## FLUID IDENTITIES IN MULTIPLE CULTURAL PRACTICES: HOW PRACTICE CHANGES BECOMING TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEMSELVES

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### ABSTRACT

This Western Australian 'Teacher as Practitioner' (TAP) case study demonstrates how inter and intra art practices create opportunities to interrogate the shared experience and discourse of an artist-teacher culture as a community of practice. It is furthered by a discussion about what it means to be a beginning teacher in art education through a look into an initial teacher education (ITE) course at Edith Cowan University. This empirical study provides an opportunity to interrogate cultures and identities through artful inquiry within this cultural space, where becoming secondary (visual arts major) teachers develop as artist-teacher and mentor during a four-year undergraduate course. The integration of TAP as a conceptual and cultural framework was designed to combat the siloing of content in the undergraduate course, and to encourage becoming teachers to see themselves as artist-teachers and practitioners within their construction of a teacher identity.

The shared experiences of becoming teachers in the first two years of TAP were documented through narrative, artworks and focus group discussion. The data show a transition in the becoming teachers' perceptions of themselves as teachers and artist-teachers; a cultural shift that is both epistemic and ontological. These findings have been extended by a cluster analysis of the longitudinal TAP project that began at the University of Melbourne to show the positioning of the undergraduate participants in this research, which also includes a Master of Teaching cohort. This practice-led paper is informed by a practice-based approach to ITE; as the integration of TAP into this undergraduate visual arts education course has significantly transformed our practices as art educators. We discuss how cultural shifts within TAP have shifted our spatial pedagogies and the inter and intrapersonal interactions between ourselves and the participants, and the participants with each other as a community of practitioners.

## INTRODUCTION

The development of an artist-teacher identity in undergraduate visual arts initial teacher education (ITE) courses is important as it allows becoming teachers to concurrently evolve as both artist and teacher. During undergraduate courses visual arts content and pedagogy are largely separate – taught by different staff, in different faculties. This siloed approach to ITE does not authentically represent the studio context in which visual arts is taught in schools, nor a teachers' ability to have integration modelled and scaffolded through content and pedagogy as part of their daily practice (Davidson, 2014; Falkenberg & Babiuk, 2013). In response to this issue

the Teacher as Practitioner (TAP) project (Morris, Coleman, Toscano, & Imms, 2018) was implemented in Western Australia (WA) as one strategy to encourage a social practice (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). It was anticipated that social practice would empower artist-teachers in visual arts education and establish support structures for the often-disconnected approach resulting from the siloed curriculum design within the undergraduate ITE course.

This paper explores the theoretical underpinning of TAP as a cultural framework in the WA context and outlines the practical implementation of a largely practice-based teaching model within the undergraduate secondary education (visual arts major) course. We will explore how re-thinking the role of culture and intercultural approaches to teaching could support becoming teachers as they develop new understandings of self and selves in relation to new knowledges, practices and pedagogies. This paper explores data collected from the first two years of participants, and emphasises the importance of an embodied learning, affective pedagogical approach (Grocott, McEntee, Coleman & Manix, 2019) and the modelling of practice through developmental mentoring (DeVries, 2011) in shaping an artist-teacher identity. The narrative of TAP integration at Edith Cowan University (ECU) is offered to other arts-based educational researchers who explore pedagogy through the arts.

## TAP AS A CATALYST

*In 2014 I started teaching into the undergraduate visual arts education course. During this time, I noticed that the undergraduates had a common complaint about studio art units (content units taught outside of the Education faculty). Their complaint was that these units taught them more than what they needed to know as teachers. The undergraduates felt they only needed to know 'how to teach it' and were frustrated when units spent more time introducing them to things 'they could not do in a classroom'. Evident in their language was a distinct difference between what it means to teach and to practice. I became interested in the Teacher as Artmaker project because it hypothesised practice as a contributing factor to teacher retention, hence intrinsically linking teacher and practitioner within the art teacher's identity (Imms & Ruanglertbutr, 2013). In 2016, as course coordinator of visual arts education, I sought to redesign the undergraduate course so that pedagogy and practice were integrated throughout the four years of study (Julia)*

