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Teaching standards and inclusion: beyond educating the same way

Abstract:
In the context of international systemic reforms that have ushered in both professional standards for teachers and inclusivity of diverse students in schools, this paper presents and demonstrates conceptual means by which teachers can critically respond to the uncomfortable couplet of standardisation and difference. This is primarily achieved by theorising alternative ways of making sense of difference. Core to the argument is that standards can become more than prescriptions for educating the same way when teachers recognise their positionality, examine the socio-cultural context of their work, and take action to ensure equality or equity of opportunity within the classroom. The paper is presented in three sections. The first section addresses the use of teaching standards in the United States and Australia, examining various ways inclusive education is articulated as a standard for practice. The second section engages theory from critical disability studies as a fillip to thinking differently about disability. The final section creates conceptual space, making it possible for educators to move effectively between different intentions - their own as practitioners, the profession's standards and socio-material conditions involving ethics and accountability. On the whole, conveyed throughout the paper is the necessity for teachers to orientate towards contextual sense making of professional standards to support inclusive practice.

Keywords:
Professional standards for teachers; inclusive education; accountability; sense making; difference.

Introduction

Education and public accountability have become interdependent yet often evolving components of social policy. In many countries around the world, standards of practice for teachers emerged post-World War I as a way to define the profession, set expectations and create measures for performance assessment (Power 1997). In this sense, standards were introduced as a top-down approach to accountability, giving credence to the profession, as education policy sought specialisation within the classroom (Lingard, Sellar and Lewis 2017). Yet, despite the contention that standards formalise and ensure specialised teaching practices, and in spite of the numerous critiques of professional teacher standards (Gannon 2012, Gorur 2013, Lingard et al. 2017, Zembylas 2018), how standardisation agendas interrelate with and support inclusive education remains largely ignored. Attempts have been made, for example in the United States, to standardise special educational approaches responding to the needs of students with disabilities (Ashton 2011). However, in our view, these efforts fail to support the inclusion in

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education of children and young people with disabilities, underwritten in human-rights frameworks for over 30 years. This subsequently maintains the authority of rehabilitative ableism, framing students with disabilities as dependent, not self-sufficient and impuissant, necessitating remediation (Corcoran et al. 2019). We draw from critical disability studies (CDS) for its theoretical and political determination to "challenge not only existing doxa about the nature of disability, but questions of embodiment, identity and agency as they affect all living [and non-living] beings" (Shildrick, 2019, p. 31). Deference in education traditionally is given to the recognition of and potential recovery from abnormality which, like a double-edged sword, carve out ways of knowing and engaging with disability.

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That being said, teaching standards can also be considered aspirational, to be used as signposts that mark development pathways for professional educators. In this sense, standards may be understood to be purposeful invitations to a range of education-related enactments. In this paper we examine the way two countries approach the use of teaching standards using examples from the United States and Australia. Both share operational similarities in that under federal government systems, responsibility for running schools and teacher registration devolves to their States and Territories. Such circumstance could pose considerable challenges for standardisation efforts. Our aim is to set out a case for difference, and by this we mean a theorisation of other ways of making sense of teaching standards, using inclusive education as a touchstone, and CDS as our orientation to analysis. The first section of the paper addresses the use of teaching standards in both countries, examining the presence of inclusive education as a standard for practice. The following section then engages theory from CDS as a fillip to thinking differently about disability. In the final section we create conceptual space making it possible for educators to move effectively between different intentions - their own as practitioners, the profession's standards and socio-material conditions involving ethics and accountability. It is by being able to include, apply and move across multiple purposes that teaching standards become more than prescriptions for educating the same way.

Professional standards for teachers – What are they good for?

Regarding professional responsibility and action, Lingard, Sellar and Lewis (2017) suggest teaching standards primarily work in two ways: to hold to account as well as giving an account. Through giving their account, teachers provide evidence of practice via reflective and reflexive processes. Such accounting is often activated by the teacher as part of continuous improvement. In addition to this, the audit approach to standards bureaucratically holds teachers to account, seeking compliance through standardised testing and other measures. Political and social shifts, such as the *No Child Left Behind* legislation in the United States and the National Assessment Program – Literacy and

Numeracy (NAPLAN) in Australia, continue to place emphasis on educational accountability through testing. As the socio-political value of standardised testing grows globally, the level of accountability on teachers to ensure that students score well on these tests follows suit. In these arrangements "…teachers are reduced to the measurable impacts of their classroom practice" (Done and Murphy 2016, 3).

