Rejuvenating experienced teachers through Quality Teaching Rounds professional development

Jennifer Gore¹ · Bernadette Rickards¹

Published online: 21 May 2020
© The Author(s) 2020

Abstract

The key premise of professional development (PD) is that learning to teach continues throughout teachers' careers. And yet, experienced teachers are often portrayed in media and public policy as resistant to such learning and afraid of change. This paper seeks a more nuanced understanding of why experienced teachers might resist the prospect of PD by investigating their responses to an innovative research-based collaborative approach known as Quality Teaching Rounds (QTR). We chronicle a story of change, from initial reservations to deep engagement and professional renewal. Analysis of before-and-after interviews with 25 mid-to-late career teachers from 20 primary and secondary schools in New South Wales, Australia, revealed that three features of QTR were critical to teacher turnaround: the time afforded teachers to refocus on quality teaching; time to observe teaching and learning and be observed; and processes founded on trust in and respect for teachers. In essence, QTR inspired teachers to embrace the opportunity to enhance their individual and collective practice, and they were rejuvenated in the process. Accordingly, we argue that the problem of professional development uptake among experienced teachers may lie less in ageist assumptions about their resistance to change than in the nature of the PD on offer. When PD is meaningful, intellectually engaging, safe, and collegial, experienced teachers are eager to participate.

Keywords Professional development · Quality teaching · Quality Teaching Rounds · Resistance to change · Teacher renewal

✉ Jennifer Gore
jenny.gore@newcastle.edu.au

¹ Teachers and Teaching Research Centre, School of Education, University of Newcastle, Hunter Building, Callaghan Campus, University Drive, Callaghan, NSW 2308, Australia

Introduction

Improving the quality of teaching is a major policy goal both in Australia and internationally, and widely considered fundamental to improving student outcomes. Indeed, each year, billions of dollars are invested in teacher professional development (PD) (Kraft et al. 2018). However, rigorous evidence of the impact of PD remains elusive (Gore et al. 2017; Garet et al. 2008, 2011, 2016; Vescio et al. 2008). While the form and substance of approaches to PD have been studied extensively in an attempt to improve impact, an alternative explanation—that the impact of PD is mediated by teachers’ perceptions of its value—has received less attention.

Given the vast number of teachers in the workforce of every nation and their potential for far-reaching influence, it is surprising that research on experienced teachers’ perspectives on PD is so scant. This is problematic in a context such as Australia where the average age of teachers is 43.4 years. While this figure is only marginally higher than the average for other nations (42.9 years), the proportion of teachers in Australia aged 50 years and above (37.1%) is higher than that of almost any other country (Freeman et al. 2014). A lack of rigorous research exploring experienced teachers’ views on and responses to PD thus represents a significant gap.

Nonetheless, conventional images and clichés are rife. Despite years spent developing their subject matter and pedagogical knowledge (Orlando 2014), experienced teachers frequently draw fire as obstructing innovation, being out of touch with the needs of a new generation, and serving out their time when passion for the job has long since waned (Ben-Peretz and McCulloch 2009). Stereotypes cast them as stubbornly resistant to change. At best, they are characterised as approaching educational innovations with cynicism (Guskey 1989), nostalgic for a previous ‘golden age’ (Goodson et al. 2006), and standing firm against contemporary educational reform (McCulloch 2009). At worst, depictions are more graphic, with experienced teachers tagged as “deadwood” or “time-servers” (Hargreaves and Fullan 2012, pp. 64–65), counting down the days to retirement (Alvy 2005, p. 765).

Over the past decade, the Australian education policy terrain has been riddled with reform ‘solutions’ that subject teachers, administrators, and policymakers to mounting levels of surveillance and stress (Bentley and Savage 2017). Australia’s increasing fixation with international measures of student achievement has resulted in a host of “dysfunctional consequences,” including “an erosion of our self-belief and confidence as educators” (Dinham 2013, p. 92). These problems are undoubtedly exacerbated by the short-term cyclical churn of today’s politics and media (Bentley and Savage 2017). An onslaught of political and media attacks on standards in Australia have left many teachers with low morale and energy, doubting their own wisdom, despite years of successful practice (Kamler and Comber 2005; Stroud 2018). The “unrelenting message” from such educational authorities is that long-serving teachers’ well-established practices are “no longer good enough” (Orlando 2014, p. 428).