*My experience of TAP came through the consent forms as I supported my first graduating class in 2016 to be recruited into TAP at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE). I had only been teaching part time in the program as I worked on my first solo show. As a practicing artist, and a/r/tographer my research is focused on the role that identity and creativity play in the evolving nature of digital spaces as sites for seeing, creating and curating the selves for multiple audiences; this community of practice was perfect for my research. Many of the becoming teachers I spoke to were excited by the opportunity to be supported by an active community of practice post-graduation and were buoyed by the sense of collaboration they saw in the TAP exhibiting artists that November. It was also the year that a graduating teacher candidate suggested that current becoming teachers be involved in an exhibition and we co-designed a 'side' show to follow TAP called TAPFringe (Kate).*

## RECIPROCAL DETERMINISM

To unpack becoming teachers the distinction between what it means to *teach* and what it means to *practice*, it was necessary to dig deeper into identity construction and the factors that shape psychological functioning. The triadic reciprocal determinism model that forms the basis of social cognitive theory was the starting point for this exploration (Bandura, 1978). As shown in figure 1, Bandura (1978) posits that psychological functioning results from the interactions between person, behaviour and environment factors.
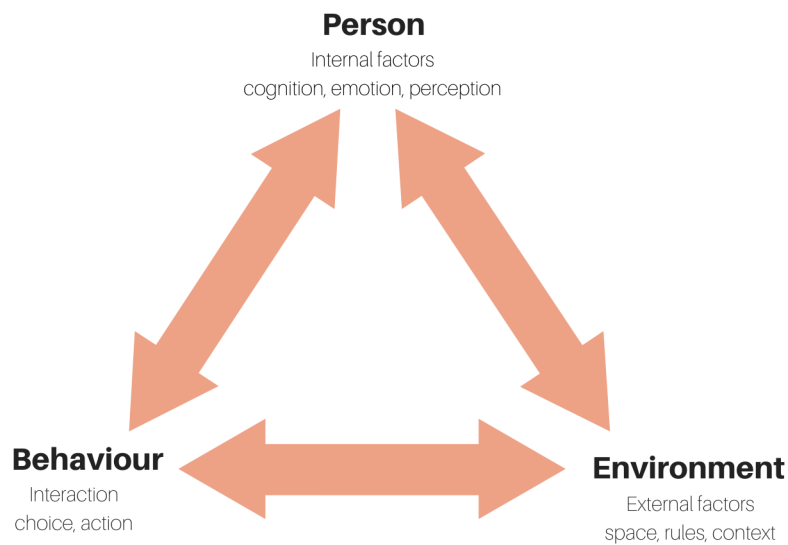
**Person**
Internal factors
cognition, emotion, perception

**Behaviour**
Interaction
choice, action

**Environment**
External factors
space, rules, context

Figure 1. *Bandura's (1978) triadic representation of reciprocal determinism.*

In the reciprocal determinism model the person factors are internal, including how the person perceives and makes sense of events, and what they value (Bandura, 1978). While behaviour is shaped by the environment and the person, it is its own factor because actions construct the social milieu and choices made impact on how the environment is constructed (Bandura, 1978). The environment, the final factor, includes the physical spaces as well as the sociocultural rules of a context that are not seen but do act on a person's psychological functioning (Bandura, 1978).

Important to this model is the *reciprocal* nature of interaction, as each factor influences and is influenced by the others; they are relational. In addition, each factor cannot be constructed in isolation; for example, behavioural actions only occur as a result of how people engage with the environment, and actions are not just an outcome but also determine future interactions thereby acting on the person and environment factors. Importantly, change within each factor can affect change within the other factors due to their reciprocity.

