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The simple view of teaching: authorised pedagogies, curriculum and the neoliberal learner in preservice teacher education

Mandy Pierlejewski [ID][a], Lisa Murtagh [ID][b] and Huw Humphreys [ID][c]

aCarnegie School of Education, Leeds Beckett University, Leeds, England; bMIE, University of Manchester, Manchester, England; cDepartment of Education, University of East London, London, England

ABSTRACT

In the context of a global teacher recruitment crisis, the English department for Education has responded by implementing a new, highly prescriptive curriculum for initial teacher education called the Initial Teacher Training Core Content Framework. Using a combination of content analysis and an original approach entitled "doppelganger as method," we examine where a doubling has occurred, asking how this doubling functions. Our analysis of the Core Content Framework focuses on the construction of both learners and learning, teachers and teaching. We find that the complex, relationship-based, messy act of educating pre-service teachers is reduced to a simple view of teaching in which fidelity to the authorised curriculum content and pedagogy define quality. This doubling of teacher education into its doppelganger, teacher training is essentially dehumanising as it denies the personhood of the people involved and the complex, relational aspect of the process.

Introduction and rationale

This article is exploratory and starts from the premise that pre-service teacher education is a site of contention, where notions of "authorised" (Dawes, 2022) pedagogies, premised on managerialism, performativity and marketisation, are arguably seen by policy makers as a metaphorical "silver bullet" to solving both England's teacher recruitment and retention crisis (Mutton et al., 2021), and ensuring there is no repeat of England's drop in the 2012 PISA literacy and numeracy ranking. Yet such notions are contested by academics and leaders of pre-service teacher education alike (Ellis, 2023; Murtagh et al., 2023). Criticism of authorised, espoused "evidence-based" practices of pre-service teacher education is becoming increasingly well-rehearsed within the education sector (Ellis, 2023; Hordern & Brooks, 2023). Within this context, this article breaks new ground. Authored by three pre-service teacher educators, it uses the case study of the centrally mandated Core Content Framework (CCF) for initial teacher education (DfE, 2019a) to ask

what it tells us about the kinds of learners the Department for Education (DfE) in England wants us, as providers of pre-service teacher education, to produce.

Pre-service teacher education in England: the core content framework

In England, teacher retention is a persistent and seemingly intractable challenge, and similar concerns are noted internationally (Madigan & Kim, 2021), with attrition rates of between thirty and fifty per cent being reported in Australia (Brandenburg et al., 2024; Kelly et al., 2019), the United States (Sutcher et al., 2019) and Chile (Educar, 2021). Such attrition can lead to reduced educational quality and wasted invested public resources in teacher education (Hanushek et al., 2016; Ovenden Hope, 2022; Watlington et al., 2010). Alongside this, the earlier results of the 2012 PISA saw university-based pre-service teacher educators vilified for their perceived inability to adequately prepare teachers (Ellis, 2023). In response to such concerns, the Department for Education (DfE) launched its Teacher Recruitment and Retention Strategy (DfE, 2019b), culminating in what is commonly referred to in DfE literature as a "golden thread" of policies. Although, at the time of writing, a new Labour government has been elected in the UK, the impact of these changes remains. The measures included an Early Career Framework (ECF, DfE, 2019c) and an Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Core Content Framework (CCF) (DfE, 2019a). Alongside this, an ITT Market Review was undertaken. These measures served to prescribe not only what, but how pre-service teacher education is delivered in England and who the accredited providers are. This paper focuses specifically on the CCF, the DfE-defined "core body of knowledge, skills and behaviours that define great teaching" (DfE, 2022, p. 4) as determined by a DfE-defined "Expert Advisory Group" (DfE, 2019a, p. 2). Whilst the need for appropriate support for pre-service teachers is indisputable, it is crucial to critically examine the claim that the CCF, "draws on the best available evidence" (p. 3,5.), particularly when the itemised curriculum content was largely devised by a small group of DfE-appointed, influential individuals and organisations. The assertion of "best available" evidence is inherently subjective and potentially changeable over time.

