "Problems, frames and perspectives on designing", *Design studies* 5(3) (1984): 132–136.

blunted by its repetitive activity rather than its constructive processes anchored in a meaningful experience for the history teachers involved.

There are many recommendations, action plans and data regarding the induction of Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) into the professional teaching environment or into communities of practice[26]. However, there is a dearth of initiatives relating to the development of collaborative communities within initial teacher education programmes or indeed the skills to effectively negotiate the transition from individualism to the embryonic stages of professional practice as a member of a professional history teaching community, or that of a community of practice[27]. These key skills are often referenced as core 21st Century skills such as collaboration, critical thinking, narrative construction and technological proficiency. Engagement in historical research practices provides opportunities to develop such skills and the history of education, for trainee history teachers in particular, offers an optimal domain within which to learn in a way they can translate to the history classrooms they will inhabit for the rest of their careers.

Opportunities to collaborate in initial teacher education do exist in projects that are focused on challenging the preconception of student history teachers whilst concomitantly developing students research skills and report writing, however, due to the nature of the tasks assigned to participant intersubjective exchanges for meaning making[28] are limited. Olson[29] engaged in a longitudinal study of the impact of narrative inquiry practice[30] on pre-service teachers' preconceptions of the practice of teaching using a co-ordinated alignment of four versions of narrative enquiry: 1) response to practicum experiences; 2) responses to readings; 3) small and large group discussion; 4) reflection papers. This structure aimed to explore tacit narrative knowledge that is "constructed from the contextual contingencies and complexities of our individual biographies in integration with socio-cultural and historical contexts in which we live"[31]. This study acknowledged that new entrants to initial teacher education present with a vision of the kind of history teacher, or otherwise, they wish to become formed during their 'Apprenticeship of

[26]   Paul Conway *et al.*, *Learning to teach and its implications for the continuum of teacher education: A nine-country cross-national study* (Maynooth: Teaching Council, 2009).

[27]   Jean Lave, Etienne Wenger, *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

[28]   Martin Heidegger, *Being and time*, trans. John Macquarrie, Edward Robinson (New York: Harper, 1962).

[29]   Margaret R. Olson, "Linking personal and professional knowledge of teaching practice through narrative inquiry", *The Teacher Educator* 35(4) (2000): 111.

[30]   Michael F. Connelly, Jean D. Clandinin, "Stories of experience and narrative inquiry", *Educational Researcher* 19(5) (1990): 2–14; Ardra L. Cole, Gary J. Knowles, *Lives in context: The art of life history research* (Lanham: Rowman Altamira, 2001).

[31]   Margaret Olson, "Interlocking narratives in teacher education", *Journal of professional studies* 1(2) (1994): 26.

Observation'[32] – a term used to describe the impression made upon students regarding what it means to be a teacher during their time as secondary school students. By asking pre-service history teachers to deconstruct their preconceptions and then re-construct a vision of the kind of history teacher they wished to become through a designed narrative enquiry process, participants efforts to view prior experiences from different perspectives or what Conle terms as 'resonance'[33] are supported. This process offers participants "opportunities to awaken to new understandings and begin to tell and live our teaching stories in more informed or transformed ways"[34]. During this quite structured process of individual narrative enquiry, opportunities for collaborative engagement become possible. Small and large group discussions are fertile ground for such engagement, however opportunities for the development of a shared understanding or meaning making are limited, as the focus of such interactions is to inform the development of the final, a more personally relevant reflection paper. A personally relevant reflection grounded in a shared exploration of the history of education has the potential to prompt challenge to established didactic history teaching practices and the exploration of alternative methods.

Such instances of innovation in initial teacher education are important for the development of alternate understandings of what it means to be a history teacher and to challenge the preconceptions that Olson's participants commonly held. However, while important, such engagements remain unsupported past the point of contact pertinent to the individual and therefore there is an absence of impetus to develop relationships away from the supports of the initial teacher training programme. Such tentative interactions are very often left to be developed by the participant or to self- establish, most evident in the notion of the in-service 'champion history teacher' or pioneer educators who pave the way for others to follow. Building on the connections that Olson's participants make between theory and practice through shared meaning making for community of practice formation during ITE, supports established in ITE may permeate into in-service practice. The only foundational study that can facilitate such personal exploration and that can withstand the robust scaffolding required to support trainee history teachers as they articulate meaning is the history of education.