Bandura's model is also closely linked to self-efficacy; a person's belief in their own abilities (Bandura, 2012). Bandura discusses two aspects of self-efficacy, personal belief in the self and also expectancy in an outcome as a result of their self-belief (Bandura, 1977, 2012). The outcome is behavioural; for example, achievement or performance in a task or a teachers' beliefs that they can positively influence student learning (L. Enochs & Riggs, 1990; L. G. Enochs, Smith, & Huinker, 2000). The factors of reciprocal determinism and self-efficacy overlap in Bandura's research, and the interaction of these factors have held true in research within the educational setting (Adeyemo, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007; Williams & Williams, 2010).

The reciprocal determinism model can be used as a framework to consider the factors at play within the university setting, and specifically, how they interact as part of a teachers' identity construction. In exploring the environment, it seems that there is a physical disconnection between the different faculty teaching spaces at the university. Like at many universities, the undergraduate ITE course at ECU is taught across two faculties: visual arts content is delivered by the Arts faculty and pedagogy is delivered within the Education faculty. The

physical spaces of these faculties differ dramatically, with each environment presenting a different set of practices and cultures. The arts studios are designed according to the studio discipline, where becoming teachers may work as artists in separate spaces or at easels or along benches depending on the work they are doing. Studio pedagogies are designed for innovation, collaboration, creativity and spatial impact. We position the facilitator of the space in the middle, serving more of a co-facilitator role in the space for collegial collaborations to occur (McWilliam, Sweet & Blythe, 2013). Conversely, the education setting consists of mass lecture theatres or tutorial rooms that are set up with desks that more closely mimic a typical art room. In both education lecture theatres and tutorial rooms the physical space supports linear transmission of content from teacher to becoming teachers, with opportunities for student-centred learning constricted by the static furniture of the learning environments (Byers, Imms, & Hartnell-Young, 2014; Lim, O'Halloran, & Podlasov, 2012). The two environments are so distinct and likely to result in different knowledge beliefs as teachers negotiate new epistemic cultures (Knorr Cetina, 2007).

While the physical and spatial environment is observable, the behaviour and person factors in the reciprocal determinism model required a deeper exploration of identity, specifically for becoming teachers and practitioners. In addition, behaviour and person factors are closely linked to the unseen sociocultural environment factor. In exploring these factors, the master and mentor model was used to conceptualise how teachers may think about themselves as both teacher and practitioner.

## MASTER AND MENTOR: FLUID IDENTITIES

Thornton (2013) writes that artist and teacher identities "are based on actual practitioners but are also constructs or categories that represent the differentiation of practices and beliefs" (p. 3). However, the overlap between these identities "can result in a synergy in which new identities, thinking and practices can emerge further interrelating or integrating important aspects of the culture of visual art" (Thornton, 2013, p. 3). In visual arts specifically, Graham and Zwirn (2010) term the artist-teacher as master and mentor; master of their subject matter content knowledge and mentor in terms of guiding becoming teachers through education with sound pedagogy. This conceptualisation of the subject specialist teacher suggests it is necessary to prioritise both subject content and pedagogical content knowledge in becoming an impactful teacher (Graham & Zwirn, 2010). The TAP research suggests that visual arts teachers see themselves as somewhere between an artist and a teacher, and that these identities are fluidly changing over time as well as constantly forming new identities in the liminal spaces (Imms & Imms, 2016).

A key argument underpinning the idea of an artist-teacher or master-mentor is authentic learning (Rule, 2006). This principle has been evident throughout art practice, including in the apprenticeship model of art teaching whereby the learner is positioned as inquirer. By working as an apprentice an artist acquires skills from the master over a number of years, learning from the master's experiences to improve their own practice (Kleiner, 2009). In the context of the contemporary classroom, an artist who practices and teaches also brings with them authenticity from their professional experiences and this builds trust and respect between teacher and student (Morris, 2015). Thornton (2013) explains how a teacher understands the *language* of both the art world and pedagogic world, and can make the links tangible for students who may feel removed from one or both worlds. As Wittgenstein attested "the limits of my language mean the limits of my world" (Wittgenstein, 1921, 5.6). A teacher who understands both worlds can assist students (or becoming teachers) to acquire the language of each, and authentically share the experience of existing in each space.

