

Reframing teacher education in England: the case for a *Bildung* orientated approach.

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Abstract

Bildung has a long tradition in continental European education but in England it is less well known and is underused to theorise about education. In this paper the German concept of *Bildung* is applied to pre-service teacher education in England where teacher education has become increasingly dominated by instrumental and technicist approaches that encroach on the development of professional values and educational wisdom. Nevertheless, criticisms to current trends in teacher education do exist in England with programmes that include values-based elements challenging the prevailing norms of this performativity driven approach. This paper adds to those criticisms by proposing *Bildung* as an underpinning philosophy of teacher education and as an unusual lens with which to reframe teacher education.

Keywords: *Bildung*; pre-service teachers; values-based teacher education; reflective practice; transformative learning

Introduction

In England schools and teachers are expected to address the impact on young people of the political, social, cultural and economic trends that have damaged social cohesion (MacIntyre, 2007; Sennett, 2012). The effect on some young people of the fragmentation of society is evident in the increases in violent crime, fed by gang culture, drug wars and county lines, that may link to high rates of depression, mental ill health, and in some cases suicide or murder (The Children's Society 2019; Young Minds, 2018). In attempts to manage emerging social crises a raft of government policies and guidance has been directed at schools e.g. Every Child Matters (DfES, 2004), The Prevent Strategy (DfE, 2011), Mental Health and Wellbeing (DfE, 2014; DoH, 2015), Safeguarding (DfE 2015); Relationships and Sex Education (DfE, 2017a), Bullying and Cyberbullying (DfE, 2017b); Character Teaching and British values (DfE, 2019) amongst others. Expectations of teachers have therefore broadened and yet teachers are generally seen as poorly equipped to manage many of these moral and ethical issues (Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families, 2017; DfE, 2015).

Leaving aside the wider societal and political changes that may be needed to address these problems this article focuses on teacher education programmes, particularly pre-service teacher education and considers how teachers can be more adequately prepared to support their pupils' holistic moral, social and emotional wellbeing. Whilst it is not axiomatic that teachers have to support these aspects of their pupils' personal development, in England there is an expectation that teachers have responsibility for the welfare of their pupils (DfE, 2015). What is required in pre-service teacher education are programmes that enable teachers to understand how they and their pupils can, in the Aristotelian sense flourish and have a sense of wellbeing, by enabling them to meet their physical, emotional, social and academic needs (Norrish, Williams, O'Connor & Robinson, 2013). Every new teacher would then be better equipped with an ethically-based resource to draw upon that employs, 'the three interrelated elements of the educative enterprise; perception, affect and judgement,' allowing them to make morally appropriate decisions in their encounters with young people in schools (Erben, 2000, p. 380).

Developing the personal capacity of pre-service teachers for this complex task is difficult. Optimistically, Furlong (2013 a) notes that many programmes have resisted a completely technicist model of teacher education and include discussion and debate about the wider issues in education in order to develop pre-service teachers' understanding of philosophical, ethical and values-based issues. There are also many (e.g. Biesta, 2015; Byrne, Rietdijk & Pickett, 2018; Mead, 2019) who consider it necessary to develop new ways of educating teachers as a counter-current to programmes in which their education has become 'training' to meet specific competencies where they may lack agency and acquiesce to the prevailing norms of standards-based training. However this can leave providers and teacher educators

feeling uncertain about their role as they simultaneously comply with the dominant technicist discourse of teacher education policy whilst trying to subvert it (McIntyre, Youens & Stevenson, 2019). The challenge is how to support radical change to facilitate personal and professional transformation, so that teachers can respond appropriately with pedagogic ‘dignity’, in other words with clear firmly articulated professional values founded on strong professional identity, autonomy and selfhood (Bauer, 1997). This article proposes a reframing of teacher education that employs the German concept of *Bildung* as the crucial and central core of teacher education.

Bildung has a long tradition in continental European education but in England it is less well known and is underused to theorise about education but that does not mean that English education is entirely bereft of theories about developing the whole person, Peters (1974), for example asks similar questions to those posed in this article. He asserts that education is something beyond cognition, worth striving for and achieved in a morally acceptable way. It seems that the time is right to reconsider how teachers in England are educated with a particular focus on the development of their professional values, morals and ethics. *Bildung* is helpful here in developing teachers’ critical self-awareness of their wider role because it is concerned with educative self-formation that involves self-cultivation, and the development of a person’s humanity within their historical, social and cultural milieu (Gadamer, 2004).