The Role of Technology in Supporting Change

Contemporary technological developments now mean that pedagogical scaffolding has the potential to dynamically support innovative history teaching

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[32]   Lortie, *Schoolteacher*.
[33]   Carola Conle, "Resonance in preservice teacher inquiry", *American Educational Research Journal* 33(2) (1996): 329.
[34]   Olson, "Linking personal": 111.

practice. Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) emerged on the foot of advances in technology where trainee history teachers have the capacity and ability to remotely access information regarding the course they were enrolled in. Such environments provide administrative and didactic support for all participants both academic and student body for the completion of the programmes of learning that they are engaged in[35] and of particular importance was their use in the development of academic-trainee teacher relationships based on content and assessment [36]. This approach is termed as a "monolithic or integrated approach"[37] allowing for the holistic view of student online behaviour. However, the role of the VLE has largely remained an academic administrative tool and is not widely viewed by students as an arena which students, and in particularly students enrolled in professional programs are comfortable with.

Arising out of the networks within academia and the education system or the VLEs that exist and connect institutions, Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) environments have made significant inroads into connecting participants and educators in a collaborative space where the hierarchical nature of VLEs have been mitigated through design. Thus allowing content to migrate beyond the classroom[38] and stretch our preconception of not only what history teaching and learning are but also the dimensions within which such learning occurs. In efforts to establish the history of education as environment conducive to a dynamic engagement with education CSCL has emerged from the learning sciences as a distinct opportunity to breakdown perceived barriers to engagement by scaffolding the digital domain of the history teacher. However, embracing the concept espoused by such platforms can open up opportunities to explore alternatives to didactice history teaching methodologies.

By linking these designed environments to the history of education, teachers may be able to conceive the role of the computer in history teaching and learning as supporting collaborative practice and scaffolding of learning rather that of a didactical engagement, where: "in most cases, the role of the computer is secondary to the interpersonal collaboration process among the students (and, ofter, the teacher, tutor or mentor). The software is designed to support not replace these human group processes"[39] and provides an environment wherein learning

[35]   Heather Fry, Steve Ketteridge, Stephanie Marshall, eds., *A handbook for teaching and learning in higher education: Enhancing academic practice* (London: Routledge, 2008).

[36]   Sevgi Ozkan, Refika Koseler, "Multi-dimensional students' evaluation of e-learning systems in the higher education context: An empirical investigation", *Computers & Education* 53(4) (2009): 1285–1296.

[37]   Robin D. Mason, Chris A. Pegler, Martin J. Weller, "A learning object success story", *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks* 9(1) (2005): 97–105.

[38]   Fred McCrea, R. Keith Gay, and Rusty Bacon, *Riding the big waves: A white paper on B2B e-learning industry* (San Francisco: Thomas Weisel Partners LLC, 2000).

[39]   Gerry Stahl, Timothy Koschmann, Dan Suthers, "Computer-supported collaborative learning: An historical perspective", *Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences* (2006): 426.

is represented as a convergence of otherwise divergent meanings. Translating this perspective to a contemporary secondary school history classroom is challenging but not impossible.

Teaching History in Contemporary Classrooms

Technology Enhanced Learning Environments (TELEs), as Wang & Hannifin suggest, "technology-based learning and instructional systems through which students acquire skills or knowledge, usually with the help of teachers or facilitators, learning support tools, and technological resources"[40]. This summary reflects a number of theoretical frameworks developed in the 1990's that have driven technological integration in the education sector. However, the development of theoretical frameworks that form the foundations upon which potential TELEs may flourish have struggled to take hold. This is perhaps best evidenced in two distinct areas. Firstly, the development of designed innovations has been largely focused on a traditional linear format of design, research and report very often resulting in the design innovation either being rejected or in many successful cases being regarded as dated or outmoded by history teachers. Secondly, the advent of mobile technology and accessibility to information systems, and in particular off-site access to TELEs, has meant that the pace of technological advancement very often outstrip the capacity of history teachers to keep pace with the very change that is trying to be affected. Newly qualified history teachers, in particular, are regularly offered new software and hardware that is intended to engage students. However, understandably, have become weary of constant change[41].