Consequently, artist-teachers are not only sharing their experiences in each space, they are acting as the bridge between two worlds (Thornton, 2013). It is the space between master and mentor that is most interesting from Graham and Zwirn's discussion of artist-teachers. The analysis emphasised the master as an individual who

"treated their becoming teachers as young artists in an atelier" (Graham & Zwirn, 2010, p. 224), and maintained their own practice as well as extending knowledge and skills through professional learning. They then discuss the mentor as the teacher who is involved in conversation; either conversations about the artworks being produced or about becoming teachers' lives and how to makes sense of their experiences (whether that be in visual form or not) (Graham & Zwirn, 2010). As a teacher educator, the intersection between master and mentor is most interesting, as teachers need to fluidly move between these identities and decide what skills, knowledge and experiences they can best draw on to meet the needs of their becoming teachers in any particular context.

## INTEGRATION OF TAP INTO THE UNDERGRADUATE COURSE

The topics of person factors and identity become even more complex in the context of an undergraduate ITE course. Not only do the becoming teachers in the undergraduate course have to learn to fluidly move between master and mentor, but they are also forming each of these identities simultaneously. This is in contrast to the partner program at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (MGSE) at the University of Melbourne where the ITE course teaches practicing artists and designers, many with years of experience as 'A'rtist and 'D'esigner, now shifting to include a deeper pedagogical approach to their understanding of practice. At the MGSE becoming teachers arrive with a deep embodied understanding of self and sense of identity formed, and then work alongside Kate to wrap and entangle themselves through the layering of mentor or teacher to their existing framework.

In the WA TAP group, most undergraduate becoming teachers enter the secondary education (visual arts major) course between the age of 17 to 30 years, and as such, they often have not developed a professional identity. Their experiences about school are from the perspective of student as artist. It is the role of the teacher educator to help becoming teachers build and shift understanding of the fluid nature of identities, and to be able to articulate who they are (Beltman, Glass, Dinham, Chalk, & Nguyen, 2015). As art educators we feel it is particularly important that our becoming teachers begin to develop as master and mentor from the beginning of their degree, and in the case of the undergraduate cohort, to combat the perceived separation of content and pedagogy that occurs through learning in disparate physical spaces. Returning to the reciprocal determinism model, Bandura (1978) stated:

> Because people's conceptions, their behaviour and their environments are reciprocal determinants of each other, individuals are neither powerless objects controlled by environmental forces nor entirely free agents who can do whatever they choose. People can be considered partially free insofar as they shape future conditions by influencing their courses of action. (pp. 356-357)

Hence, becoming teachers shape their own identities and futures through their own course of action, within the bounds of the other factors. So, if they enact arts practice and internally perceive arts practice as part of their identity and career they will value and integrate it within their construction of self as teacher so that practice and theory are entwined. Conversely, the becoming teachers who perceive that art practice in their content units is separate from their study as a teacher will be less likely to enact praxis.

Consequently, the notion of master and mentor is integrated throughout the undergraduate course. While the physical separation of arts content and pedagogical content teaching spaces cannot be changed, the environment within the pedagogical teaching space can be altered to promote the master and mentor model. The first opportunity for undergraduate becoming teachers to come together is a ceramics studio unit in their first year of study, the only art content unit delivered within the Education faculty. This unit emphasises

becoming teachers as master, while also asking them to reflect on themselves as a future mentor and to identify how the knowledge and skills they develop at university could be applied to the classroom.