Significant tension is created within the system of professional standards when holding to account and giving an account are forced into co-existence. Further, this tension extends concern that standardising these processes leads to a devaluation of the professional knowledge and motivation of teachers (Zembylas 2018). Done and Murphy (2016) observed the difficulty teachers face in implementing inclusive education, where all students feel valued and challenged, while simultaneously upholding standardised test scores and other political mandates. In sum, teachers feel pressured and respond primarily through "teaching to the test" (Popham 2001, 16). Class time has become an opportunity to review test material and test taking strategies to ensure students meet benchmarks set by various legislation, therefore proving teacher effectiveness. Lingard, Sellar and Lewis (2017) refer to this as "new public management" as teachers are left to right the balance between demands concerning public accountability and overarching professional ethical responsibilities.

Without professional standards of practice, we risk greater inequality within education, particularly for non-white, economically disadvantaged students, English language learners and those identified with disabilities, as these students are often the first to be excluded from mainstream classrooms. An argument could be made that evidence of this lies in the variation of professional standards across the United States and the levels of high school graduation, as an indicator of achievement in each state (Rice 2020). Yet, the same standards that work to ensure a semblance of consistency in practice can create distrust, low levels of engagement and neglect of duty as resistance. Zembylas (2018) poignantly outlines a socio-political responsibility to critique standards, particularly their functionality and relevance, as a just and ethical obligation. As we describe in further detail below, this necessarily places the onus and responsibility on teachers to recognise their positionality, examine the socio-cultural context of their work and take action to ensure equality or equity of opportunity within the classroom.

Within the United States, despite federal legislation such as *Race to the Top* and the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, each state governs its own policies, leading to tremendous variation in the presence, content and implementation of standards (Hornbeck 2017). Federal policies attempt to standardise achievement and establish benchmarks to ensure student success, yet systems of measurement are state imposed, and they vary greatly in rigor, scope and implementation (U.S. Department of Education Every Student Succeeds

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Act 2015). Even greater variance exists when examining the content of academic and professional standards particular to inclusive education (Rice 2020). The notion of inclusive education implies that all students have opportunities to learn alongside their peers, without discrimination of ability and with the necessary educational supports. Inclusive education is "rooted in a democratic orientation to schooling that acknowledges diversity of student profiles as the norm and requires spaces to be designed to reflect this" (Naraian 2021, 3). Conversely, when describing special education, Naraian (2021, 2) identifies the practice as distinguishing between levels of ability among students; levels that are fixed and which do not account for differences and propensities for learning, thereby perpetuating ableist norms. While all states have embraced the notion of special education as regulated by legislation, this can isolate and remove students from the classroom, excluding rather than including them. In terms of inclusive education, many schools still view this as part of special education, identifying it as a level of extra service necessitated by students with disabilities, rather than seeing it as a way forward to include all students and as a responsibility of all teachers.

An analysis of policy documents from the fifty United States revealed that six do not have professional standards for teachers, while the remaining forty-four maintain professional standards for teaching in some form (Rice 2020). In examination of the professional standards for evidence of inclusive practices, thirty of the states' standards contained language about inclusive education. From these states, twelve have adopted standards based on the recommendations of the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Continuum (InTASC). The InTASC organisation produced professional standards for teachers in 2013, which included language specific to ensuring an inclusive education. For example, Standard 2: Learning Differences recognises diverse cultures and communities and the individual learning needs of students (InTASC 2013). Nonetheless, states are not obliged to have membership in InTASC. There is, moreover, inconsistent participation due to divergent political pressures and agendas, dictated by each state governor and commissioner of education. Even when a state implements policy, such as the professional standards, how a state measures teacher performance is unique. For instance, in New Hampshire, there is localised control of teacher standards and assessment, which gives way to vast inconsistencies across the State, as each town or district determines these components (Rice 2020). Whereas in neighboring Massachusetts, there are clearly delineated, State-mandated professional standards for teaching, which are regulated also by State systems (DESE 2021). Such inconsistencies pose a challenge to the mobility of teachers, their ability to meet the varying demands of the job and make sense from the triangulation of standards-disability-inclusion.