While clearly technology has had a positive impact on education the environment required to support technological engagement must seep beyond the traditional walls of the education systems we inhabit[42]. This is particularly important in history classrooms where connecting students to content through exploration in the living community is a common methodology. It is necessary, therefore, to recognise the development of such environments is a complex undertaking. At this juncture it is helpful to consider framing a TELE in the context of ITE. Pre-service history teachers, given the professional nature of the programmes they are engaged exist in multisite education. Very often the technology they use in their ITE providers will not reflect the technology available to them at schools and this is also the case regarding the technology available to pre-service history teachers in their personal

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[40]   Feng Wang, Michael J. Hannafin, "Design-based research and technology-enhanced learning environments", *Educational Technology Research and Development* 53(4) (2005): 6.
[41]   Flynn, Hall, "Towards a teaching".
[42]   Edward L. Ayers, *The pasts and futures of digital history* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia, 1999).

lives. Again these technologies may not be available to them in a professional capacity. So, what we see is a complex and diverse history pre-service and in-service history teaching environment that lends itself to technological individualisation and can render the development of TELEs ineffective suggesting the very existence of technology for specific purposes does not infer the effectiveness of such technology in practice. Research into the impact of TELEs in second level education or teaching practice reflects this assertion and in a study of collaboration between second level mainstream and special educational needs teachers the development of collaborative relationships was found to be limited at best[43] indicating that TELEs at third level education and in particular initial teacher education programmes face significant challenges[44]. Exploring these challenges within the history of education subject, as a learning experience, offers the participants an opportunity to examine in detail the challenges they will face as in-service history teachers and to develop fledgling ideas around how they might combat they proliferation of didactic practice.

As problematised by Kirschner the role of technologies in the teacher's toolbox is complex and he points out that technologies should be as much a part of teachers' repertoire as the use of a text book or whiteboard[45]. This begs the question of what technologies can be truly integrated into a model of history teaching and learning. Recently, we have witnessed the tenth anniversary of Twitter and its meteoric rise to prominence. The establishment of Facebook as a social norm has further cemented the role of social media in the everyday lives of people with a large majority of students enrolled in U.S. universities actively engaged with Facebook accounts and as an educational environment Facebook has an impact upon all strata of academia. Roblyer, McDaniel, Webb, Hermen & Witty indicate that Facebook, when a concerted effort to integrate Facebook into a designed learning environment is made, can be established as a rich and valuable resource for the connected teaching and learning community[46]. It has never been more incumbent on history teachers to engage with social media as a method of archival exemplification and personal archival creation regardless of subject specialisation. Students have, the capacity to bridge from the formal to informal learning seamlessly given the correct supports and enrich our understanding of what it means to meaningfully engage with the curricular subject of history at secondary school level and beyond.

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[43]   Lee B. Hamill, Anne K. Jantzen, Mary E. Bargerhuff, "Analysis of effective educator competencies in inclusive environments", *Action in teacher education* 21(3) (1999): 21–37.

[44]   Paul Kirschner, Niki Davis, "Pedagogic benchmarks for information and communications technology in teacher education", *Technology, Pedagogy and Education* 12(1) (2003): 125–147.

[45]   Paul A. Kirschner, "Do we need teachers as designers of technology enhanced learning?", *Instructional Science* 43(2) (2015): 309–322.

[46]   Margaret D. Roblyer *et al.*, "Findings on Facebook in higher education: A comparison of college faculty and student uses and perceptions of social networking sites", *The Internet and higher education* 13(3) (2010): 134–140.

It is evident in the literature that the issue of deference to established practice prevails in initial teacher education education and the introduction of new methodologies and technologies that can support learning has been slow to materialise[47]. However, also evident is the transformative potential of such measures within faculty research – if not readily rolled out to engagement with the student population. These findings also support the aforementioned issues raised by Kirschner (2015) and the use of VLEs as components of 'convenience and control'[48]. A pervasive communication tool, Twitter is representative of the development of a movement towards online democratic participation in a myriad of spheres. However, the very pervasiveness of this type of social media has placed demands upon users of same to develop digital and/or 21st century skills that allow them to effectively engage with such technologies. Nicholson & Galguera explore the experiences of student teachers use of Twitter as part of their initial teacher training, delineating the diversity of their reactions and the potential benefits of using Twitter as a tool in this complex environment as well as problematising its presence[49]. They highlight findings from the Pew Research Centre's Internet and American Life Project where Twitter use is twice as high in young adults (18–29 years) as in older age groupings – the typical age profile of trainee teachers[50]. Historical research skills as core learning outcomes for trainee history teachers through a structured engagement with the history of education is a process of modelling best practice for re-use with their secondary school history students.