In the second year of study the emphasis is on mentor, as becoming teachers learn to plan and teach visual arts as art educators. Nevertheless, studio work is integrated in these units so they learn to apply pedagogy within an authentic classroom setting, and new studio skills are taught so they feel a sense of mastery that extends their art studio content. The interconnection and layering of knowledge and engagement of practice is important to their identity development during this year.

In the third year the becoming teachers have a reflective practice component within their practicum unit, taught within their major learning areas. In the visual arts cohort, these becoming teachers witness how the fourth year becoming teachers intertwine their artist-selves with their teacher-selves, producing artworks for TAP. The third year becoming teachers reflect on their journey as master and mentor in the context of practitioners who are soon to complete their final teaching practicum.

In the final year the becoming teachers are together for a brief time before the final practicum where we reflect on themselves as mentors using the National Professional Standards for Teachers (AITSL, 2011), and they identify areas they need to improve or evidence during practicum. When they return from practicum the becoming teachers have one final class together. This is the class where TAP has been integrated, so they have a semester focused on themselves as masters (balancing the first semester of mentor). In this unit becoming teachers prepare work for the TAP exhibition at Edith Cowan University, held just after they graduate the course. This unit provides an opportunity for becoming teachers to reflect on their journey and articulate their identity as a graduating teacher.

## STUDIO THINKING WITHIN THE INTEGRATION

Despite the integration of the 'master and mentor' conceptual and cultural framework throughout the course and becoming teachers' experiences in visual arts content units within the Arts faculty, they still feel confronted by reifying the artist-self through having a public exhibition of their work. As a result, other models are drawn on to scaffold becoming teachers when constructing this final body of work in the undergraduate course. A key model used within the TAP integration at ECU is the studio habits of mind, developed in Project Zero's *Studio Thinking Project* at Harvard University. Summarised from the *Studio Thinking Project* (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2007) the habits are:

- Reflect: Learning to think and talk about art, including making judgements.
- Stretch and explore: Learning to play with media, learn from mistakes and unplanned expression.
- Express: Learning to create works that convey meaning.
- Develop craft: Learning to use tools and artistic conventions.
- Envision: Learning to imagine the process from concept to final artwork.
- Arts community: Learning to engage with other people and groups in the field and within broader society.
- Observe: Learning to look carefully at what is presented in art, to interpret messages that are not obvious at first.
- Engage and persist: Learning to embrace problems and be resilient in problem solving issues in working artistically.

These eight habits are aligned to the beliefs and practices of an artist practitioner, and were the result of research into how the arts are taught and learnt in the primary and elementary years of schooling (Hetland et

al., 2007; Hunter-Doniger & Berlinsky, 2017). Nevertheless, they are applicable at all stages of studio-based learning and teaching.

The habits of mind are a way of scaffolding undergraduate becoming teachers' practice, and can be accessed depending on how much support each student feels they need. The TAP unit usually begins with looking at an artist who relates to the theme of the annual TAP exhibition, unpacking their work and the exhibition theme itself. These activities develop iterative reflection, observation and action, and tap into creative and critical thinking through metacognition. As the TAP exhibition is often the first major exhibition for these undergraduate becoming teachers outside of their school shows, Julia also works around opening up the concept of practice. It is common for the undergraduate becoming teachers to think that hyperrealism is the pinnacle of an artist's practice, an idea that is perpetuated by the number of realistic works that make it into competitive exhibitions and awards, and often shared with the undergraduate becoming teachers by their previous schoolteachers and peers. Consequently, the beginning part of the unit supports becoming teachers to return to the joy of experimentation and inquiry.

While the undergraduate becoming teachers are highly autonomous during this semester, the studio habits can be used at any point in time. There is a formative review conducted halfway through the semester, where the becoming teachers and staff formally reflect on each other's work and offer advice moving forward into the resolution of the body of work. However, most becoming teachers can be seen offering informal advice on a weekly basis. If a student has an artistic block, the studio habits are used as a prompt and may provide insight for a way forward. Peer review often lead this process, offering generative question making from students about materiality (stretch and explore), concepts (express), or about the vision for the product (envision). At times they also assist each other through collaborative dialogue with provocations to explore new techniques (develop craft). The habits of mind formalise the discussions through a shared and common disciplinary language and support the becoming teachers to act as master-mentors to each other within the studio space.