In contrast to the United States, while there is a degree of variation across the eight States and Territories of Australia in the implementation of education, the Australian

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Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) are consistent for educators nationwide. It can be argued that many of the seven listed standards within the APST implicitly pertain to inclusion in education. For example, Standard 1.2 states: “Know students and how they learn” (AITSL 2011). These are mobilised in support of the rights-based and anti-discrimination legislation in place in Australia aimed at directing education providers to practice inclusively through specific identification of difference, including the *Disability Discrimination Act* 1992, and the *Disability Standards for Education* 2005. In order to gain registration as educators, teachers must document their use and mastery of the standards through a comprehensive portfolio of evidence, reviewed by designated peers. The APST allows both novice and veteran teachers to progress through their career along a designated trajectory from graduate to lead teacher. This allows for greater teacher mobility, opportunity and provides consistent expectations across states and territories.

In spite of their capacity for national standardisation, it is important to examine whether the APST promotes accountability to difference, representing genuine goals for inclusive practice. Adoniou and Gallagher (2017) highlight several promises involving the APST. Their qualitative study included 36 Australian educators and took place over a 12 month period. While limited in scope, the study results revealed overwhelmingly positive attitudes and beliefs about the standards, both from teachers and administrators. Teachers saw the standards as facilitating their professional growth and reflective practices. Teachers and their assigned mentors identified the standards as a tool that led to opportunities for formative, immediate feedback. One mentor reported: “…[teachers] can see what areas they’re strong in and what areas they may be weak in and just rather than fluffing along, it gives you something to aim for” (117). Principals and administrators voiced support for the opportunities for professional growth, but also for increased collaboration between novice and veteran teachers. The process for documenting growth allowed teachers to create a personal story where giving an account was given prominence over being held to account. The majority of study participants heralded the role the standards play in raising the professional profile of education in the community. Some teachers also described how they use the standards to explain their jobs, responsibilities and stature. In these ways, the standards were seen as positive and empowering to teachers and administrators alike.

While positive themes emerged from the study, Adoniou and Gallagher (2017) also noted some caution and discomfort expressed by teachers when asked about using the standards for regulatory purposes. Teachers did not want to be assessed solely on the standards or have the standards serve as “gatekeepers” to remove teachers from the profession (121). They also critiqued the developmental process of standards, observing these often neglected teacher perspectives and input. Principals and administrators nevertheless identified the standards as a vehicle for coaching teachers who were not performing at a

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benchmark for experience-level competencies. For example, one principal in the study described the benefit of having a document to reference when framing expectations. The school leader noted, "We have an issue with a staff member where there's been complaints and the standards are being used like a benchmark of what should be happening" (118). Overall, the study demonstrated a positive response from teachers and administrators regarding the application of professional standards.

The argument being addressed here is not dichotomous, i.e., questioning the existence of standards versus no standards, but rather we call for an ongoing examination of performance and context with an orientation toward equitable and just treatment of all students. Education policy evolves consistently with conceptual development of inclusive practice, and as such professional standards need to shift as and when necessary ensuring quality teaching practice remains paramount. Inclusive educators, advocates and researchers must be active in monitoring these shifts and seeking to participate in the evolving conversation on professional standards. Despite differences in commitment to inclusive education and professional standards internationally, a greater underlying issue emerges. As Zembylas (2018) suggests, standards are regulative technologies, and their efficacy is reliant on teachers' abilities to engage in affective sense-making. And so, we question how standards should be enacted, and if and when teachers feel distrust and low levels of engagement towards their presence? Also, what do inclusive classrooms look like in locations with no guidance in comparison with those with varying degrees of guidance, including special education provision? It is likely that understanding and working with difference pertains as much to knowing students as it can to teaching practices. The following sections examine these considerations further.

Standardising difference

We now move to provide an analysis of the ways that professional teaching standards account for ability and disability in attempts to institute inclusive educational practices. Resourced conceptually with critical disability studies (CDS), in this section we make suggestions to counter the continued dominance of special educational approaches by figuring legal standards that affectively relate to difference, differently (Barad 2014). In so doing, the discussion locates standards and difference as an uncomfortable couplet for teachers to contend with as they attempt to service education systems still firmly held within the pervasive shadow of special educational traditions. Disability, it should be noted, clambers onto the world stage as the largest minority population: there are estimated more than one billion people living with impairments internationally (WHO and The World Bank 2011), implying a challenge to education systems in diverse contexts.