However university institutions, and consequently ITE programmes, are slow to both recognise and harness the potential of micro-blogging concepts such as Twitter despite the appetite for such engagement from the student population. This is a contemporary 'live' archival experience that is deviant from traditional didactic engagement. Furthermore it is evident that the ability to harness such platforms, micro or otherwise, is highly desirable by the prospective employers of newly graduated history teachers. Importantly, in instances where Twitter groups were formed as part of a university college course, students spontaneously continued to communicate about class content after class had concluded resulting in a strengthening of the students' relationships both with each other and the facilitator/teacher of the that programme[51]. In addition, a separate study found the introduction of Twitter's 140 character communication limit was effective

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[47]   Conway *et al.*, *Learning to teach*.

[48]   Gregor Kennedy *et al.*, *The net generation are not big users of Web 2.0 technologies: Preliminary findings*, (Proceedings ascilite Singapore 2007), 15.

[49]   Julie Nicholson, Tomás Galguera, "Integrating new literacies in higher education: A self-study of the use of Twitter in an education course", *Teacher Education Quarterly* 40(3) (2013): 7–26.

[50]   Aaron Smith, Joanna Brenner, "Twitter use 2012", *Pew Internet & American Life Project* 4 (2012).

[51]   Reynol Junco, Greg Heiberger Eric Loken, "The effect of Twitter on college student engagement and grades", *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning* 27(2) (2011): 119–132.

in supporting participants collaborative activities and negotiation of shared meaning, also resulting in increased participation beyond the demands of mandatory participation[52]. The use of Twitter in programmes that are pre-professional found the use of the platform allowed participants to engage with established professional communities beyond the boundaries of the learning environment allowing participants to feel like they were emergent members of those established professional communities. In addition, the use of Twitter has also been found to reduce feelings of isolation due to the sense of community established through various levels or participation in these more established networks of professionals and students[53]. In short, to reach beyond the walls of history classrooms. The challenge to implementation within the history teaching community remains largely technological self-efficacy.

Developing Technological Self-Efficacy

A collaborative exploration of the history of education has the capacity to enhance the technological self-efficacy of history teachers in ITE and increase the likelihood of a movement away from didactic approaches to teaching second level history students. Mishra, Koehler & Kereluik contend that educational technology can be broadly defined "as the study and practice of facilitating learning and improving performance by creating, using and managing technological processes and resources"[54]. They argue that technological innovations very often do not permeate education systems or teaching practice as: "using the newest technologies such as mobile phones in ways that are instructionally effective requires specific knowledge of how the technology can be used for pedagogical purposes. Teachers are busy people with many goals competing for their time. Educators who are not skilled beyond basic usage will need to learn both the technology as well as how to use it instructionally – a completely different skill"[55].

The rapid rate of change of technology, is particularly relevant when discussing history teachers' levels of technological self-efficacy. This rate of change can discourage history teachers to engage with emergent task specific technologies as they can feel that the technology will very soon become obsolete. Indeed, in order to keep up with any technology, history teachers are required to engage in a rate

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[52]   Eva Kassens-Noor, "Twitter as a teaching practice to enhance active and informal learning in higher education: The case of sustainable tweets", *Active Learning in Higher Education* 13(1) (2012): 9–21.

[53]   Noeline Wright, "Twittering in teacher education: Reflecting on practicum experiences", *Open Learning* 25(3) (2010): 259–265.

[54]   Punya Mishra, Matthew J. Koehler, Kristen Kereluik, "Looking back to the future of educational technology", *TechTrends* 53(5) (2009): 49.

[55]   *Ibidem*.

of continual learning or they will fall behind and ultimately lack the technology implementation skills required to meaningfully integrate technology into their pedagogical practices.

The development of technological self-efficacy in history teachers must therefore move away, in general, from task specific technologies to those that are pervasive and meaningful to the secondary school history student.. Aligning the development of technical competence and efficacy with technologies that are present in the professional and private lives of pre-service and in-service history teachers is to acknowledge the impact that technological advancements have had is not contained within domains, rather it is pervasive. This pervasiveness blurs the distinction, therefore, of what educational technology means to the history teaching profession. This 'confusion' is pertinent to discussions regarding pre--service history teachers' technological self-efficacy as the technology they perceive as being educational can very often be present in their personal lives and the lives of the secondary school history students they engage with.. To this end, self-efficacy is discussed in relation to technologies that are not task specific or purpose built – bespoke. This can only occur within environments that foster exploration, that can accommodate pedagogical scaffolding such as the history of education in ITE programmes and concomitantly, the curricular subject of history at second level education.