This problem is not unique to Australia. Over the last three decades many national and state education systems have adopted accountability regimes to steer educational practice, particularly in Anglo-American and Asian nations (Brass and

Holloway 2019; Holloway and Brass 2018; Lingard et al. 2013). Accordingly, Day (2004) points to a number of studies charting the consequences of this growing emphasis on results-driven curricula, including less risk-taking, stifled creativity, and a reversion to more traditional teaching styles.

Little wonder, then, if teaching feels like “the battered profession” (Dinham 2013, p. 98). Policies that assault the expertise of experienced teachers risk driving the most well-prepared, and most emotionally invested, out of the profession (Stillman and Anderson 2015; Stroud 2018). Not surprisingly, disenchanted teachers may opt to retire in their fifties, especially when the benefits of retirement packages outweigh any satisfaction they might expect by remaining on the job (Alvy 2005). While it is difficult to put a dollar cost globally on this premature professional exit, a recent report estimates that on average it takes eleven hires to replace a quality teacher in the United States alone (Schaefer et al. 2014).

Our concern in this paper, however, lies less with experienced teachers who leave and more with those who stay. We ask: Can PD fortify their motivation, commitment, and resilience, all of which are essential to maintaining teaching at its best (Day and Gu 2009)? What kinds of PD might best contribute to their professional renewal? Why might experienced teachers resist PD and, more importantly, what components do they actually value?

We explore these issues by analysing the experiences of mid-to-late career teachers who participated in Quality Teaching Rounds (QTR), a form of PD that neither pathologises them nor centres on accountability but, rather, seeks to be respectful and regenerative. As we shall demonstrate, teachers embraced the opportunity to produce quality teaching and, despite initial reservations, relished being challenged. In essence, this paper reveals the transformative power of PD that mid-to-late career teachers find meaningful, safe, intellectually engaging, and collegial.

The PD approach

QTR is founded on strong evidence from prior research on effective pedagogy (Ladwig 2007; Newmann et al. 1996) and effective PD (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin 1995; Garet et al. 2001; Hawley and Valli 1999; Kennedy 2005; Louis 2007; Penuel et al. 2007). It combines the strengths of professional learning communities (PLCs), including attention to community, local context, and applicability (Bolam et al. 2005; McLaughlin and Talbert 2001), with those of instructional rounds, especially attention to evidence and collaboration (City et al. 2009; Elmore 2007). Crucially, QTR adds a pedagogical framework, the Quality Teaching (QT) model (NSW Department of Education and Training 2003) to structure observation and analysis of teaching (Bowe 2016; Bowe and Gore 2017).

Notably, this framework addresses head on the issue of what constitutes good teaching and learning. The concept of good teaching is often poorly defined and widely contested (Lampert et al. 2018), but it makes sense that if teachers are to teach well, they need to have (or develop) a sense of what constitutes good teaching. Indeed, City et al. (2009) point out that the first step in any systematic

attempt to scale up quality is to “develop an explicit and widely held view of what constitutes good teaching and learning” (p. 173).

To achieve this end, the QT model focuses on pedagogy in three dimensions: Intellectual Quality, Quality Learning Environment, and Significance. Each dimension is comprised of six elements, as shown in Table 1. Rather than being narrowly focused on a single part of teaching practice, the model offers a comprehensive account. It addresses matters of curriculum, student engagement, social justice, and pedagogical practice, thus enabling teachers to engage in holistic individual and collective analysis of teaching in their own contexts (Gore et al. 2017). It also facilitates analysis at a level of specificity that is intended to quickly engage groups of educators in rich conversations, guided by 1-to-5 descriptors for each element.

Importantly, the QT model provides teachers with a common language and set of conceptual standards absent in much collaborative PD, including work on PLCs and instructional rounds. A common language facilitates rigorous, rich professional conversations, while not excluding other matters teachers might want to focus on (Bowe and Gore 2017; Gore et al. 2017). This addresses an enduring challenge to effective PD: that reaching agreement about what constitutes good teaching is often impeded by the underdeveloped language teachers have for talking about their work (Bowe and Gore 2017). The QT model enables teachers to notice and analyse practice through the shared language of its dimensions and elements.