## PRACTICE-LED PEDAGOGY

The pedagogical approach to teaching through the habits of mind and through the master and mentor model is practice-led. Important to practice-led research is *double articulation,* whereby theory and practice are considered simultaneously as a reflexive practice is developed (Bolt, 2010). Our teaching across both cohorts is informed by praxis, and the practice of teaching is also constantly reflected *on* and *in* as we interact with our becoming teachers (Schön, 1987). The research that occurs within the spaces we both practice within transforms future experiences and shapes the theory of teaching within the ITE context. Important to this process is that it is a living inquiry (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005). Referring back to Bandura's (1978) reciprocal determinism model, the person and behaviour factors change with each group of becoming teachers; therefore, pedagogy and practice changes within the space to accommodate the lived experiences of the group and based on the interactions between the becoming teachers and teacher educators.

Practice-led teaching and research is heavily influenced by the notion of experimentation and play, and an understanding that the research is more than the researcher themselves. The sense of discovery for participants is evident in practice-led teaching (Haseman, 2014), and is aligned with the eight studio habits of mind (Hetland et al., 2007). While the goal of the TAP exhibition is fixed in the WA context, the process to achieve the goal depends on the participants and how they collaborate together as a group of artist-teachers. Julia's facilitation as a teacher educator forms the role of mentor, whereby she works alongside the participants and employs multiple frameworks (such as the studio habits) to give structure to their developing cultural dialogues and material practices where it is needed. Her pedagogy is woven through the findings from the WA TAP participants, as the lived experience of pedagogy and practice is interrelated.

## FINDINGS FROM THE WA TAP PARTICIPANTS

The TAP project has run in WA over the past three years. In 2016 qualitative data were collected from the graduating participants. In 2017 the two cohorts of undergraduate becoming teachers (2016 alumni and 2017 graduates) were invited to participate in both quantitative and qualitative data collections. The participants completed a survey on their identity and experiences, and extended qualitative data were captured through the survey and unstructured interviews. The findings for this cohort are limited due to the small sample size; however, the initial findings can be used to evaluate the teaching approach used within the undergraduate course and they provide insight into the participants' identity formation as becoming teachers. The discussion below weaves field notes and observations of Julia's lived experience through the process with the data from the undergraduate participants.

## HOW EMBODIED EXPERIENCES SUPPORT LEARNING

The TAP experience promotes embodied learning. Embodied learning is important because "Human experience is, according to Merleau-Ponty's view, not something that we contemplate from some position outside the world, but it is itself part of that world" (Stolz, 2015, p. 478). Merleau-Ponty's conception of embodiment has synergies with Bandura's reciprocal determinism model in that the interactions of environment, person and behaviour cannot be isolated (Bandura, 1978).

The notion of embodied learning is particularly important in the context of visual arts as it relies on the artist's understanding of materiality and expression through materials (Budge, 2016). As such, the artist is part of the work, and the work is part of the artist. Consequently, undergraduate becoming teachers' process of making artworks about their shifting and multiplicitous identities helps them come to know themselves as becoming teachers *through* the visual arts. Therefore, the becoming teachers engage in practice-led research throughout the TAP semester. As a teacher educator Julia is able to see the becoming teachers practising Barrett's (2010) *meme* in this process, whereby the artworks made are vehicles to convey cultural understandings of what it means to be an artist-teacher or teacher-artist (with a differing emphasis for the individual student).