Self-efficacy is considered a fundamental competence belief in one's ability to control processes[56]. Elsewhere, self-efficacy is defined as a "belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the course of action required to manage prospective situation"[57]. These perspectives on self-efficacy indicate that confidence in one's abilities is that of a belief in one's self to complete a task within a specific domain, which in turn influences the performance of all participants within educational settings[58]. It is therefore incumbent on designers to consider the practical aspects of technological engagement in educational settings as "external (first--order) and internal (second-order) barriers […]. If pre- and inservice teachers are to become effective users of technology, they will need practical strategies for dealing with the different types of barriers they will face"[59].

Ertmer elaborates further by delineating what such barriers constitute and offers suggested strategies for overcoming identified first and second order

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[56]   Barry Zimmerman, Dale Schunk, "Competence and control beliefs: Distinguishing the means and ends", *Handbook of Educational Psychology* (2006): 349–367.

[57]   Albert Bandura, ed., *Self-efficacy in changing societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 2.

[58]   Frank Pajares, Dale H. Schunk, "Self and self-belief in psychology and education: A historical perspective", *Improving academic achievement: Impact of psychological factors on education* (2002): 3–21.

[59]   Peggy A. Ertmer, "Addressing first-and second-order barriers to change: Strategies for technology integration", *Educational Technology Research and Development* 47(4) (1999): 47.

barriers. First-order barriers relate to obstacles that are non-essential to the transitional dynamic of teaching and learning in second level classrooms[60] and often take the form of resources that are absent or poorly structured within the environments of the technologies' intended implementation. A negative experience in ITE can be the precursor to making such barriers into perceived insurmountable challenges in second level history classrooms. There is also a perception amongst teachers that access to hardware and software alone is the main barrier to the integration of technology in educational settings belying the presence of, or indeed enhancing the impact of, second-order barriers that may exist within that dynamic[61]. This is something that second level history teachers need to consider when designing educational experiences for their students. Second-order barriers are described as obstacles that relate to pre-service and inservice teachers preconceptions regarding history teaching and learning. These beliefs or preconceptions may indeed not be apparent to those facing such barriers[62]. The history of education in ITE is the only foundational subject that explicitly highlights trends within the educational systems and allows an equally explicitly challenge to established practice to be developed in the safety of a scaffolded, collaborative environment. There is therefore a reciprocal relationship between such barriers that cannot be ignored in the design of educational environments that integrate technology into the process of history teaching and learning. It is clear from the literature that a common vision or goal is an important factor in the successful integration of technology into the pedagogical practices of history teachers and in overcoming the aforementioned barriers.

Ertmer also calls for the development of such integrated pedagogical practices in the development or refinement of teacher education programmes and suggests that "without these skills, and strategies for accomplishing them, teachers may find integrated technology use too distant a goal to achieve […] by arming our current and future teachers with knowledge barriers, as well as effective strategies to overcome the, it is expected that they will be prepared to both initiate and sustain effective technology integration practices"[63]. It is clear that a balance must be struck between the thresholds that history teachers will experience and the development of pedagogical practices that they can emulate through participation either in initial teacher education or during in-service continuing professional development. A space where this can happen cannot be constrained as it would not be reflective of the naturalistic context of learning in second level history classrooms. As a foundational study, the history of education can accommodate such engagement as it represents the reality of the programme they are engaged in as it would also

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[60]   *Ibidem.*
[61]   *Ibidem.*
[62]   *Ibidem.*
[63]   *Ibidem.*

be the case for the second level students they will be trying to help connect their history lessons to the contemporary world that they live in. Forming collaborative communities, within ITE programmes, to share experiences must be the first step for pre-service history teachers.

Establishing Collaborative Communities

The establishment of collaborative learning communities in educational settings has been a long held ambition of government educational departments and influencing bodies for a number of decades. The advent of technology has begun to offer possibilities for the establishment of sustainable learning communities that have a shared vision or goal[64] and that are forged on the commonality of a shared history of education. Platforms such as Facebook and Twitter when employed in educational settings have been identified as potential arenas for the development of communities engaged in the practice of learning and with common aspirations, desires and goals. In particular, the formation of communities of practice and the constituent learning communities of such environments[65].