Teachers who participate in QTR typically work with the QT model in groups of four, with at least one lesson observed for every member of the professional learning community. A ‘round’ is comprised of three sequential sessions that occur on a single day.

(1) The first session (typically 1 hour in duration) engages teachers in discussion of a professional reading, chosen by a PLC member. The aim is to develop a shared basis for their professional conversations, learn more about each other’s beliefs and values as they pertain to teaching and learning, and explore implications of policy and school initiatives for their practice.

(2) The second session involves classroom observation. One PLC member teaches a lesson (30–60 min duration) that is observed by all other members of the PLC.

Table 1 Dimensions and elements of the Quality Teaching model

Intellectual quality	Quality learning environment	Significance
Deep knowledge	Explicit quality criteria	Background knowledge
Deep understanding	Engagement	Cultural knowledge
Problematic knowledge	High expectations	Knowledge integration
Higher order thinking	Social support	Inclusivity
Metalanguage	Students’ self-regulation	Connectedness
Substantive communication	Student direction	Narrative

- (3) The third session involves individual analysis and coding of the lesson, including by the host teacher (usually 30 min), followed by a discussion of the lesson by all PLC members using the QT model (typically taking 1–2 h).

All teachers take their turn to host a lesson observation and all teachers, including the host, participate fully in coding, analysis, and discussion.

Taken together, these processes are designed to build trust and counter both the well-documented reluctance of teachers to open their classrooms for peer observation (Elmore 2002; Little 1990) and the characteristic ‘politeness’ that often impedes critical analysis of their practice (Hargreaves 1994). Matters such as confidentiality, note-taking during observations, and interacting with students during lessons are negotiated by each PLC to help teachers feel comfortable about deprivatising their practice. Thus it is that QTR attends carefully to the power relations inherent in collaboration and allows teachers to enter risky territory with maximum support.

The study

Building on a series of preliminary studies (Gore 2014; Gore et al. 2017), the interview data utilised in this paper were collected as part of a cluster randomised controlled trial (RCT) conducted in government schools in New South Wales, Australia. The methodology has been described in detail elsewhere (Gore et al. 2015). In brief, the project involved a rigorously designed RCT adhering to the Consolidated Standards of Reporting Trials (CONSORT) guidelines for group trials (Moher et al. 2010).

The three-arm cluster RCT, conducted from mid-2014 to mid-2015, involved two intervention groups—a “Set” intervention (two sets of Rounds) and a “Choice” intervention (one or two sets of Rounds)—and a waitlist control group. Two full lessons per teacher for 192 teachers in 24 schools (8 in each school) were observed by the research team (blinded to group allocation) before QTR commenced (baseline), 6 months later when the two intervention groups had finished, and again 6 months after that in order to begin to consider the sustainability of any effects. In addition, all participating teachers were surveyed at the three points in time. The quantitative analysis showed significant gains in the quality of teaching, as well as in teacher morale and sense of recognition, for the two intervention groups (effect sizes 0.4–0.5) (Gore et al. 2017).

A subset of teachers was interviewed at each data collection time-point, using repeat-interview methodology (Corden and Millar 2007). This enabled an analysis of how teachers’ responses to the PD changed over time. The interviews focused on teacher perceptions of PD in general and QTR in particular, the professional learning culture of their school, their personal philosophy of teaching, and their career plans (see Appendix A for example interview schedule). For this paper, our analysis is anchored solely in the interview data.

Participants

Teachers included in this analysis were: (1) in either the middle (7–18 years' experience) or late phases (19–30+ years' experience) of their careers (Huberman 1989); and (2) had participated in interviews at two time-points (baseline and 6 and/or 12 months), or had reflected substantially on their pre-participation views during the post-intervention interviews. Table 2 profiles the 25 teachers (3 male, 22 female) working in 20 different schools who met the experience and pre-post interview criteria. The gender balance here reflects the teaching profession in Australia, where eight out of ten primary teachers are female (Weldon 2015).

