

**Diversity in teacher education - perspectives on a school-led system [book review]**

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**Diversity in Teacher Education – Perspectives on a school-led system** edited by Nick Sorensen, 2019, Routledge, 162pp, £22.99 (pbk) ISBN 9781782772521

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The last few decades in England have seen wave after wave of changes to how teachers learn to teach, with the most rapid changes taking place from 2010 onwards. This timeframe has seen the marketisation of the sector, the shift of provision from Higher Education Institutions (HEI) to school-led, and Initial Teacher Education (ITE) reframed as Initial Teacher Training (ITT), reflecting changes in the way teaching is viewed by government.

Edited by Nick Sorensen, this book details these changes and the context and research of the Diversity in Teacher Education (DiTE) project in England, combining the results of both primary data collection and analysis with scrutiny of policy and building on Modes of Teacher Education studies of the 1990s. The seven chapters discuss the various strands of the DiTE project, along with a foreword by Geoff Whitty and introduction by Sorensen, which focus on the evolution of ITE in the last 11 years, covering the changes in policy regarding how teachers in England learn to teach, the influence of neoliberalism, and the increased marketisation of education and of ITE.

The first part of Whiting's chapter on mapping ITE provision outlines the construction of a 'topography' of routes into teaching, to investigate the options and routes for achieving Qualified Teacher Status. To do this the author attempts to categorise providers and outlines the issues that arise as a result and the limitations of the available data, e.g. differing routes not recorded separately. The issues around describing or distinguishing routes as either HEI or school-led are explored in depth.

Sorensen's next chapter builds on Whiting's work, focussing on the relationships and partnerships that have come about between schools and HEIs, the multiplicity of routes and resulting responsibilities, and how this has evolved. Using a case study, the chapter illustrates the key challenges faced by schools that are part of a School-centred initial teacher training (SCITT) route, including partnership working with HEIs, recruitment of trainees and the constant changes to the system. The nature of the school-led system also means that each school or HEI may have multiple partnerships and agreements, making the system ever more complex.

The following chapter is set as a conversation between Sorensen and Pat Black, head of teacher education at Bath Spa University, discussing the history of ITE at the university and the impacts of the changes. The conversation emphasises the partnership working between HEIs and schools throughout, as well as the lessons learned from having to adapt to a school-led system and its associated complexities. Black advocates for a simpler system of routes into teaching and the importance of teaching as a profession.

Chapter 6 draws on primary data, in the form of interviews with teacher educators across three universities in England. The authors describe the teacher educators as part of "complex adaptive system", adjusting ways of working in a constantly changing policy environment and an increasingly complex and accountable system to build partnerships and prepare teachers. The chapter also highlights the multiple identities (educator of teachers, school visitor, researcher) that teacher educators can, and in some cases must, assume.

Models of ITE form the basis of Chapter 7, derived from Maandag's et al's 2007 work, along with Bernstein's concepts of classification and framing to examine power and control in differing models.

The implications of this on identity and professionalism for teachers in England are then explored, with Hordern noting the insecurity of teacher professionalism.

The final chapter uses Bernstein's notion of recontextualisation to discuss ITE programmes in England in the light of the differing discourses of "official" (i.e., government) and "pedagogical" (i.e., teachers and teacher educators) influences. Referring to the international TEDS-M study of international mathematics teacher education to compare and contrast with ITE in England, the authors suggest that the growth of craft and instrumental approaches to teaching, the marketisation of ITE and existence of multiple routes and providers in England have come about as a result of official recontextualisation, i.e. the changes that have been brought about by the English government's vision of what ITE should be.

The afterword draws findings of each chapter together, summarising the impact that repeated changes to policy and ITE have had on both stakeholders and the system itself from an individual HEI; teacher educators across three institutions; the evolution of multiple routes, and school/MAT and HEI partnerships. It notes the tensions that exist within the system as a result the constant changes to ITE in the creation of a school-led system, and the evolution of measures of accountability and performativity that affects both ITE and schools, along with the impact of free schools and academies. The book finishes with a summary of the DiTe programme and the need for more research.

The combination of primary data with narratives around policy make this a useful and illuminating read. In the first instance, the book would be useful to anyone interested in the intricacies, history and evolution of the multiple systems and routes through which someone can train to be a teacher in England. However, the narrative gives far more than that, unpicking the layers of complexity created by constant policy change; laying bare the impacts of neoliberalism; the growing marketisation of ITE; increasing state intervention and control, both in the how and what of teacher training in England, and the weakening of the role of HEIs in teacher training with the school-led teacher system with the rise of SCITTs, School Direct, Teach First etc. The resulting impacts on HEIs, schools, teacher professionalism and identity, and the pervasive culture of performativity and measurability are covered in detail. Also recognised are the partnerships between HEIs and schools which, in truth, existed long before the reforms leading to the school-led system, but continue to be vital in ITE.

Intentionally or otherwise, this book often feels like a tribute to the creativity, resilience and dedication of those in England who educate our teachers, in schools, and more particularly in HEIs, and is made all the more relevant and timely given the ongoing changes in the ITE system, including the ITT market review (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-itt-market-review/initial-teacher-training-itt-market-review-overview>) and the reforms to the Early Career Framework, which aims to provide high quality CPD for teachers in the first two years of their careers.

## Reference

Maandag, D. W., J. F. Deinum, A. W. Hofman, and J. Buitink. 2007. "Teacher Education in Schools: An International Comparison." *European Journal of Teacher Education* 30 (2): 151–173. doi:10.1080/02619760701275552.