Background to pre-service teacher education in England

A brief contextual overview of pre-service teacher education in England is provided rather than a comprehensive account of the field where a complex and shifting tapestry of provision exists (Whiting et al., 2016; Whitty, 2014). Since the publication of the White Paper *The Importance of Teaching* (DfE, 2010) government policy in England has continually and systematically altered the landscape of pre-service teacher

education to one with an increasing emphasis on school-led training where learning ‘at the chalk face’ in apprenticeship-style models of training prioritises time spent in school rather than within the Higher Education Institution (HEI) (Beauchamp, Clarke, Hulme, & Murray, 2015; Furlong, 2013 b; Mutton, Burn, & Menter 2017). This change has resulted in a shift in emphasis from university-based routes to school-led routes with a consequent reduction of the influence of universities on pre-service teacher education policy (McIntyre, et al., 2019).

Routes into teaching in England have also diversified with a proliferation of possible courses available to prospective teachers, and some - for example, the assessment only route - do not require any academic study in a HEI. Other routes, such as Postgraduate Teaching Apprenticeships, Teach First or School Direct programmes involve ‘training on the job’ with little or no element of academic study (Beauchamp et al., 2015; Furlong & Lawn, 2011). Even those programmes that are based in HEIs at undergraduate (e.g. Bachelor of Education, B.Ed.) or postgraduate level (e.g. Postgraduate Certificate in Education, PGCE) have proportionally more time in school than in the HE institution. Typically, the school-based element is now between 60-75% of each programme’s duration (Beauchamp et al., 2015). Whatever route into teaching someone follows all pre-service teachers must achieve the Standards for Qualified Teacher Status that emphasise the development of core teaching skills and the techniques of teaching (DfE, 2010).

This current approach to teacher education, with its emphasis on the techniques and craft of teaching leaves little space or time to engage with moral and ethical issues in education. This implies a shortfall in pre-service teachers’ professional development, their understanding of the profession, and what means to be a ‘good teacher’ (Beauchamp et al., 2015; McIntyre et al., 2019).

A critique of standards-based teacher education

A more explicit and formal political connection now exists worldwide between education and economic growth with a consequent focus on learners' ability to acquire the skills and competencies necessary to be able to enter the global job market (Hillen & Aprea, 2015). This has resulted in the commodification of education and homogenisation of curricula worldwide with the prevailing 'standards agenda' of the Global Educational Reform Movement particularly in countries such as the USA, UK and Australia (Sahlberg, 2011).

Schooling and education, like oil or coffee, have become tradeable commodities rather than a moral endeavour or a human right (Biesta, 2006). The impact on schools and teachers is one of increased managerialism and high accountability for their performance in a competitive, consumer-led system governed by standards that leaves little room for teacher autonomy or the development of a community of learners (Aasebø, 2015; Biesta, 2006; Darling-Hammond, 2012). Education, at all levels, in England has not escaped this tyranny of marketization and commodification but this has been most keenly felt in HEIs including those that have teacher education courses (Furlong, 2013a; McIntyre et al., 2019; Mutton et al., 2017; Whitty, 2014) . In addition, complacency and compliance within HEIs has meant that teacher educators have failed to make their case to the critics. The lack of opposition to the commodification of teacher education programmes has left these programmes and individual teachers vulnerable to right wing policies and criticisms from *The Black Papers* in the 1970's onwards (Beauchamp et al., 2015; Furlong, 2013a, McIntyre et al., 2019 , Whitty, 2014). During his period in office as the Education Minister , Michael Gove was determined to fight the 'progressive' grip that the educational establishment had over teacher education, indicating that university teacher educators were the 'modern

enemies of promise' and led to increased government interference in how teachers are trained (McIntyre, et al., 2019, p. 154). A multiplicity of routes into teaching resulted, creating a market place in which courses have become a commodity to be traded, and where the salient factors are 'value for money' and qualifying to teach in the shortest possible time (Mutton, et al., 2017). Funding has been altered to bolster school-led training and increase the numbers of pre-service teachers following these routes and these economic pressures have undermined University-led courses. Some HEI's no longer offer teacher education courses giving rise to fears that this may augur the demise of teacher education in HEIs (Furlong, 2013a; McIntyre et al., 2019; Whitty 2014). A change in direction reclaiming the idealistic high ground and re-conceiving teacher education is timely and will support teacher education courses imbuing an understanding of the moral purpose of education and professional values as well as helping to rebalance universities' influence on society (Furlong, 2013 b ; Whitty 2014).

Since the teachers' standards were first introduced and throughout their various iterations there has been a growing emphasis on high quality of teaching as a transaction in which knowledge and skills are transferred from teacher to their pupils (Mutton et al., 2017; Whitty, 2000). The current standards (DfE, 2013, p. 10) note that teachers, 'are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct'. This statement encompasses specific standards on high quality teaching, and personal and professional conduct that teachers must demonstrate they have achieved prior to gaining qualified teacher status (QTS) and adhere to thereafter once qualified. However priority is given to the development of core teaching skills and strong subject knowledge with the aim of improving the academic performance of their pupils with less focus on the broader aspects of a teacher's role in supporting the moral development and wellbeing of their students. Schools and teachers are likely to prioritise these functionalist standards within pre-service teacher education as demands from successive governments for greater accountability, and improved test results

have increased. That is not to say the technical or epistemic aspects of teacher education should be sacrificed or jettisoned in a move to prepare teachers solely with a set of values and moral purpose (Ball, 2003). However, the almost exclusive focus on performativity has resulted in teacher education programmes that are likely to impede the development of professional values, practitioner autonomy and an ethical self-concept (Ball, 2003; Turner-Bisset, 2001).