One of the key themes of this paper is the emergence of doppelgangers – mirrored forms of people and processes created by neoliberal policy – and so it should be noted here that perhaps the most obvious form of this mirroring is the DfE's preferential use of ITT (Initial Teacher Training) for pre-service teacher education in England. In this paper, we use ITT only when referring to the DfE and others' use of the term and instead, use Initial Teacher Education (ITE) as the term which we believe better describes the process and practice of becoming a teacher – education, not simply training.

The CCF represents a standardised model of pre-service teacher education, "authorised" (Dawes, 2022) by the DfE. It revolves around "Learn that" and "Learn how to" statements, categorising learning into specific domains and prescribing curriculum content (DfE 2019a, pp. 4–5). Such a simplified approach falls short of capturing both the intricacies of teaching and learning, and the motivations and affections of individual humans involved in enacting the CCF. It relies on rote memorisation and the reduction of research findings to simplistic and generalised procedures rather than embracing the nuances and complex understandings of how young people learn. It silences knowledge about the broader contexts in which children develop (Hordern & Brooks, 2023) and limits how it prepares teachers to address a classroom as a room full of human beings, each with

their own personal experiences and challenges (Murtagh et al., 2023). This results in what Connell (2009, p. 218) aptly describes as a mere "list of auditable competencies" that must be met, a "teaching by numbers" (Taubman, 2010, p. 7) methodology devoid of depth that relies heavily on delivery-oriented models (Barber, 2007; Dawes, 2022).

Coupled with this, we argue that one of the features of the CCF has been to instrumentalise or "datafy" (Lupton & Williamson, 2017, p. 10) the people involved, creating doubles of these actors, whether they are teaching students, their mentors and class teachers in schools, or those that they are learning to teach: children and young people in school settings. This process of datafication is seen as a re-creation of the person in data, producing a data-doppelganger of the individual (Pierlejewski, 2020a, 2020b). This instrumentalisation of actors is not new, nor unique: it has been a feature of the English policy discourse for some time (Biesta, 2011), and extends not just to teachers, mentors, children and young people, but to parents and carers brought in to support and extend the work of schools (Haines Lyon, 2019; McGowan, 2005), and through these actors, to the educative process itself (Biesta, 2023; Hordern & Brooks, 2023).

The way these actors are referred to, and what they are expected to enact, reveals both the perspectives on humanity and on the educative process embodied in the CCF. A more holistic and humanising understanding of teacher education gives rise to questions about the actors and their actions within the CCF that are both anthropological and educational, often entwined, and necessarily complex. The impact of such a one-size-fits-all approach to pre-service teacher education, reflective of neoliberal perspectives of teachers and education (Couldry, 2009; Elfert & Ydesen, 2023; Mirowski, 2018; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009), is that it fails to acknowledge the unique contributions that the actors involved in engaging with the CCF bring to learning, thus diminishing opportunities to consider the diverse needs of pre-service teachers, mentors, children in school and their parents/carers, and so potentially stifling innovation, creativity and collaboration in education.

Global influences on teacher professionalism and teacher development

England is not alone in its desire to assert control over the teaching profession, and much of this drive can be traced back to The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Its reach in the realm of education is extensive, and in recent years, the OECD has turned its attention to teacher education (Murtagh et al., 2023) via the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). The overarching objective of TALIS is to generate comprehensive data on teacher learning, ostensibly to deepen understanding of the various approaches and policies that can be employed to support countries in cultivating high-quality teachers (Schleicher, 2020). This focus on teacher learning echoes the OECD's broader interest in student learning, referred to by Biesta (2009, p. 14) as "learnification," where the role of teaching is reduced solely to its effect on learning and "pupil outcomes" and with the rest of what teaching is historically understood to be ignored or sidelined (Biesta, 2022, pp. 60–63). With TALIS promoting the idea of international comparisons and consequently shaping what is considered teacher learning and for what purposes teachers engage with modes of learning, this arguably serves to narrow the scope of teacher education to a suite of instructions and practices and redefines teacher professionalism as a term that seeks to reduce teacher autonomy, whilst concomitantly constraining the goals of schooling and education, leading to a tendency

towards providing specific guidelines on what both practicing teachers and pre-service educators should engage in, enhance, and put into action (Apple, 2004; Connell, 2013; Meroño et al., 2023). It is a "medical" model that has long been shown to be inappropriate in education (Biesta, 2007).