Conway *et al.* refer to culture in the principles they set out as necessary for successful ITE programmes in terms of diversity, change and homogeneity[66]. Day suggests that while defining culture in relation to professional education environments is difficult, it may be referred to as an environment "where people in the organisational setting, characterised by the ways in which values, beliefs, prejudices and behaviour are played out within the micro-political processes of school life"[67]. Given the variation in approaches to ITE across and within continents, from school to school, it is evident that culture, regardless of its exact definition, plays a key role in shaping collaborative communities of practice. Introducing, therefore, new entrants to educational communities is an important process given the multitude of micro-cultures that can exist from history classroom to history classroom, from school, school to school etc. This is equally true for second level history students as they engage with the array of curricular subjects available to them. Processes of induction allow new members of such communities to familiarise themselves with the nuances of the community and vice versa[68]. However familiarisation is

[64]   Nancy J. Gilbert, Marcy P. Driscoll, "Collaborative knowledge building: A case study", *Educational Technology Research and Development* 50(1) (2002): 59–79.

[65]   Oscar T. Lenning, Larry H. Ebbers, The Powerful Potential of Learning Communities: Improving Education for the Future. ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report, vol. 26, no. 6. ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education, One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 630, Washington, DC 20036–1183, 1999.

[66]   Conway *et al.*, *Learning to teach*.

[67]   Chris Day, *Developing teachers: The challenges of lifelong learning* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[68]   Jennifer Nias, Geoff Southworth, Robin Yeomans, *Staff relationships in the primary school: A study of organizational cultures* (Mansell: Cassell, 1989).

not induction into a community of practice rather induction into a collegiate environment or what Fielding elucidates as a 'functional relationship' within which change can dissolve relationships and where communal or 'personal relationships' are enriched by change[69]. Modelling this behaviour as best practice in secondary school teaching communities has the potential to be replicated at a student level. If we want our future history teachers to model best practice they need to see it an action as second level students.

Wenger in *Communities of Practice*, espouses a theory of social learning where participation is key to a constructed meaning between participants. Actively participating in a learning community is therefore a manner of social development and educational endeavour[70]. Lave & Wenger have defined learning communities as a "set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in relation with other and overlapping communities of practice"[71] where scaffolded peripheral participation in a community is the foundation upon which full participation can be built. Encouraging initial peripheral participation is therefore a key tenet of developing learning communities or communities of practice. However, for history teachers, and all teacher alike, the context of engagement is key as is the commonality of the foundations of that engagement – the history of education.

Hargreaves' identification of these strata of community based individualism are made, notwithstanding the physical condition of the employment site where individual history teachers may be physically isolated from a community due to the position of buildings and remote interaction[72]. Also evident in the work of Hargreaves is the concept of collaborative cultures in education communities where relationships are founded upon spontaneous events that occur regardless of location and time. Hargreaves also discuss the impact of directives that stipulate individual teacher participation with other individuals and labels it 'contrived collegiality' where participants are compelled to participate in incidents of collaborative activities which can often result in longer term inflexibility and inefficiency[73]. While not in opposition to Hargreaves' position, Day suggests that despite the coercive nature of 'contrived collegiality' or contrived collaborative situations, these situations may act as instances where participants can make inroads to becoming

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[69]   Michael Fielding, "Community, philosophy and education policy: against effectiveness ideology and the immiseration of contemporary schooling", *Journal of Education Policy* 15(4) (2000): 397–415.

[70]   Etienne Wenger, *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

[71]   Lave, Wenger, *Situated learning*.

[72]   Andy Hargreaves, Michael Fullan, "Mentoring in the New Millenium", *Theory Into Practice* 39(1) (2000): 50–56.

[73]   Hargreaves, *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1994).

active members of more spontaneous communities of practice[74]. In essence, the relationship between collaboration and collegiality, for didactic history teachers, is ambiguous at best.

Lenning and Ebbers contend that any transcendence of collegiate boundaries in pursuit of the establishment of a holistic learning community or community of practice is dependant upon the formation of four distinct learning communities: Curricular Learning Communities – such communities consist of students who are enrolled together in two or more modules that draw on different disciplines; Situational Learning Communities – are a community of learners where the classroom or situation is the axis around which all interaction is based. In this environment co-operation and group activities are shaped by pedagogical direction; Student--Type Learning Communities – this distinct learning community grouping defines the group as having a common purpose or goal. A shared interest and reason for enrolling in a programme or co-enrolling in a number of modules; and Residential Learning Communities – are learning communities that provide opportunities to engage in learning content and activity away from the physical constraints of the classroom, usually when living in close proximity to one another. Lenning and Ebbers' description of learning communities are further enhanced by developments in recent decades with regard mobile technology particularly in relation to residential learning communities where communication between community members is not bound by physical presence or instances of face-2-face interaction[75]. What links all of these communities together is the history of education that they share. Translating this residential engagement into second level teaching classrooms, empowered by technology, has the potential to challenge persistent didactic history teaching activities. Constructing narratives to populate such digital residential community engagement is critical.