Data analysis

All interviews were audio-recorded, professionally transcribed, and read by at least two members of the research team. Data were coded with the assistance of

Table 2 Participating teachers

Years of teaching experience	Pseudonym	Speciality
7–9	Adam	Science
	Lania	Social Science
	Sarah	Primary
10–12	Jan	Primary
	Jodi	Primary
	Amber	Special Education
	Tessa	Primary
	Kaylah	Science
	Helen	English
	Carol	Science
	Carly	Primary
13–15	Breanna	English
	Wendy	Languages
16–18	Karen	English
19–21	Sheree	Primary
	Ellen	Primary
	Judith	Primary
	Jo-Anne	Primary
22–24	Lillian	Primary
	Matt	Primary
	Tony	Social Science
24+	Sue	Primary
	Gabrielle	Primary
	Michelle	Science
	Briony	Technology

NVivo software version 10, using an inductive process of building from the data to broad themes (Creswell 2013). Still the most commonly used method of analysis in qualitative research, despite more recent alternatives (e.g., Lather 2017; St. Pierre 2013), thematic analysis is especially useful in identifying the complexities of meaning within a textual dataset generated from in-depth interviews (Guest et al. 2012). Coding commenced with one pair of researchers reading the different sets of interviews—pre-intervention, post-intervention, follow-up—and another reading the set of interviews for each participating teacher. Next, codes were iteratively consolidated, compared, discussed, and refined until agreement on key themes was reached among the research team. Our aim was to bring to light teachers’ professional reasoning, by analysing their views on PD and their response to participation in QTR.

The quotes we have selected to present in this paper are most illustrative and/or representative of teachers’ views. Exemplars appear from most, but not all, teachers featured in Table 2. The first time we quote a teacher, we include her/his years of teaching experience in brackets, but thereafter not for subsequent quotes.

Findings

Findings are presented in three sections. In the first, we explore how mid-to-late career teachers position themselves and their colleagues in relation to stereotypes about ‘older’ teachers, particularly with respect to their supposed ‘resistance’ to PD. In the second section, we chronicle the impact of teachers’ participation in QTR and their transition from scepticism to being ‘switched back on.’ In the third and final section, we illustrate the most salient aspects of QTR that engaged these experienced teachers and led to renewed confidence in their abilities.

Experienced teachers as learners

The teachers in our study took pains to distance themselves from the caricature of older teachers as averse to change and reluctant to participate in PD. They often represented themselves as learners who are open, engaged, and curious. Sue [24+ years], for example, wants “to be the best teacher I can” and is “always looking for professional development.” Prior to undertaking QTR, she was already a reflexive teacher with a professional mantra focused on the core purpose of teaching:

I say to the kids, “What’s the purpose, what are we doing this for?”... in the hope that whatever we do is going to be a learning curve for me that will support their learning and help me be a better teacher. So, I’m hoping that’s what this [QTR] is all about. That’s why I put my hand up because yes, anything to make me a better teacher, I’m in for.

In fact, it is this disposition for improving practice that attracts her to QTR participation. Other teachers also articulated a commitment to ongoing learning. Adam [7–9 years], for example, says, “the day I stop learning is the day I stop being a teacher” while Jan [10–12 years] observes, “if you’re not learning every day with

your kids then you shouldn't be in the profession in my view." This striving to improve is not simply a response to accountability or surveillance regimes. Rather, as Matt [22–24 years] explains, it is because "as teachers, you're always critiquing yourself anyway. You want to do the best that you can for your kids." Unthreatened by younger colleagues coming up through the ranks, Matt views them as an "inspiration to keep me developing myself with what's going on as well."

While such commentary evokes a positive image of older teachers committed to finding the best solutions for their students, it also invokes an 'us and them' binary. Teachers at the younger end of the mid-to-late career teacher spectrum, in particular, seem more judgmental when speaking of colleagues. Tessa [10–12 years], for example, describes a talented colleague who opposes the QT model, using the stereotype of the resistant older teacher:

At my last school, there was a man who was a fantastic teacher but he was waiting out his position to retire. So, he wanted nothing to do with interactive whiteboards, he wanted nothing to do with Quality Teaching because he knew he only had a year to go. So, trying to get him to identify those [QT] elements and making sure that he had them in his classroom practice—he said, "I know the kids are all doing their work"; he said, "I know what they know." But there was no evidence of him actually using [QT].