The reduction of time available to HEIs, relative to the time spent in school, is also challenging for pre-service teacher programmes, with less time available opportunities for debate and discussion to consider the moral purpose of education is likely to be restricted. How one should develop as a teacher and have time to consider one's values and moral stance with peers and tutors in the relative calm of the HEI environment are therefore limited whilst the hurly burly of the school day leaves little room for such contemplations (Mead, 2013). These predominantly school-based programmes, therefore, tend to focus on the technical craft knowledge of teaching and 'tips for teachers' that employ a technical/functionalist approach to provide evidence of meeting particular competencies (e.g. Evetts, 2009; Pollard 2005; Whitty, 2000). In doing so other professional attributes and values, including pre-service teachers' attitudes and beliefs about responsibility for student wellbeing and the nature of the pupil-teacher relationship, may be relegated to the side lines of teacher education in favour of the mentors' 'quick fix' (Mead, 2013, p. 14).

Pre-service teachers, may also feel the need adhere to a school's values, in order to meet the standards for QTS (Byrne et al., 2018). This acquiescence can cause anxiety if pre-service teachers' personal and professional values and identity come into conflict with the expected norms of performativity of many schools (Ball, 2003, Menter, 2009). As teachers comply with government demands their professional identity is shaped according the normative standards for teacher education with its priorities that emphasise product over the process of learning (Day & Gu, 2010). The crucial link

between the moral formation of pre-service teachers and pupil-teacher relationships may therefore be eroded. In such circumstances teachers may become little more than skilled practitioners or ‘compliant operatives’ enacting the policies and practice dictated through a managerialist discourse (Hall & McGinty, 2015.p. 12).

Organisational professionalism in which managers exercise control over teachers has become the prevailing norm in education (and elsewhere) leaving little room for teachers’ agency and may prevent the ethic of personalised care for pupils that is an important component of teacher professionalism (Evetts, 2009). Against this backdrop of de-professionalisation, and ontological uncertainty about their teacher identity, morals and professional values, it is an irony that teachers are now, more than ever, expected to deal with a myriad of social issues alongside maintaining high educational standards. As the current government grapples with the increasing pressure of social issues they have again turned to teachers to address them. For example, they have indicated that by 2020, relationships and sex education (RSE) and mental health education will change from their previous non-statutory status to become mandatory parts of the curriculum (DfE 2017a, 2017b). In addition, pre-service teachers, in England, are to be trained to detect the early signs of mental ill-health in their students (Ward, 2019).

The question is can how pre-service teacher programmes accommodate these values-based moral elements of the curriculum within the existing positivist and competency-based frameworks that appear to create a binary division of technical standards versus teachers’ personal moral decision making and their professional values? The concept of *Bildung* is germane to this issue and an overview of *Bildung* is provided before exploring it as a possible way forward for pre-service teacher education to

facilitate pre-service teachers' sense of moral purpose, autonomy and ability to make ethical judgements in their classrooms.

Bildung

Bildung does not occur through a didactical process where information is imparted by a teacher. Instead it is a conflict-ridden process, that Hegel calls 'experience', in which a spiritual being discovers her/his own identity or selfhood while striving to actualize the selfhood it is in the process of discovering (Wood, 1998). As Søren Kierkegaard noted, *Bildung* comes to its high point when 'the existence that has been, now comes into being' (Løvelie, 2002, p. 467). *Bildung* is therefore a self-educative process or experience that has a broader compass than mere education, and is characterised by transformative and holistic personal development; it cannot be imposed upon an individual because it is formulated by her/ his direct experience of the world that influences their perceptions and judgements (e.g. Husserl, 1970; Kant, 1781).

Furthermore, knowledge is not acquired exclusively through a process of self-discovery but requires guidance and support to know what to study, and at times direct teaching (Fuhr, 2017). Hegel reminds us that *Bildung* is also a social and historical process that requires guidance and engaging in meaningful discussion with others so that their assumptions and ideas [about education] are questioned (Wood, 1998). A *Bildung*-orientated approach to education requires asking difficult questions of oneself and others about their attitudes and values with regard education so that they can challenge taken for granted assumptions; it is a practice of 'coming into the world' for both teacher and pupil and is not always pleasurable, echoing Hegel's notion of *Bildung* as a conflict ridden process (Biesta, 2006, p. 9).