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Emerging from the voiced accounts of people with disabilities and seeking to expand critique to encompass both material and discursive conditions of marginalisation, CDS takes as its starting point the affirmative potential of disability as an interconnected category of human variance (Feely 2016, Goodley 2013, Naraian 2021, Shildrick 2019). Readers may be familiar with the social model of disability, which emerged from the UK in the 20th century to counter the everyday socio-economic exclusion of disabled people from equal participation in services. Recognising the material environment as the primary cause of disablement, rather than biological impairments people may live with and/or acquire through their lives, the social model has provided significant tools by which to examine the causes of marginalisation (Goodley 2013). CDS builds on this position, drawing from a hybridity of innovative conceptual tools to challenge lingering deficit associations with disability, and questioning why and how the ideology of ability is mobilised in spheres of everyday life. Here we deploy CDS to consider categories of ability and disability, and, importantly, how standards configure ways of knowing and relating to these. This approach contributes to the discussion in the third section of how sense making of professional teaching standards might be oriented toward more relational endeavors.

What interests us here is how inclusive education is framed in conjunction with the concept of disability. Many countries have enacted legislative frameworks that refer to their notional obligations to UN principles of human rights by mandating antidiscrimination laws, and in so doing, to reconceive of their education services to be more inclusive of diverse learners. Legislation in the United States stops well short of human rights, concentrating on juridical participation over genuine inclusion (Kanter 2019) and continuing to promote separate standards for special education (Ashton 2011). Similarly in Australia, the *Disability Standards for Education* (2005) mandate all education providers respond to the inclusive education agenda in service of equality, in the name of upholding equal and universal human rights. More specifically, through these standards, having access to and participating in education is necessarily made equal on the same basis of those with disabilities as those without. Framed in this way, legislation in both contexts mandating inclusion in education transact in what Söder (2009) calls negative rights, wherein assurance is provided only on the basis that their denial is outlawed—not because they assume entitlement to equity.

Embedded too in Australia's professional standards for teachers (AITSL 2011), which is a "public statement of what constitutes teacher quality" (3), is the necessity for all educators to employ pedagogies that are responsive to students with disabilities among various other markers of difference such as Indigeneity and cultural diversity. Of the seven standards, the first "Know students and how they learn" (10-11) is imbued with 6 professional knowledge indicators about student diversity, three of which we cite at the

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graduate-level competencies below to underpin our discussion about the ways they construct knowing and relating to difference:

> 1.1 Physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students
>
> Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.
>
> 1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.
>
> Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.
>
> 1.6 Strategies to support full participation of students with disability
>
> Demonstrate broad knowledge and understanding of legislative requirements and teaching strategies that support participation and learning of students with disability.

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Via the APST (2011) and *Disability Standards for Education* (2005), all educators in Australia —from recently-trained graduates to school leaders—are expected to be able demonstrate application of differentiated instructional practices in response to acquired knowledge about physical, social and intellectual development. To this end, a surge of disability and inclusion-oriented policies in a single national context may, on the surface, seem progressive for the ways that knowledge about a diversity of student abilities and disabilities underpin minimum standards of quality in education. Yet, in contention here is how we come to know seemingly fixed categories of ability and disability, aligned as they are with milestones that signpost typical and normative development. As presented, the aforementioned standards constitute a bifurcation of educational provision across identity markers of difference, analogous with the inclusive and special education dichotomy.

The important, yet increasingly surpassed social model of disability (Shildrick 2019), might have facilitated the inclusion of disability as a juridical and knowable entity, and accordingly, we might express some relief that disability is accounted for in these professional standards. Yet, recent disability scholarship has adopted a critical edge to interrogate the noxious effects of categorisation (Feely 2016, Goodley 2013, Naraian 2021, Whitburn and Michalko 2019). A point of departure for work in CDS is the study of ableism—the examination of how human ability underpins pernicious social, cultural

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and political standards of normativity. For example, Feely (2016) cautions that in prevailing ways of knowing, or applications of dominant epistemology, disability or ability is considered a biological, immutable and fixed totality, which underpins damaging trajectories for people whose physical bodies or intellect fail to match accepted ideals. Essentialist thought has arguably been, and continues to be, a cause of much suffering for millions of humans with anomalous bodies or minds, functioning to exclude these people from full human status and, at times, justifying eugenic efforts to eliminate them (Feely 2016, 864).