In England, even more than other nations, the enhancement of teacher education and its overall quality in the eight years since the publication of the "Carter Review" (A review of the effectiveness of ITT in England) (DfE, 2016) has emerged as a pivotal component of government policies aimed at reforming the education system (Biesta, 2023, p. 214). This pursuit of educational reform is driven by the aspiration to excel in international rankings, often referred to as "PISA envy" (Thomson et al., 2014, p. xii). A crucial element of this reform agenda has involved the establishment of centralised authority over pre-service teacher education; an increased emphasis on practical and standardised methodologies, with teacher preparation centred around the idea of training and the acquisition of quantifiable skills and methods.

Bernstein (1977, p. 156) has referred to such "input-output" problems, suggesting that schools have become "people-processing" institutions, and we echo his sentiments. It is strongly reminiscent of Freire's (1972) concept of banking education, which likewise reduces the learner to a vessel, or reproductive organ. We conclude this de-humanising, performative culture reduces the process of teaching and learning to an "input-output" calculation (Ball, 2013, p. 104), and we argue that this places the individual in the shadows, where their embodied and lived reality, including all their relationships, is notably absent. When considering this analysis, we were conscious not only of the actions within the CCF (training) but the actors (trainees) and their relationships with pupils, expert colleagues, and parents. All of these were subjected to our analysis, but for the sake of space we here focus principally on those referred to as trainees and pupils.

Methodology

The research team for this project was made up of three experienced teacher educators, working in different English universities. Our approach to analysing the CCF has involved two processes. Firstly, we conducted a content analysis, identifying key words within the text and examining how and where they were used. Following on from this, we used doppelganger as method, an approach which identifies splits or divisions and asks how these doublings function as a technology of power.

Content analysis is a method for summarising and analysing written data. It uses both quantitative and qualitative methods to categorise, compare and draw conclusions from texts (Cohen et al., 2018). We selected key words for analysis based on our interest in the actors and actions embodied in the CCF. Thus, we focused on the word "training/education" as a key action and the terms for the people involved in this process: the "pupil" and the "child." We first analysed the frequency of particular words and then identified the context within which the words were used. We compared the frequency and context of synonyms such as "child" and "pupil" to draw out the differences in meaning which this comparison suggested.

The comparison of synonyms revealed a doubling of both actions and actors which led us to use doppelganger as method to analyse these doubles. This is an approach which seeks to examine the double in a range of contexts (Pierlejewski, 2020a, 2020b, 2023). The

term "doppelganger" means "double walker" in German and is used within the Gothic genre to describe a ghostly double. Psychoanalytic interpretations of the doppelganger genre focus on it as an aspect of the uncanny. This is a concept which Freud developed in his (Freud, 1919) paper of the same name. He describes the uncanny as something strange and yet familiar, something which should be inside but has become external. Doppelganger as method takes an understanding of how doppelgangers function in literature along with psychoanalytic interpretations to ask how doublings act as a technology of power. It is useful in understanding the neoliberal ideal as neoliberalism requires a reproduction of the social world in economic terms. This can be seen as a doubling in itself, as a new version of the social world is produced along with new actors and actions. Klein also uses a similar approach to examine the "mirror world" of far right politics (Klein, 2023, p. 73). Her work focuses on the reproduction of the social world in which terms are repurposed to relate to completely different concepts, creating a mirror world. Our work builds on this, examining the reproduction of key concepts in a process which creates new versions of the original. Klein uses the term "mirror world" to describe the doppelganger of the world she knows. This term is useful as it denotes a two-dimensional world which appears to be real but is in fact only a reflection. We found this a useful metaphor to conceptualise the insubstantial forms of the actors and actions we examined within the CCF.