Here learning is considered to be much more than the acquisition and accumulation of knowledge or skills but a transformation of knowledge and increased

personal understanding that has some of the hallmarks of transformative learning theory (Gadamer, 2004; Mezirow, 1978). Both the cognitive and affective dimensions of a person's selfhood are included in the learning process that involves the transformation of the learner's personality, feelings, and relationships to others (Fuhr, 2017). As an educative process, *Bildung* alters an individual's perceptions of the value, purposes and meaning of life that extends the scope of their moral and ethical development (Carr, 1991). These developments in a person's character will help to enhance a teachers' ability to empathise with pupils' needs even when those needs may be alien to the teachers' experience.

However, the central tenets of classical *Bildung* theory have been challenged for their elitist and idealistic perceptions of individual development by ignoring the social conditions in which people exist. The norms espoused in *Bildung* have also been called into question by uncertainties resulting from post-modern ideas of reflexive (late) modernity (Bauer, 1997), liquid modernity and individualisation (Bauman, 2000). Biesta (2002) notes that rational autonomy and the development of personal identity over time as linear sequential life transitions are in fact disrupted due to constantly changing societal and individual relationships, and other contingent factors. Nevertheless the criticisms of the essentialist claims of classic *Bildung* theory do not mean that the humanist ideal of *Bildung* is redundant (Løvelie, 2002). Von Humboldt's insight about the interplay between the self and their historical, social and cultural world in developing *Bildung* is still relevant because it can provide individuals with a moral compass to guide them in times of uncertainty and help to counteract the reductive tendencies of current educational policies (Lovelie & Standish, 2002).

From this perspective Biesta (2007) suggests that we need to embrace the future and ask what kind of challenges are we facing in education today and how should we

respond appropriately to them? In the context of this article the questions might be (1) how do we develop pre-service teachers' moral, social and educational values so that they can become resilient, autonomous practitioners who can withstand the barrage of instrumental approaches?; and (2) how do we develop teachers to have greater agency and gain a strong sense of their own educational judgments to do the right thing?

Bildung can support teachers' educative ethical judgments and contribute to more holistic knowledge that includes emotions and the ability to relate to the 'other' so that teachers and their pupils learn to trust and help each other (Kristiansen, 2015). There is no metric for these outcomes, they are not subject to quantified target setting but are nevertheless invaluable for the improvement of education.

As a broad theory to guide and underpin teacher education *Bildung* may help new teachers and their educators to question the technocratic and instrumentalist approaches adopted in England (and elsewhere) and help to mitigate the current status quo. In sum, *Bildung* can be regarded as a process and product of educative transformation that consists of several overlapping key concepts, such as the development of moral understanding, self-reflection, communication, narrative and personal responsibility for education that are pertinent to teacher education today (Gadamer, 2004). In the next section I argue how *Bildung* can be applied in practice to support such transformative learning.

Applying *Bildung* to pre-service teacher education in England

A reframing of teacher education underpinned by *Bildung* does not mean that a specific recipe or standard prescription is feasible. Indeed Furlong (2013 a) suggests that a single model of teacher education may not be the most effective provision for pre-service teacher education and teacher education departments could capitalise on current neo-liberal policy to develop local and alternative educational projects

A single prescriptive model of teacher education would also controvert the essence of *Bildung* as a process of personal and educative transformation and would be unworkable because schools, teachers and pupils are individuals with unique perspectives, needs and issues meaning that each encounter, almost on a minute by minute basis, teachers have with their pupils each day will be different (Mead, 2013). Nevertheless these situated judgements about what to do in classrooms are moral and political acts that require teachers who are reflective and have the wisdom to be able to make appropriate educational judgements and act in morally thoughtful ways (Erben, 2000; Mead, 2019). I now propose some general principles of how a *Bildung* orientated teacher education programme might operate to help mitigate the problems of the prevailing instrumental standards-based programmes currently in place.

The core of *Bildung* is a process of self-educative transformation to increase personal understanding but this cannot occur in a short time period (Gadamer, 2004). A programme based on *Bildung* requires time for a prospective teacher to become a thoughtful, morally wise and reflective practitioner. A substantial period of pre-service education, alongside further ongoing professional development throughout a teacher's career, is needed so that the process of educative self-transformation can continue as a lifelong endeavour that would strengthen and deepen their personal education, as is the case in Scottish teacher education programmes (Furlong, 2013 b). A start in this direction would be to lengthen current programmes to include time for personal and professional reflection about the moral and ethical issues that occur on a daily basis in the classroom to enable pre-service teachers to learn to make informed and educationally wise decisions (Biesta, 2012). In addition, for qualified teachers, annual appraisals could include discussion of their personal development in relation to *Bildung* so that they continue to transform themselves through broadening their understanding of

classroom experiences and thereby increase their educational wisdom (Wood, 1998). Support for mentors and teachers will be necessary to achieve an understanding of *Bildung* as well as enabling them to develop their own sense of *Bildung*. This, as noted above requires time, but HEIs can be of assistance because they can offer, through pre- and in-service courses, opportunities for critical debate about education and engage in an examination of educational values that will enhance every teachers' ability to question their own assumptions about education (Furlong, 2013 a).