Facilitating Narrative Construction as Historical Investigation

Narrative is "concerned with the production, interpretation and representation of storied accounts of lived experience"[76]. By engaging in storytelling as a communicative process then participants, history teachers and history students, in that process can come to an understanding of other people's lives. Storytelling as a process of narrative inquiry in an educational setting is therefore an inherently engaging and participatory process. Our lived experiences can be narrated in many forms

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[74]   Day, *Developing teachers*.
[75]   Lenning, Ebbers, The Powerful Potential.
[76]   Geoff Shacklock, Laurie Thorp, "Life history and narrative approaches", *Research methods in the social sciences* (2005): 156–163.

however oral history has become prevalent in recent years where biographical interviewing has become a mainstay of qualitative research in that field[77]. Fundamentally the development or communication of narrative is a means of making sense of the world and relating that meaning to others – the building of communities for both history teachers and history students.

Understanding the importance of oral history is an integral component of many second level history curricula. Exploring autobiographical narrative construction is situated within the experiences of the individual and is constructed in a manner through which that individual makes sense of the world at the moment of telling[78]. It is the immediate telling of story that Bignold & Su acknowledge as contributing to the limitations of autobiographical storytelling in their research study and describe the difficulties associated as being "open to fabrication, inaccurate memories and concealment of event and facts"[79]. They introduce an interview process into their research methodology in order to mitigate this difficulty and gain a fuller, clearer insight into the historical educational experiences of the participants in their study. In the course of their discussion the researchers highlight three challenging areas when using narrative approaches in educational contexts.

The first challenge they highlight is how best to present the participants' historical experiences within the designed educational environment – to ensure that the participants voice remains that of their own – remain authentic and suggest a structured refinement process that involves the original author questioning assumption and or conclusions. Secondly, the role of the narrator in actually reflecting the contextual complexities of the historical experiences. In order to mitigate this concern the authors suggest grounding any historical autobiographical construct in established research concerning the internal fabric of the narrative. The third concern voiced by the authors of this research study is that of how to ensure the validity of the narratives stating that as a researcher one's own position is "crucial to the validity of the studies, particularly given the close involvement with the participants a members of the [two] communities being researched"[80].

Pithouse suggests that storytelling can help teachers to remember and interact with memories in manner that can facilitate challenge not just to the memories being explored but to the impact of those memories and experiences on preconceptions of teaching and learning[81] and, in particular, history teachers and their students. In her study, Masinga asked participants to share their stories. These stories

[77]   Brian Roberts, *Biographical research* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2002).
[78]   Wendy Bignold, Feng Su, "The role of the narrator in narrative inquiry in education: Construction and co-construction in two case studies", *International Journal of Research & Method in Education* 36(4) (2013): 400–414.
[79]   *Ibidem*: 406.
[80]   *Ibidem*: 410.
[81]   Kathleen Pithouse, "The future of our young children lies in our hands": Re-envisaging teacher authority through narrative self-study", *Memory and Pedagogy* (2011): 177–190.

were then compared to the stories of others in the group offering opportunities for a "collective examination of the memories in which the memories are theorised and new meanings result"[82]. She then describes a process of collaborative reconstruction of the collective histories being narrated as a process collaborative negotiation for meaning making[83]. Underpinning the development of this collaborative reconstruction is the work of Lapadat, Black, Clark, Gremm, Karanja & Quinlan. The authors contend that "the telling of one's story is both a construction of self and a performance of self, in which the listener/reader/viewer is implicated as witness, audience, collaborator, and co-constructor"[84]. During the course the study participants developed a deeper understanding of themselves informed by those who listened, gave feedback, constructively challenged and collaboratively reconstructed their perceptions of their lived lives up to that point – all though a process of collaborative story building[85]. If we wish to challenge the persistence of didactic teaching practice we must revisit our own histories of education and allow others with different experience to challenge what we know. Subsequent replication of this action during in-service history teaching may therefore be more likely. It is important, however, that the environmental complexities of the in-service history teaching are fully acknowledged within ITE modules such as the history of education and present a clear vision of what alternative to didactive history teaching practices are possible.