Becoming teachers embody both master and mentor as they simultaneously develop their own work and extend their notion of practice (as master) and support their peers through the process (as mentor). To enact these roles in the university context can be challenging for becoming teachers, as it means taking ownership of their learning in the final semester and bringing a self-directed focus to practice. Part of this transition to the workforce involves Julia as a teacher educator, as the relationship between teacher educator and the becoming teachers becomes more democratic in a community of practice. Julia supports this transition by working alongside becoming teachers in the studio for the final semester, so they may reciprocally observe and discuss her arts practice as she mentors them.

As novice exhibitors, there is a need to talk about embodiment not only in terms of art practice but also in terms of mentoring becoming teachers. At the beginning of the TAP semester Julia discusses empathy, and becoming teachers reflect on how the fear and excitement they feel about graduating is similar to those of final year secondary students. For the undergraduate becoming teachers who are apprehensive about the exhibition, the WA cohort talk about how year 12 students prepare their work for examination by strangers. Often the undergraduate becoming teachers have taught year 12 students while on practicum, and can relate to this scenario. The aim of this process is to shift any fears or concerns they have away from their own practice, and instead, to consider this process one of empathy building. Repositioning the intent of the exercise to embodied learning often dispels some of the initial fear of displaying artworks. This sets the tone for the becoming teachers

to engage in practice-led work and to engage with materiality to understand the world around them, and their place in it as artist-teacher.

The qualitative data from the WA undergraduate participants indicated they felt a deeper sense of empathy for their future students and the process of working artistically. A first year beginning teacher explained "*I am able to relate to students better as I am practicing and going through a design and production process just like they are.*" Furthermore, the graduating teachers feel like they are more aware of the curriculum and how senior school students (in particular) experience the curriculum:

> *I feel the lead up to my body of work has made me able to understand better the work required of ATAR [Australian tertiary admissions rank] art students. Being asked to produce an artwork with a set theme and time frame has helped me to be more prepared for students experiencing similar circumstances.*

The embodied experience translated to the classroom setting as well. The undergraduates spoke about their practice with secondary school students and this affected the interpersonal interactions within the classroom:

> *I have found students to be more open about their artworks when they understand I am still practising myself. In addition, when they see I am genuinely interested to hear feedback on my art, they to listen to what others have to say about their artworks.*

Through TAP there is emerging evidence that emphasising master and mentor translates to the classroom, as undergraduate trained teachers bring their arts practice into the educational setting. From the initial qualitative data, it would appear this practice has enhanced teaching in visual arts, and made teachers more aware of how they plan for visual arts experiences.

## CHANGING PERCEPTIONS OF SELF

While it is positive to see the effect of the TAP experience on teaching practice, the undergraduate trained participants spoke about the changes in their own identity as a result of the process. A few of the comments collected in the survey included:

- *Remaining active in the 'art world' keeps me in touch and is a chance for me to do something for my practice. This is important for my self-worth as an artist and reflects into my teaching practice.*
- *I enjoy and treasure the opportunity to exhibit with other artists and teachers.*
- *I like to feel a part of this community where fellow teachers and art practitioners understand my circumstances. I find it very encouraging and motivating in my own work.*

The emotive language used to discuss the impact of TAP shows the significance of this practice and culture of practice for the participants. The WA participants felt that TAP was a strong community of practice. Maintaining a network is especially for important for early career teachers as there is high teacher attrition in the first five years of teaching, and common causes of teachers leaving the profession are a sense of burnout and isolation (Australian Council for Educational Research, 2014; Woodhouse & Pedder, 2016). Having access to the TAP community is one strategy to support early career teachers, as they have a network of teachers in similar circumstances who they can call on for support in their formative years. This shift in the conceptualisation of their cohort showed a change in the identity of the group of participants. They were no longer defined as 'teachers' or 'becoming teachers' but instead saw themselves as a network of professionals who practice in a common field.