Committing to this is of course costly. Hopefully policy makers and government officials might reappraise their priorities for teachers by considering the education of other professionals such as doctors or lawyers who are not allowed to practice without a lengthy period of education. Yet, currently, teachers who have the responsibility of the future generation in their hands can begin to practise after a few weeks of 'training'. Time for meaningful reflection, engagement with others in dialogue and narrative would enable pre-service teachers to develop a moral understanding of their role as a teacher and evolve a values-based practice. This may be more cost effective than the current short, economically driven programmes because teachers with a sense of *Bildung* will be enabled to make ethical judgements to support their pupils' needs more effectively and this may help to reduce the risks associated with the social problems young people face that were referred to at the beginning of the paper. Current arrangements do not allow for these developments because the length of teacher education programmes in England is too short for a *Bildung* orientated approach. Perhaps lessons can be learnt from the Finland where it takes five years to qualify as a teacher with a Master's degree from a research-led university (Sahlberg, 2010).

Secondly, as part of educative self-transformation, opportunities are necessary for a teacher to become learned in order acquire a profound understanding about the

meaning of education and the purposes of teaching that have firm foundations in educational theory. My argument is that this cannot be achieved through the mainly practice-based routes of teacher training that are currently available. On the other hand university-based teacher educators have the expertise and specialist knowledge as a result of engagement with research and disciplinary theory to have acquired practical wisdom that can assist pre-service teachers understanding of their wider role (Furlong, 2013 a; McIntyre et al., 2019). Furthermore the culture of the academy expects democratic debate and critical discussions that challenge taken for granted assumptions and values that need to be part of pre-service teachers' development (Furlong, 2013 a). These are pre-requisites of a *Bildung* orientated approach to teacher education and therefore, HEIs need to be a key component of all teacher education programmes replacing the current market place where pre-service teacher education is commodified through a multiplicity of routes that offer little opportunity for theoretical deliberations.

Of course this approach may be resisted by some practitioners, as well as policy makers and politicians who have a particular ideological perspective with regard to how pre-service teachers are to be educated but *Bildung* does not preclude engagement with others' opinions. A principle of *Bildung* is to embrace dialogue and HEI's could take the lead role in offering training to other providers and work in partnership with them to develop their understanding of *Bildung* and how it can enhance the development of pre-service teachers. Campaigning for a *Bildung* based approach may then at least help to modify current pre-service teacher education programmes. This is liberating because at least understanding the principles of *Bildung* would enable pre-service teachers to become autonomous practitioners with the resilience to act more independently and have an increased the capacity to question given norms such as the hegemony of competency driven programmes. These teachers will have acquired the confidence and

educational resource to articulate the reasons why they make particular decisions in the classroom rather than merely adhering to instrumental standards or acquiescing to managerial demands thereby enhancing rather than eroding pre-service teachers' sense of occupational professionalism and professional identity (Evetts, 2009; Fuhr, 2017).

Thirdly *Bildung* includes learning about and understanding oneself within one's social, historical and cultural context (Wood, 1998). As Von Humbolt noted this is about the interplay between a person and their world (Lovelie & Standish, 2002). For teacher education this will require a thorough and meaningful integration of theory and practice supported by HEIs and school practitioners where experiential learning is shaped by a deep understanding of the purpose, context and history of teaching and education (Dewey, 1916). In this way pre-service teachers will be furnished with a holistic understanding of teaching rather than merely acquiring a technical craft (Beachamp et al. 2015; Furlong, 2013 b). In a *Bildung* orientated process, I propose that a range of mentors and others in the school community alongside HEI colleagues help to develop broader knowledge and understanding about the process of teaching. This will require those involved to develop their own understanding of *Bildung* and that can be achieved through engagement with HEI's as noted above. Such gains from multiple sources will remove pre-service teachers' reliance on the idiosyncrasies of an individual school or teacher as their main source of knowledge. Mentors and others also need to challenge pre-service teachers' assumptions so that they avoid 'quick fixes' to demonstrate superficial proficiency in a particular standard. Opportunities for dialogue and narrative communication afforded in a *Bildung* approach will also help pre-service teachers to better understand themselves and develop their character whilst at the same time gaining an understanding of the needs and perspectives of their pupils and develop their capacity to act with virtue towards them (Fuhr, 2017).