At odds with inclusive schools are education systems that perpetuate ableism by presupposing normative developmentalism as their principle means by which to account for difference among students (Naraian, 2021). As Naraian observes, what it assumed via this approach is that pathological deficits are fixed to individuals with disabilities, rather than considering the disabling effects of curriculum and legislative structures that underpin education. In rejecting foundational principles in this way, CDS demonstrates that concepts such as biological difference are contextually (historically, geographically, politically and socially) contingent. Contingency, here, is intended in compound form, evoking what Barad calls figuring difference differently: "living between worlds, crossing (out) taxonomic differences, tunneling through boundaries (which is not a bloodless but a necessary revolutionary political action)" (2014, 175). Exemplars of such moves include the redesignation in the 1970s of conditions such as homosexuality and intellectual impairments that were once identified as psychiatric and mental deficiencies (Feely, 2016), just as Asperger's Syndrome was written out of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) as the epistemology of autism as a spectrum in 2013 (McGuire 2017). These definitional variations across time suggest that putative categories of certainty are contingent: alongside legislative developments, they change as knowledge about and with them (via activist social movements and scientific knowledge) continually develop and reproduce (Whitburn and Thomas 2021).

Contingency is also evoked in a relational sense. By resituating attention away from the abilities and/or disabilities of individuals, disability scholarship persuasively works toward an affirmative ethic, demonstrating that a network of context-specific supports from people, technologies and other resources contribute to an alternative epistemology of disability. Together, these conceptions of contingency facilitate avoidance of separate systems of thought and their reductive implications, to instead consider the constitution of disability as a variation of continually updating influences, such as those biological, material, discursive, temporal, and technological (Feely 2016).

Thinking with CDS to inform education, and moreover the enactment of professional standards for teachers, offers an alternative point of departure for demonstrating

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knowledge and understanding about students' differences. It provides fertile ground for rejecting notions of inclusion of students with disabilities in education as a normalising venture (Slee 2018) to instead start from the premise of locating difference as indeterminate. As Barad (2014, 178) intimates, "[i]ndeterminacy is not a state of being but a dynamic through which that which has been constitutively excluded re-turns". Through this framework, teachers are at once invited to think beyond student difference as levers of standardised practice, to consider the contingencies of disability, alongside their role and responsibility in making temporally specific and context-bound decisions to support their teaching of diverse students. Murphy and Done (2016, 272), for instance, offer what they call "intuitive practice" for teaching students diagnosed with Autism spectrum condition as an "art of the prevailing middle". Whereas teacher training in related practices are recurrently entrenched in medical and biological ideologies associated with applied behavioural analysis, Murphy and Done's suggestion is to reposition teachers as agents of processual experimentation. They state:

> Instead of approaching complexity as potentially unmanageable, necessitating reductive and rigidly applied behavioural training programmes, the intuitive practitioner embraces that complexity as a site from which hitherto untried pedagogic responses can be trialed, developed or rejected according to a feel for their efficacy for a particular child (275).

In this sense, rather than rely on reductive epistemologies of difference to underpin their response to standards, subsequently and falsely enacting rehabilitative ableism as inclusive practice, teachers are encouraged to embrace spontaneity to support participation in learning. What we advocate here is neither an uncritical response to the ways we generally know disability (Feely 2016), nor a reductive response to standards for teachers to work with students with disabilities (Ashton 2011). Through an example of the ways standards in Australia and the United States can be used to advocate these outcomes, we instead call for a more purposeful invitation to enacting standards which direct teacher practice. In what remains of this paper, we provide a conceptually nuanced yet practicable approach for teachers and school administrators to this end.