Figure 2. *Installation of the TAP 2017 ECU exhibition.*

Interestingly, the sense of community was evident in the visual language of the artworks produced for the 2017 exhibition. Figure 2 shows the 2017 exhibition installed at Heathcote Museum and Gallery in Perth. Many of the works in the exhibition focussed on fragmentation, used either a very limited colour palette or (not shown in this image) very vibrant colours, and there was an emphasis on line in most of the works submitted. It was evident that the participants were working collectively to produce a cohesive body of work as a community, while still being authentic to their individual artistic styles.

Not only did identity shift on a group level, but the identity for the individual WA participants also changed. In the first semester of their final year (where they focus on mentor), Julia qualitatively collects becoming teachers' perceptions of identity on the scale of artist, artist who teaches, teacher who practices art, teacher (these scales have been reworded to practitioner in TAP; however, the original terminology is used within this visual arts context (Morris, Imms, Toscano, & Coleman, 2017)). Most of the becoming teachers see themselves as a teacher, with some tentatively thinking they are (or would like to be) a teacher who practices art. They justify the tendency towards identifying as a teacher because they are beginning to apply for teaching positions, and the notion of being a teacher is more strongly conveyed through the job application process than that of artist.

At the end of the final semester the initial responses are compared to the TAP survey data. The overall TAP participants (including MGSE) fit into one of four groups that were identified in a cluster analysis of the longitudinal data:

> **Group 1**: In general, they identify as practitioners, in reality they are practitioners.

> **Group 2**: In general, they identify as a practitioner who teaches, in reality they are a teacher who practices.

> **Group 3**: In general, they identify as a practitioner who teaches, but in reality they are a teacher.

> **Group 4**: In general, they identify as a teacher who practices, and in reality they are also a teacher who practices.

These groupings compare both the participants' perception of their identity and self-reported 'real' identity based on their lived experiences. The 2017 survey data showed most WA participants clustered within group 4.

It is likely that they identify (and in reality are) teachers who practice as they have a unique opportunity to prepare for their first TAP exhibition just prior to graduation. This builds a connection with the project that encourages them to maintain practice into their early career teaching. Only longitudinal analysis will show if this continues into subsequent years. However, becoming teachers who felt very strongly about being a 'teacher' slowly shifted their perspective by the end of semester. For example, one of the 2017 graduates recently wrote "*While my identity is teacher before artist, I strive to be what my students need most … an artist-teacher can be the bridge between the art world and the school world*". This is in contrast to her initial perspective that "*my role as a teacher to encourage students to explore art practices and create work that is meaningful to them*". While the initial statement emphasises students' practice and distances herself as teacher from the students' processes, the revised perspective shows more connection between teacher and student, and emphasises the active role of the teacher in helping individual students follow their artistic practice.

## CONCLUSION

The integration of TAP within the WA context has had a significant impact on the full four years of the undergraduate ITE course, in both programming and lived experience. Identity is a dynamic construct and an assemblage of many experiences (Thornton, 2013; Tuckwell & Johstone, 2016). For undergraduate ITE, the challenge is to produce teachers who are capable and adaptive in both their subject content area as well as in applying pedagogy to meet their students' needs, and to develop these aspects simultaneously. As teacher educators, we have been conscious not to preference one of these areas over the other (even though it might appear *easier* to support the siloed approach to education by not challenging the status quo). However, the benefits derived from integrating the master-mentor approach in education units have included graduates who have deeper empathy for learners as a result of their own experience as embodied learners, as well as graduates who value their arts practice and see that the TAP community and culture of practice is a supportive space for them to continue to develop their practice as early career teachers.

This approach to initial teacher education is about encouraging the individual identity of each visual arts teacher so that they can articulate who they are, what they value, and how they enact these values in the classroom through what they do. In addition, it is about the affective support that can be maintained longitudinally through the community and culture of practice – not only for the sake of practice itself, but so that artist-teachers have a network to call upon as they leave university and enter the profession. This community and culture of practitioners sustains critical discussions about practice (of teaching and art) between like-minded individuals.

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