Whilst these proposals are somewhat idealistic and in the short term they are unlikely to be adopted wholesale nevertheless it is important to find ways of challenging how teachers are trained and open up the dialogue with all stakeholders to encourage changes that will benefit pre-service teachers' future practice as well as the generations of pupils they will teach. The benefits of *Bildung* on teachers' development are now discussed further through four interrelated dimensions that could be employed by teacher educators as the principles for a practical framework to support a *Bildung* orientated approach to teacher education. They are:

- Values-based teacher education and moral and ethical development
- Experiential and transformational learning
- Reflective practice including critical engagement with others and wrestling with conflict
- Dialogic learning and narrative

Values-based teacher education

Some teacher education programmes in England have, in part, aimed to address the moral dimensions of pre-service teacher education, and with some success, but they have tended to focus on those aspects of the curriculum that have a natural affinity with values education such as health education and Personal Social and Health Education, Citizenship or Religious Education (Byrne et al, 2018; Jerome, 2012; Mead, 2013). In order to focus on the broader moral role of education for all pre-service teachers what is needed are programmes that recognise the significance of practical wisdom or phronesis¹ in the development of professional knowledge and values (Carr, 2007). This values-based rather than a more technicist approach to teacher education requires pre-service teachers to examine their personal and professional values and attitudes to enable them to become autonomous and reflective practitioners who better understand

the needs of their pupils and manage them in appropriate, thoughtful and non-judgmental ways (Biesta, 2006; Mead, 2019). This requires a special interaction between pupil and teacher in which moral judgements are made where practical wisdom or phronesis is required rather than solely relying on practical teaching skills or *techne*² (Carr, 2007).

However this is not a natural or spontaneous development, and a critical pedagogy is required that involves reflective practice and active meaningful engagement with others (Kristiansen, 2015). Pre-service teachers need to have opportunities to understand how to examine their values and to be able to articulate their ideas about the value and purposes of education. This includes the importance of their relationships to others, and exploring feelings of justice, integrity and creativity within their professional work (Carr, 1991; Fuhr, 2017). Through questioning themselves and in dialogue with others as part of their learning they become aware of the moral and formative nature of educational experiences for themselves and their pupils.

Experiencing such opportunities in the HEI and schools may transform pre-service teachers' ontologies, values and ideals about education and help to foster their critical and moral reasoning (Gadamer, 2004). Working with others is a crucial aspect of this critical pedagogy involving opportunities to practise as well as reflect on one's thoughts and actions in order to achieve the increased personal and professional understanding that is part of the self-transformation of *Bildung* and a fundamental part of a pre-service teacher's experiential learning.

Experiential and transformative learning

Pre-service teachers need to have the experience of practising to teach as opposed to gaining only theoretical and curriculum based knowledge (*episteme*) to develop their teaching skills (*techne*) in order to accumulate experiences to enrich their professional

wisdom (phronesis) (Ulvik & Smith , 2011). Thus practice is a valuable part of becoming a teacher and provides opportunities for novice teachers to learn how to make sound educational decisions and become educationally wise (Biesta, 2007). In recognising the importance of practice in pre-service teacher education these authors are advocating the transformational processes associated with *Bildung* where ‘learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience’ (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). Pre-service teacher education has always recognised the value of practice in schools and so suggesting student teachers need school-based practice may seem rather banal. In the context of a *Bildung*-orientated model of teacher education practice does not mean the apprentice style model of training critiqued earlier but, rather, having opportunities to acquire the professional values and qualities that enable pre-service teachers to consider the ethical implications of their actions, and learn how to do the right thing (Mead, 2013). As Biesta notes pre-service teachers therefore require experiences that are:

not just about any kind of experiential or practical learning, but one that constantly takes the ability for making wise educational judgements as its reference point and centre. (2012, p. 19)

Teachers have to make decisions in classrooms that are uniquely situated and specific to a current situation and moment in time and this requires thinking on one’s feet or as Ulvik and Smith (2011, p. 519) put it ‘the artistry of the moment’ that is phronesis. A focus on *Bildung* may facilitate the development of this educational wisdom.

Although *Bildung* is a self-educative process this cannot be done in isolation from others or their social and cultural context (Fuhr, 2017; Wood, 1998). Furthermore, some consider that there are limits to how useful a pre-service teacher’s internal solitary reflection is in understanding personal reasoning (Penglington, 2008). Learning by

example from the expertise of a more knowledgeable other, such as a mentor, is vital in the process of becoming a teacher. Many (e.g. Izadinia, 2016; McIntyre & Hobson, 2016; Mead, 2019) note the importance of mentors going beyond the outcomes-driven models of school-based training to take a more holistic view of teaching and learning so that pre-service teachers can gain a more complex understanding of the process of teaching including the moral and political acts teachers initiate each day. Observing experts in the classroom to broaden their perspective means that pre-service teachers can learn from studying others. By reflecting on their own and others' practice they may begin to develop their own practice. The activities outlined above are already considered to be good practice in pre-service teacher education but an emphasis on *Bildung* would help to promote greater reflection and dialogue about the decisions pre-service teachers make to further support a more meaningful understanding of their practice.