The method for applying doppelganger as method involved examining the language used to describe the key concepts identified and analysed through the content analysis. We asked, "What is the nature of this doppelganger as something strange and yet familiar?" identifying similarities and differences and followed this by asking, "What does this change in discourse produce?." The second question of the function of the doubling was perhaps the most important as it enabled us to evaluate why the discourse had changed and what impact it had on the field of teacher education. It helped reveal the hidden workings of neoliberalism in which a reproduction of the social world in terms of economics is always required.

As teacher educators, it is important to acknowledge that our analysis has been influenced and enhanced by our personal knowledge and beliefs (Fox, 2008), but that the concomitant expertise and long-term perspectives are valuable assets that can be utilised throughout the analytical process. Rather than hindering knowledge generation, our positionality serves as a valuable resource to inform and enrich our work (Braun & Clarke, 2019).

Analysis of the ITT core content framework

A doppelganger as method approach to analysis looks for a doubling or mirroring. Our analysis of the CCF sees this doubling in terms of the complex and simple views of initial teacher education. This approach builds on the work of Jones and Ellis (2023), who propose a simple and complex view of teacher development. The complex view of initial teacher education focuses on a holistic and humanising understanding that must constitute the lived reality of the student teacher and the children being taught. It is an unpredictable, messy, complicated process which reflects the complexity of lived experience. The people described within the CCF are, by comparison, robotic shades, subsets of human life "loaned" to the production line of new teachers. They represent the simple

view of ITE, drawing heavily on notions of "New Science" (Hordern & Brooks, 2023) in which both actors and actions are simple, predictable and replicable.

The simple view of teaching

Education rendered invisible

Our content analysis of the CCF began with a focus on the way that the CCF uses the words "education" and "educational." These words occur 128 times in the whole document, but 106 of those occasions are in the reference list alone. For the remaining 22 occurrences, the words are used in the following ways: as an appellation, for instance, Education Endowment Foundation (used 8 times); as part of the phrase "special educational" (4 times) and in the phrase "best available educational research" (used 8 times) and "educational research" (once). The final use of the term is revealing:

> **High expectations** (Learn how to) . . . seeking opportunities to engage parents and carers in the *education* [our emphasis] of their children (e.g. proactively highlighting successes) with support from expert colleagues to understand how this engagement changes depending on the age and development stage of the pupil. (DfE, 2019a: 9)

In the CCF, education, it seems, only obliquely has to do with what happens in schools. Instead, it is the role of the parent or carer to educate their children. The quote here appears to refer, using the German distinction, to "erziehung" (the raising of children) not "bildung" (intellectual and moral formation) (Biesta, 2022; Hopmann, 2007). Inadvertently, or perhaps by design, "parents and carers" are assigned a role in the CCF that is instrumentalised carefully:
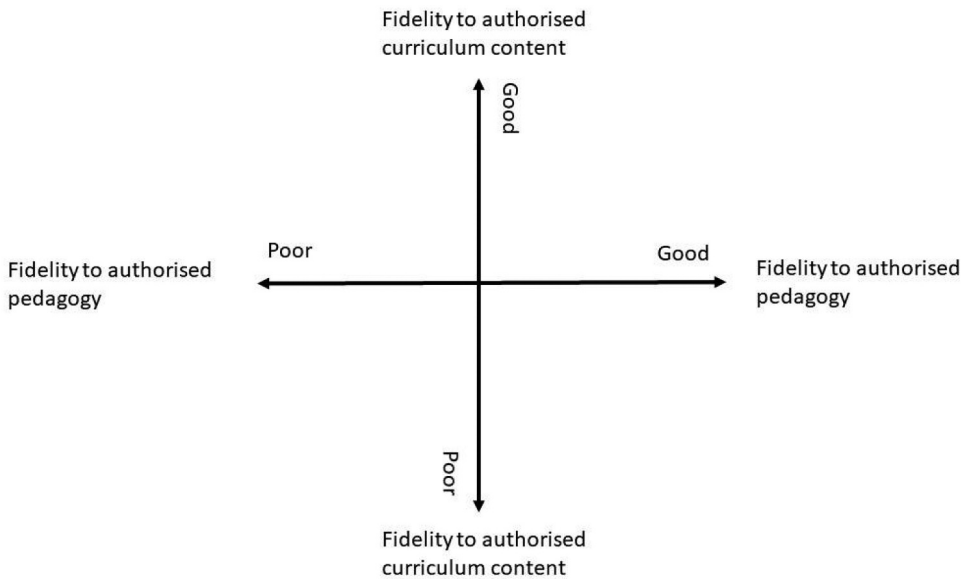
> **Managing Behaviour** (Learn how to) Discussing and analysing with expert colleagues effective strategies for liaising with parents, carers and colleagues to better understand pupils' individual circumstances and how they can be supported to meet high academic and behavioural expectations. (DfE, 2019a:27).