Affecting preferences

We have been, so far, concerned with examining various purposes underscoring invitations made to practitioners so they might address and meet local teaching standards. Predominantly, those invitations have been recognised as accountability measures issued by governance authorities (e.g., professional registration bodies) and, regarding inclusive education, ways of knowing disability regularly informed by deficit-oriented models found in special education provision. In this final section we directly question whether

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these kinds of invitations are sufficient to accord with the range of ways teachers aspire to becoming the kind of practitioner they want to be, and equivalently, how they then make sense of matters regarding contingency and relationality to enact inclusive practice. To achieve this, we need to invite different ways to theorise how, in this instance, teaching standards engaged as material conditions affecting inclusive education, might be otherwise understood. We now return to where the previous section left off with Murphy and Done's (2016) recognition of the intuitive practitioner.

Teachers are regularly called upon to make decisions. In complex circumstances requiring pedagogic responses, teachers may enact, as suggested above, one action or another 'according to a *feel* for their efficacy' (our emphasis). Contemporary psychological theories dedicated to decision making commonly employ parallel information processing systems to explain processes taking place and Epstein's (2010) cognitive-experiential self-theory is exemplary. In Epstein's model, decision making is influenced by an experiential/intuitive system "that humans share with other animals" (295), contrasted with another, more evolved rational/analytic system. The obvious formula on which this theory is premised assists a number of psychology's customary moves – to purposively distance people from history (that being the evolutionary ethos) and to hierarchise thinking over feeling or analysis above experience. This second move is largely what is presumed and preferred to take place in reflective practice (see for example Kahneman's [2011] now classic *Thinking, Fast and Slow*). It is a model educators would be familiar with as teaching standards are diligently reviewed so as to improve the effectiveness of one's reflective practice. But in what remains here we argue for an alternate way of knowing difference in teaching, one which we believe offers a more purposeful application for being and teaching inclusively.

The first issue taken with traditional treatments posits that individuals, like teachers, are often limited in their capacity to make consistently correct decisions in classrooms when relying on intuition alone (Vanlommel et al. 2017). Instead, in activity commonly referred to as evidence-based practice, teachers are directed to slow down and think through the research epistemologically proven to be reliable. Arguments for and against different forms of epistemic bias, for example, use of numeric evidence (Gorur 2018) and other forms of data speculation (Teo 2008), have been made for some time across the fields of education and psychology. Relevant to our argument are ways in which such bias converts into practice and in turn, affects interpretations of teaching standards and difference. Here, we cast our minds back to our earlier point regarding the application of standards and how these help to constitute the duality of so-called mainstream and special education. We suggest the connection of evidence-based practice to effective implementation of standards sustains more of the same kind of bias. This move degrades the role of intuition as affective sense-making by reducing to the responsibility of the

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teacher alone, complex classroom events. We are certainly not making the case for an abdication of any teacher's professional responsibility. What is being called for here is a form of relational responsibility (McNamee and Gergen 1999) capable of recognising the reductivism of prevailing epistemic biases to recount making sense of teaching standards.

We pledged in the Introduction to engage theory capable of enabling teachers to move effectively between different intentions - their own as practitioners, the profession's standards and prevailing socio-material conditions involving ethics and accountability. Principally such an account needs to be trans-, or at the least, interdisciplinary in application. Alongside CDS' attention to contingency and relationality, what we propose offers an alternative to psychological reductivism, sociological depersonalisation, and it is sensitive to the "affective atmosphere" (Buser 2014) of classrooms and communities. In such arrangement, teaching standards are recognised as actively participating in the conflux that makes learning eventful. Beyond those individuals immediately present (e.g., teacher and students) exists material (e.g., desks, rooms, technology, etc.) and non-material conditions (e.g., temporality, discourse, norms, values, etc.) affecting what takes place. Teaching standards can be identified through their regulatory and accountability functions as tools of the trade. Simultaneously there are opportunities for making different kinds of sense of their constitutive capacities.

Let us return to the notion, touched on in the first section of the discussion, that teaching standards can be understood as a certain kind of tool. The idea that language, for example, the text communicating the standards, assists us in our efforts to do or achieve relational tasks like teaching, is generally an acceptable proposition today. However, how we understand what takes place when language is engaged is a complicated matter. If we are able to move past the presumption that language correctly represents what already exists in the world then as a tool its functionality grows exponentially. Immediately, as we have done in the previous section of this paper, drawing on CDS and working with interdisciplinary resources we are enabled to sense how difference is understood and accordingly, what knowing, learning and living with disability can be. Following Ingold (2011), we contend tools do not have intrinsic attributes or, to put this another way, terms like inclusive education can afford different meanings depending on application. When considering teaching standards in this light, we purposively place these in relation to other matters affecting movements taking place in and out of classrooms (e.g., which day of the week it is or the financial support available for students with "special needs"). Subsequently, "…for an object to count as a tool it must be endowed with a story, which the practitioner should know and understand in order to recognise it as such and use it appropriately. Considered as tools, things are their stories" (56). In so far as teaching standards are concerned, whose story matters most? The intuition of the teacher in

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successive moments of engagement? Evidence-based claims to universal reliability? Or the place from which participants engage e.g., special education?