Reflective practice

The rhetoric in pre-service teacher education with respect to developing pre-service teachers' expertise including their professional values has been dominated by the notion of reflective practice (Schön, 1983). This is often reduced to a descriptive rather than critical approach to reflection where such an approach becomes a tick box exercise in which the pre-service teacher is expected to meet a set of SMART targets based on a brief discussion of their performance in the classroom (Mead, 2013).

In contrast what is meant by reflection within *Bildung* is an aspiration towards Socrates' call to 'know thyself'. Rather than accumulating knowledge or demonstrating the accomplishment of a set of competences, learning as a result of reflection should be understood as the development and consolidation of embodied ways of knowing or, in other words, ways-of-being or becoming (Biesta, 2012).

From this perspective reflective practice includes the experience of critical self-reflection, in which pre-service teachers can examine, revise or extend their personal and professional values and consider how they might change and develop their classroom practice (Dewey, 1916; Schön, 1983). Here the practice of reflection is a process of engaging with experience to re-evaluate and learn from it so that creative solutions to problems are possible (Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983). These learning approaches resonate with the *Bildung* as a self-educative process of self-discovery and personal endeavour in which the individual is responsible for their learning, cultivation of the self and character formation (Fuhr, 2017; Prange, 2004). This process is emancipating and empowering for pre-service teachers and can lead to pre-service teachers' self-mastery and autonomy (Løvlie & Standish, 2002; Mortensen, 2002). Additionally by extending this critical reflective practice beyond pre-service training programmes and as part of ongoing teacher development, teachers will have the opportunity to gain the moral authority to take active control and responsibility for their actions so that they can invest in what is best for their pupils' learning, development and wellbeing.

Learning as a consequence of reflection is not straightforward and demands the willingness to resolve cognitive and emotional conflict, an inherent process of *Bildung*, in order to gain the insight required for self-discovery (Wood, 1998). But these insights are often elusive and gaining them requires the implicit to be made explicit through opportunities to articulate thoughts, ideas and feelings. Here the role of others including mentors, peers and tutors is an essential part of the transformational learning process for pre-service teachers. Dall'Alba and Barnacle (2007, p. 12) note that Heidegger's description of *Bildung* suggests that such transformations can be achieved by 'removing human beings from the region where they first encounter things' and make the familiar

unfamiliar so that it may be possible to see ‘the taken-for-granted from other perspectives and develop new ways of dealing with our world’. Creating these uncomfortable moments through dialogue can facilitate independent learning and critical thinking in order to enable pre-service teachers to deal with some of the new and unfamiliar events that they inevitably encounter when learning to teach.

That is not to say pre-service teachers need to make these new and sometimes strange experiences familiar or comfortable to them. On the contrary, Biesta (2006) calls upon Hannah Arendt’s notion of ‘visiting’ as an approach to *Bildung* that enables someone to regard a strange situation with their own eyes, rather than empathetically, thereby realising the difficulty of the unfamiliar and feeling disoriented consequently opening up the possibility of understanding the world from someone else’s perspective. The uncertainty these processes create is often a precursor to, or highlighted by a significant event that can lead to enlightenment. Such events or epiphanies act as catalysts for the pre-service teacher to exegetically analyse the situation and her/his response to it. In the plurality of modern classrooms teachers constantly experience difference. *Bildung* should make it possible for them to meaningfully engage with this strangeness in order to challenge their axiomatic certainties and through reflection reconsider their own positions. As an ongoing lifelong educative process *Bildung* is comprised of these disorientating encounters. Opportunities for pre-service teachers to discuss, question and reflect upon these experiences with mentors, tutors and peers using dialogue and narrative will perform a crucial role in the cultivation and establishment of their moral values (Cleary & Hogan, 2001).

Dialogue and narrative

Dialogue and narrative can help to concretise memories of positive or difficult previous experiences or epiphanic moments so they are made intelligible and this may

help to illuminate why a particular decision in the classroom was made (Erben, 2000). Re-remembering through dialogue and narrative can allow a revised view of the situation to be articulated and may provide insights for pre-service teachers about how they are becoming a teacher (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Engaging in dialogue enables teachers to reflect upon moral questions about the ethics and values of their practice; thus they will be able to develop a greater critical self-awareness for their actions in the classroom (Schön, 1983).