Building a Clear Vision

The role that the development of professional experience in school-based placement plays in the development of trainee teachers has been a contentious issue in ITE for decades[86]. Questions regarding how history student teachers best learn how to teach, where school placement should occur, the duration of placement, whether this experience should be an individual or collaborative experience, are prevalent in the literature and remain unresolved[87]. Darling-Hammond and Lieberman in their edited study of eight high performing OECD countries: Australia, Canada, Finland, Hong Kong, Singapore, United Kingdom and the United State of

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[82] Lungile Masinga, "Teachers learning about their sexual identities through collaborative storytelling: Mandla and Sihle's story", *Agenda* 28(1) (2014): 38.

[83] *Ibidem*.

[84] Lapadat *et al*., "Life Challenge Memory Work: Using Collaborative Autobiography to Understand Ourselves", *International Journal of Qualitative Methods* 9(1) (2010): 78.

[85] Masinga, "Teachers learning".

[86] Erica Southgate, Ruth Reynolds, Peter Howley, "Professional experience as a wicked problem in initial teacher education", *Teaching and Teacher Education* 31 (2013): 13–22.

[87] Dick W. Maandag *et al.*, "Teacher education in schools: An international comparison", *European Journal of Teacher Education* 30(2) (2007): 151–173.

America, conclude that there are a significant variations in how countries approach these issues[88]. However within these variances there exists a consistent theme, that of how to enable pre-service teachers to successfully negotiate the transition between ITE and professional teaching environments. As Hammerness suggests "the well documented prospective teachers' experience of reality shock could be the result of only learning about the bureaucratic nature of schools, the isolation of the profession and the ambiguous nature of teaching… but could also result from the gap between teachers' own visions and their current realities"[89]. This 'reality shock' is also evident in the transition between second level education and third level education, particularly within the continuum of the Irish Education System. Strategies such as gradually integrating PSTs into in-service action research groups have been successful in Finland. Gently and carefully constructed vision of in-service professionalism in a global context helps student teachers in Singapore to transition into professional teaching environments. In the United States, movements towards alternatives to formal teacher training colleges in a decentralisation of teacher training, is underway. Here too, a central concern of ITE providers is the introduction of NQTs to life as a professional second level history teacher.

Darling-Hammond & Lieberman pay particular attention to the culture of professionalism in teacher education programs and the role action research in educational communities can play in the successful transition from teacher training to a professional teaching environment[90]. It follows therefore the development of a culture of community practice is at the very core of the aspirations Conway *et al.* set out. Developing a community of practice with the history teaching community that is founded upon a scaffolded expiration of the history of education has the potential to strip away the tendency towards didactic practice and combat a decades old problem.

Conclusion

It is clear that the concept of autobiographical storytelling has the potential, when carried out in a designed, collaborative learning environment, to help participants challenge preconceptions of what it means to be a history teacher within the second level education system. However, a robust and dynamic framework that embraces the naturalistic context of history classrooms is required. In addition, this process of collaborative storytelling when supported by a CSCL environment and rooted in historical fact has the potential to develop learning communities

88   Linda Darling-Hammond, Ann Lieberman, "Educating superman", *Finding Superman: Debating the future of public education in America* (2012): 31–45.

89   Karen Hammerness, "Learning to hope, or hoping to learn? The role of vision in the early professional lives of teachers", *Journal of Teacher Education* 54(1) (2003): 54.

90   Darling-Hammond, Lieberman, "Educating superman".

that when considered as sequentially constructed have the potential to be the foundation upon which an emergent history teacher community of practice can be formed. This paper has presented a framework for the development of a structured engagement with the history of education that enables trainee history teachers to collaboratively challenge their established preconceptions of what it means to engage with history and to construct an alternate future for their engagement with second level history students. The core components of this process are collaboration, critical engagement, narrative construction and the development of technological self-efficacy anchored in the foundational ITE subject – the history of education.

Paul Flynn
Challenging didactic history teaching activities: a framework for change in initial history teacher education broad topic

Summary

This paper explores the role of the history of education in initial teacher education programmes and questions the effectiveness of persistent didactic teaching practice at both higher and second level education in the subject of history. This paper contends it is by studying the history of education, rooted in a pedagogically scaffolded processes and based on personal experience that opportunities exists to relate personal experience to the role of a history teacher and to challenge preconceptions regarding didactic methods of teaching history. The ultimate goal of this movement towards employing collaborative history of education learning environments is to reinvigorate interest in the second level subject of history by modelling the same process with second level history students. The potential impact of such a framework will be discussed and the resultant value placed upon the history of education by pre-service history teachers is explored.