and

> **Professional Behaviours** (Learn how to) Observing how expert colleagues communicate with parents and carers proactively and make effective use of parents' evenings to engage parents and carers in their children's schooling. (ibid.)

Parents here are simply seen as a support mechanism for that teaching content "delivered" at school. The aim of "building relationships" or "liaising" with parents is principally to use them to help the school effort towards behaviour, motivation and academic progress. There is little expectation that what is offered at home by parents who love and understand their children can contribute to what is taught in school. The "trainee" must make sure that parents are engaged in what the school is trying to teach. But what it is that is being taught does not appear to be referred to as "education." Education remains, curiously, the province of the parent.

Education, in the context of bildung, is replaced in the CCF by the term "training" (DfE, 2019a, p. 3). This term is consistently used to describe the process by which pre-service teachers, or "trainees" in the CCF, learn how to become teachers. The focus of this training is centred around two types of content. The "learn that" statements which delineate the "core body of knowledge" (p. 3) that a trainee should know and the "learn how to"

Fidelity to authorised
curriculum content

Good

Poor   Good

Fidelity to authorised   Fidelity to authorised
pedagogy   pedagogy

Poor

Fidelity to authorised
curriculum content

Figure 1. The simple view of teaching.

statements which establish their "entitlement to practise key skills" (p. 5) and learn from "expert colleagues." The focus is almost exclusively on the delivery of approaches. Students observe these approaches being used by expert colleagues in school, they "should expect multiple opportunities to rehearse and refine particular approaches," discuss "what makes a particular approach successful or unsuccessful" and "receive structured feedback from expert colleagues on a particular approach" (p. 5). Education is thus reconstituted as its doppelganger, training: a simple process of learning and delivering approaches.

The core body of knowledge outlined in the CCF constitutes the content of the ITE curriculum. Providers of ITE must design curricula which "encompass the full entitlement described in the ITT Core Content Framework" (DfE, 2019a, p. 4) and although the document states that "the complexity of the process for becoming a teacher cannot be overestimated," (p. 4) the content of the CCF itself is based on a simple formulaic approach to teaching. High-quality ITE therefore, depends upon fidelity to the authorised curriculum content outlined in the CCF. The pedagogy promoted in the CCF is embodied in its "learn how to" statements which focus on observing, practising, deconstructing and receiving feedback on approaches found in the bibliography of the CCF. This creates a simple view of teaching in which fidelity to the authorised curriculum and pedagogy result in high-quality teacher training. We have represented this philosophy in a deliberately oversimplified form (Figure 1), influenced by the equally oversimplified simple view of reading (Rose, 2006).