Narrating their experiences and hearing the narratives of others can facilitate pre-service teachers making sense of their professional lives (Beattie, 2000; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Goodson, 2003; Sikes & Everington, 2001). Through conversations with mentors, tutors or peers, pre-service teachers can help to clarify their ideas, begin to take responsibility for their actions and develop a sense of (moral) purpose. In these encounters with experienced mentors and tutors, that can sometimes be difficult, the pre-service teachers will have their beliefs and values challenged and begin to question their professional values, and the moral and political act of teaching as well as the decisions they have made. This is the essence of the critical pedagogy that brings about the ability to make phronetic judgements advocated by Mead (2013; 2019).

Life stories are contextually situated and pre-service teachers' understanding of themselves, and their identity, as a beginning teacher will be enhanced as a result of engaging in the telling of the stories of their experiences in school. Although each pre-service teacher's narrative will be unique it will also have a universality that allows for shared interpersonal understanding and provides a mechanism for the interpretation of other's lives. Therefore, narrative as a practice within pre-service teacher education also has a wider moral purpose, and has the ability to communicate and develop moral understanding. It is through the stories we tell that we get to know and start to

understand 'the other', and not to fear what is alien but comprehend the actions of others, such as the pupils, pre-service teachers encounter in school. The interpretation of their pupils' stories, can provide insights that alter pre-service teachers' perceptions and judgments (Erben, 2000; MacIntyre, 2007).

As McAdam's adroitly expresses:

If you want to know me, then you must know my story, for my story defines who I am. And if I want to know me, to gain insight into the meaning of my own life then me, too, must come to know my own story. (McAdams, 1993, p. 11).

Thus encouraging narrative and dialogue creates a classroom community in which the crucial link between pre-service teachers' moral formation and pupil teacher relationships is enhanced (Pring, 1994). Pre-service teachers and their pupils will be better able to recognise and understand each other's difference, relate to each other with moral civility and so develop their humanity (Biesta, 2012; Erben, 2000; Kristiansen, 2015).

Becoming morally aware and educatively wise therefore requires pre-service teachers to engage with the contexts of their own and others' lives. Encountering these social, historical and cultural contexts cultivates their holistic development. Hegel considers this as the development of mind (*Geist*) that is a social and historical process occurring throughout life rather than in a time-defined period of study (Wood, 1998). The prevalence of the hegemonic standards-based training prevalent in England (and elsewhere) that pre-service teachers currently receive militates against them becoming thoughtful, reflective, and wise practitioners within the limited time of current teacher education programmes. However, longer programmes based on *Bildung* and the inclusion of experiential elements of their education within the social and historical

perspectives of schools and schooling will help to support a lifelong commitment to self-transformation.

Thus a *Bildung*-orientated model of school experience is one where pre-service teachers are even more clearly guided by more experienced and knowledgeable others, who have achieved virtuosity, and that aims at fostering their growth and the capacity to develop their professional identity and gain professional wisdom that is both transformational and beneficial for them throughout their careers (Ulvik & Smith, 2011).

Conclusion

I have argued that *Bildung* is at odds with a functionalist perception of teacher education where meeting the standards for QTS is the key goal. This standards-based approach undermines the potential of education as an instrument for the liberation, self-formation and development of a teacher's humanity. Whilst working within a competency-based programme that has an emphasis on learning the trade of teaching, some teacher education programmes have found ways to wriggle between and negotiate the interstices of the standards so that they enable pre-service teachers to become educationally wise (Mead, 2013). Rather than try to find nooks and crannies in programmes in which to address professional values this paper has offered a radical perspective for pre-service teacher education by applying *Bildung* as an underpinning philosophy of teacher education with which to reframe teacher education so that the important issues with regard to educating future teachers to be educatively wise are predominant rather than in the shadows. Humboldt saw *Bildung* as a way to develop individuals' capacities to the highest possible level in the face of the utilitarian education in which in the last decades the concepts of qualification, competence, and learning have come to predominate in pre-service teacher education (Fuhr, 2017). Just

as it did for Humboldt, *Bildung* has relevance and currency in pre-service teacher education today. Pre-service teacher education programmes that are reframed in terms of *Bildung* will be more meaningful in the long term, in developing teachers with a sense of moral purpose, educational wisdom, professional identity, and autonomy that will benefit themselves and their pupils.

Returning to the opening premise of this article, education alone cannot achieve what is required to meet the entire needs for the wellbeing of young people and their families. It must be done in concert with other services, such as health and social care. However, considering how we might educate our teachers to build educational relationships that are based on communion with each other rather than instrumentality they will be better equipped to manage the issues they face in developing themselves and their pupils. Embracing *Bildung* will be a start. This will help to transform and enable new teachers to *become* those teachers who have the capacity to support themselves and the pupils they teach to flourish so that they can laugh and cry at the right things (Aristotle, 1962).

1. Phronesis is wisdom or intelligence applied to practical things, it is the ability to make wise decisions or how to act virtuously in a practical situation such as teaching
2. Techne is knowing how to do something and is associated with skill or craft knowledge, it is the ability to apply the principles or methods of teaching.

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