Many stories can potentially become part of the practice of teaching, and as we have highlighted, these involve differing intentions. Introna (2019, 759) elaborates:

> Sense is always and already, in some sense, made prior to individual or collective sensemaking practices, however we might understand that. Differently stated, every attempt at framing is always and already enframed [and] subjects are always and already affected, an affectedness that moves – it colours in advance what matters and how it matters (or not).

Therein we engage the third intention previously mentioned. As well as the practitioner and the tools they employ, there exist certain conditions – "an affectedness" – which influence options made available for all involved in education to make their next move. What we believe to be of paramount importance for teachers readying themselves for each and every day in the classroom is the provision of options for storying difference. This could mean following an intuition as much as it could mean enacting statistically evidenced research. It could also mean, when embracing the relationality of teaching and learning, accepting dependency as always, already reciprocal. As Goodley (2021, 73) states, "(t)o dismiss dependency is to dehumanise. To embrace dependency is to lean upon the potential of what makes us human". In any event, our stories are always and already affected by socio-material conditions, including matters of ethics and accountability. Our argument, facilitated by CDS, invites educators to locate dependency as an ongoing condition of teaching and learning, and when making sense of standards, embrace the potential of disability to better educational practice.

In the first section we asked how standards should be enacted if and when teachers experience distrust and apathy regarding their presence. What is important for such experience is that the baby does not get thrown out with the bathwater. In other words, matters like inclusive education should not hinge on their presence in teaching standards nor education policy. Our advice has been consistent – teachers must avoid invitations to reductionism and either-or, presence/absence dualities or propositions. In what might seem like a paradox, we believe standards should have a presence in the lives of teachers and school communities. It is then, within the doing of teaching, that sensibility is both given by their presence and crucially, made anew by the aspirations of the professional leading the lesson. Standards can be more than prescriptions for educating the same way, they can affect preferred ways of knowing/being (Corcoran 2017).

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Conclusion

> One thinks that one is tracing the outline of a thing's nature over and over again, and one is merely tracing round the frame (Wittgenstein 1953, no. 114).

If all this discussion said was how we frame things affects what happens then we would merely be repeating previously well-worn arguments. Instead, what we convey here offers more – it offers options. It is fundamentally an ethical question: whether the complexities of everyday classroom engagement can be disaggregated into essentially separable parts. British psychologist John Shotter (1993, 205) recognised concerns like these noting "…something seems to be at work in the activities between people. The activities are not just repetitive, they grow, they develop, they are creative, they make history". Questions like disaggregating teaching and learning are fundamentally ethical because they speak to first principles. Here we are not excluding other considerations from being involved but rather attending to how we orient ourselves to living in the world. Would it be preferable to consider all things as connected prior to our attempts to frame them? When teachers account for their practice are seemingly fixed standards the most legitimate way to frame the work taking place? Do the frames employed concretise ways of knowing/being? Given choice, what methods invite professional aspiration?

Alternatives are available, and CDS can help us to deploy them. For example, by decentring teachers and students, ability and/or disability, we begin to shift how matters are framed garnering different ways of sense making and working. Echoing Shotter, the oscillating affectedness continuously influencing notions of inclusive education can and should be recognised as an active participant wearing different guises given prevailing circumstance. Often it comes down to the educational support money can buy. Other times it may rely on the people occupying leadership positions in government or in schools. Inclusive education is always more than any teacher's professional capacity to respond to students presenting with disability. As well as examining how those individuals immediately present are differently storied or framed there also exist material and non-material conditions that make learning eventful. In effect, teaching and learning has a life of its own and in this sense, whilst teaching standards are something most involved in education have to learn to live with, it is impossible for that to mean all teachers educate the same way.

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