The trainification of teacher preparation

Within the shadow world of the CCF, the people with whom the CCF is principally concerned are student teachers or beginning teachers, or pre-service teachers. These usages, found throughout the European, Asian and North American literature, are

abandoned in the CCF in favour of the term, "trainees." All instances of these two latter terms occur in the preamble to the CCF which gives the "philosophical" and policy framework for what follows (DfE, 2019a, pp. 3–7). For instance, we read: "throughout their training, trainees should expect multiple opportunities to rehearse and refine particular approaches" (p. 5) or "it is incumbent on providers to ensure their trainees are trained to meet these standards, so that trainees to whom these standards apply are successfully awarded QTS" (p. 6). Whilst some care is taken to insist that the CCF serves as a "minimum entitlement for trainee teachers" (p. 7), student teachers are seen as those "trained" with pre-determined content, to become in turn, essentially deliverers of pre-determined content of the English National Curriculum (DfE, 2013). The goal appears to be that one trained teacher, characterised by their ability to teach authorised content using authorised pedagogies can be replaced by another, with no diminution of provision, because it is the pedagogies and the content that are privileged. The student teacher therefore loses their individual identity and is reproduced as the doppelganger trainee: a homogenised version of the becoming teacher who must act and think like all other trainees. We call this process "trainification". It is essential in the simple view of teaching as every trainee must be able to remember the core body of knowledge and master the authorised approaches. There is no room – or requirement – for individual difference as these might render the authorised curriculum content and authorised pedagogy less effective.

The word "student" is reserved exclusively in the CCF to refer to those who are taught in schools; all 21 mentions of "student" are found solely in the CCF reference lists. This is perhaps because students "study." That "study" – as opposed to "practice" (24 mentions) or "training" (16 mentions) – might be required of those learning to be teachers is not considered. The verb "study," like the noun "student," is nowhere to be found in the CCF text. Thus, while in the world of university-led ITE, the focus is on educating students to become teachers, governed by the requirements of study for education degrees (Quality Assurance Agency for UK Higher Education, 2019), in the shadow world of the CCF, the focus is on training trainees to deliver content.

Doppelganger as method has identified a double of education as training and a doppelganger of the initial teacher education student as trainee. Following the identification of these doppelgangers, the function of this doubling is explored. By creating a doppelganger of the student as a trainee, the process of training teachers is simplified. The complexity of the lived experience of teachers is reduced to a simple process of delivering content. If teaching is simple, then trainee teachers are simple, and the process of teacher education is simple. This deprofessionalises teacher educators, as their expertise is not required to deliver pre-determined content.

The act of doubling teacher education in the production of the CCF makes the CCF indispensable. Without it, providers of initial teacher education are not able to educate teachers. It becomes a product which must be replicable in all settings, so the focus is on a core body of knowledge and approaches. For this to work, the learner must be homogenised. If learners are all the same, the product will be suitable for all, and this demands simplicity. The doppelganger of ITE, in the form of ITT, therefore, commodifies the curriculum. This commodification in turn will drive the market, transforming it from one dominated by universities, to a possible new initial teacher education market driven by the demand for teachers. It is an aspect of

the neoliberal project, in which aspects of the social world are treated as a business. In this case, the market drives teacher education, transforming it from a system providing education to a market in which commodities such as the CCF are sold to client-trainees. This may be part of a plan to gradually remove universities from teacher education altogether and let the market produce new providers. If groups of schools have no provision of teachers, they will have no option but to utilise the CCF to produce their own teacher education packages and become providers themselves. The incoming Labour government may take a different approach to ITE but at present, their plans are unknown.

Pupillification

Content analysis of the CCF reveals children and young people being taught in schools referred to as "children" just four times, with the word "child" occurring once. Those taught in schools are referred to as "pupils" 151 times in the text. The ratio of "pupils" to "children" is very large. This does, in part, reflect the generic nature of the term, with "pupils" standing for "children and young people taught in school," but it may also reflect the fact that when a child enters a school, it is only the "teachable mind" – and the "cognitive process" that teaches that mind – that now matters, as though a child, on entering a school, sheds particulars of their identity and embraces "pupilness." The "childness," their family and community, their own interests and their life beyond school, their agency as young people in that community and in that extra-curricular life, is seen as no part of what the "trainee" should be focusing on. What matters, and what matters solely, is "outcomes for pupils" (DfE 2019a, p. 3), defined as those outcomes that derive from "great teaching" (p. 3). Thus, children are instrumentalised into pupils in a process which we call "pupillification." Three of the occurrences of the word "children" in the CCF are in relation to their parents, where the word then becomes a proper relational term. In a school setting, children revert to becoming pupils. The emphasis on "outcomes for pupils" (9 occurrences) is understandable within the current governing assumptions of English policymakers that look to PISA standings as justification for their effectiveness, but the characteristics of such outcomes are nowhere defined. The assumption is made that "outcomes" are enough. The role of the trainee is to improve outcomes, whether by teaching; by raising expectations; through setting homework; by judicious marking and assessment or through professional development. The failure to describe the teleology of the process means that the CCF then assumes a moral neutrality as to content. No moral imperative is present beyond the quest for "outcomes for pupils." This aligns with arguments of the depoliticisation of education and teacher education in which the political and ethical aspects of education are replaced with a discourse of education as a set of technical solutions (Clarke, 2012). This is a serious failing in a document seeking to describe and prescribe a curriculum for (largely) well motivated young people each driven by their own moral sense of purpose in pursuit of becoming good (in all the ways that that word implies) teachers.

The reimagining of the child as pupil marks a second doubling in the CCF document. The simple view of the child featured here is a disembodied, decontextualised brain, whose function is to produce "outcomes." In neoliberal terms, these outcomes are the products which schools produce, and which are measured to provide choice for parents. This relates closely to the data-doppelganger of the

child found in the literature of datafication (Pierlejewski, 2020b). The outcomes valued by the CCF are the outcomes from which the data-doppelganger of the child is created, as outcomes are the measurable indicators of learning. The pupil can be seen as a data-doppelganger as they exist in contrast to the complex, emotional, contextualised, social child: the child with whom student teachers will engage in their lived experience of teaching.

The function of this doubling is again to simplify the process of teaching. In order for teaching to be simple, learners must be simple, and the process of learning must be simple. In this view of learning, input is balanced with output. Freire's (1972) banking model of education repurposed for teacher education. It also relates to the new definition of learning embodied within the CCF which defines learning as involving a "lasting change in pupils' capabilities or understanding" (DfE, 2019a, p. 11). This is later expanded as encompassing a change in long term memory. Learning, therefore, is not social, affective, creative or autonomous. It is not constructed by the learner but received and filed within the long-term memory. Such a simple view of learning is easy to teach. It further deprofessionalises both teachers and teacher educators, rendering the role of the teacher as deliverer of content. If learning is simple, then teaching is simple, and anyone could do it. The role of the teacher educator becomes obsolete as the predetermined content becomes the vehicle for learning rather than the knowledge of the educator.

Conclusion

By posing England's drop in the 2012 PISA rankings as a disaster, efforts were made to seize control of pre-service teacher education in England, whilst also seeking to improve recruitment and retention. These endeavours have seen the DfE in England embark upon a clear agenda of marketisation, with a strong emphasis on fidelity to mandatory curriculum content, coupled with compliance and monitoring regimes. Our analysis of the CCF confirms that the DfE's view of the actors involved is coherent with that of English education policy more generally, reflecting a broadly neoliberal perspective on humans and their motivations (Couldry, 2009; Elfert & Ydesen, 2023; Mirowski, 2018; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009). At the root of this understanding lies a particular view of humanity's purpose, whether as individuals – homo economicus as the rational man governed by self-interest able to maximise the utility of any situation or product – or as the societies that such a utilitarian view of humanity creates. Such individuals are expected to act largely in their own self-interest: "Underpinning the neo-liberal view of education is a particular conception of the individual, which education is expected to produce" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2009, p. 184). It is precisely through constraining educators' view of humanity by using policy documents like the CCF that the neo-liberal imaginary creates such individuals.

For each of the actors concerned with the CCF there is a distinct role and function, a narrowing, distorting mirror of the traditional understanding of a student; a bleaching out of the teacher or learner as a critical, questioning, affective and caring engager with knowledge (Ball, 2003; Griffiths, 2011). It is this assault upon personhood, and the distortion of the formational and transformational aspects of becoming a teacher, which is one of the most pernicious narratives of the CCF (Rowe, 2023). The simple view of teaching removes the context of the person, then produces individuation of teachers and children,

so that they become solely their own person, replaceable by another similarly defined person, without having to exist in relation to any other person in the educational sphere (Pendenza & Lamattina, 2019). Whilst characteristic of the neoliberal imaginary (Mirowski, 2018), this process of individuation is reflected in the implicit image of the human being emerging from the CCF.

This has several implications for teacher education. These are: the position of teaching in our culture; the value of relationships within teacher education and the influence on other jurisdictions beyond the English context.

Firstly, it renders the role of teaching in our culture as a simple delivery of skills, knowledge and understanding, by casting teaching as an "economic" process, with inputs and measurable outputs geared to a simplified set of determined outcomes. Complexifying teaching, as a cultural process with historic and geographic variations and involving intentionally the wide range of agents serving children has to be an imperative for teacher educators in order to restore something of the importance of teaching as a communal enterprise within our cultures. Seeing teaching as a process in which end results are neither planned for nor expected, but as a cultural process necessary to reveal each child's inheritance, as construed by Oakeshott (1967), is beyond the bounds of the neoliberal imaginary, as it has no lens to quantify non-economic outcomes.

Secondly, it undermines relationship, almost as policy. Far from being negligently uncollaborative, the CCF focuses on individual pupil outcomes and individual pupil progress without any understanding of the way that whole classes of children (children!) make progress together; how groups of teaching students might influence each other and how children learn in extended families. As teacher educators, we need now more than ever to reclaim the complexity of humanity, understanding, affirming and celebrating the relationships, families, communities and cultural backgrounds that make us who we are together. This will involve intentionally identifying pedagogies that make use of those complex relationships and might even "hide" individual contributions in the quest to teach the benefit of collaborative enterprise.

Thirdly, the situation in England is not unique, although this may change with the new Labour government, elected as we were revising this article. The English experience of ITE reform has gone further than most OECD countries in the level of detail and compliance expected. The most recent comparator in an anglophone country has been the Australian government's Quality Initial Teacher Education Review, which, in its final report (Paul, 2021) and response to consultation (Australian Government, 2023) highlights the same tools that England has been using since the Carter review. As yet there is no "national curriculum" for ITE in Australia, but within the *Strong Beginnings* report of its Teacher Education Expert Panel, are strong hints that it is coming, with "core content areas" of the brain and learning, effective pedagogical practices, classroom management and responsive teaching (Australian Government, 2023, p. 28ff), linked closely to existing teaching standards. As Mills (in Ellis, 2023, p. 206) writes, looking at English ITE from his Australian perspective, in England "the intrusion of the state into teacher education has been significant and since 2019 has reached unparalleled levels." We echo Mills' warning that the English ITE experience, at least to the present, is an object lesson for Australian initial teacher educators of how *precisely not* to proceed.

The neoliberal mindset has created schools that are highly competitive and strenuously "outcomes-focused" and performative, focused on those aspects of teaching that result in

immediate or near-immediate learning. The CCF feeds directly into that performativity, with the predicted impact on teacher wellbeing (Ball, 2003). Stern (2018) has characterised schooling delightfully as "care and curiosity in community" and this perhaps offers the necessary complexity and open-endedness to student teachers as they enter practice and might provide the necessary protection from the false rigours embedded in the CCF. With an ongoing political polarisation and the rise of an unnuanced identity politics in England, the skills of perceiving complexity and teaching relationally and with care may be the strongest suit we have in enabling the larger education system to understand its deeper purpose.

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Notes on contributors

Pierlejewski is a senior lecturer in the Carnegie School of Education at Leeds Beckett University. Her research interest is the datafication of early years.

Murtagh is Head of MIE at the University of Manchester in the UK. Her research interest is associated pre-service teacher education

Humphreys is senior lecturer in the Department of Education at the University of East London. He researches the Christian impact of church schools in England.

ORCID

Mandy Pierlejewski http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1117-6979
Lisa Murtagh http://orcid.org/0009-0002-4965-0074
Huw Humphreys http://orcid.org/0009-0006-1058-0784

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