Older experienced teachers also engage in belittling talk about their contemporaries. Sue, a self-confessed "perfectionist" seems to identify with younger teachers, while reproaching older teachers for being stuck in old routines:

I find a lot of the younger staff, [those in their] middle-20 s/early-30 s, have got more interest. They've got that drive. They want to be a good teacher, willing to change for the better of the students whereas I don't know if that's everybody ... I think there'd be a lot of staff that say, "Okay, this is what I did five years ago; that's the way I'll teach."

It is of great interest, however, that while most teachers characterise themselves as learners, many did show resistance to QTR PD in the early stages. Prior to participation in the study, they seriously questioned its relevance and utility at this stage of their careers. Jo-Anne [22–24 years], for example, eschews the newness of the approach, "To be honest I do a lot of it anyway, I just didn't know it had a title," while Michelle [24+ years] questions the novelty of the QT model, "it's just been the jargon put around what we already do." Likewise, Carly's [13–15 years] framing of QT as "just best practice" suggests a lack of conviction that it has much to offer her as an already competent teacher:

From what I've read, it seems to me that it's really just best practice, that's what good teachers actually do, maybe intuitively ... I feel like it is actually just common sense and it just describes what quality teachers do.

The repetition of phrases such as *best practice*, *I do it anyway*, *what we already do*, and *just common sense*, provides a rationale for not engaging. Many teachers, such as Adam, are cautious about PD that might be condescending, without adding to their knowledge and skills:

So, from a lot of teachers' points of view, from the people I work with down in Science, we don't understand, we don't see, and we haven't been exposed to the systems that are trying to be put in place by [the] Quality Teaching framework. Whether or not they're any different to what we're actually doing now is something we question.

Having been exposed to a series of PD initiatives over the course of their careers, such caution is not surprising. Yet even teachers at the younger end of the spectrum, such as Sarah [7–9 years], already identify the aggravating pattern of recycled PD ideas re-branded as novel:

I'm starting to see that now, that cycle of programs come in and come out and now being able to say, "Oh okay, so this is the new name for that" and "This is what they used to call this." Yes, you get a bit jaded by that sometimes.

Clearly this kind of disillusionment will impact the way older teachers engage with PD, especially if, as veteran Gabrielle [24+ years] suggests, the proposed changes appear unnecessary or, worse, baseless:

It's a hard one because, look, there's a lot of changes in the way that the Department of Education is run and the schools are run, and sometimes we're inundated with professional learning. Sometimes that's not as effective as they think it's going to be, and I think people at the other end of their career have worked out what works and you're not going to change that; I think that's human nature.

It is possible to interpret such commentary as indicative of older teachers' resistance to change, but we believe a more complex reading applies. That is, as Gabrielle asserts, it is their right to critique all proposed PD in relation to its authenticity and relevance to their practice. Having been around teaching for a long time, there was no simple eager embrace of the opportunity to participate in QTR. Instead, dedicated to their profession and their students, they were cautiously open to the possibility that *this* PD might have something to offer.

Experienced teachers as 'switched back on'

After their participation in QTR, 24 of the 25 mid-to-late career teachers embraced this form of PD. Their dominant narrative was one of overcoming initial reservations and, ultimately, feeling rejuvenated. Prior to her involvement in the study, Judith [19–21 years] asserts, "all good teachers naturally use that sort of [QT] framework." However, after participation, her story changes:

Through QTR I've learnt to focus more on how I'm teaching and what I'm teaching. It became apparent that I don't tend to focus on a key idea in my lessons. I tend to flip and flop ... and I end up trying to cover lots of things in a lesson but nothing has been covered very well, whereas I really should be focusing on a key idea and teaching that idea well ... My first lesson didn't get fantastic feedback but I was okay with that. My second lesson got better feedback; so you can only improve, can't you?

This transition from scepticism to enthusiasm for QTR is reiterated in many teacher accounts. Karen [19–21 years] describes how “cynicism was overcome by reality, and it's fantastic, and I'm grateful.” Likewise, Michelle not only describes QTR as “the best thing I've done in over 27 years of teaching,” but is particularly surprised at the turnaround among her more resistant colleagues: “And like I said, people that I thought might not participate, have come back with rave reviews. Like, I'm gobsmacked in some instances.”

Close attention to the teachers' language reveals a widespread story of rejuvenation through QTR. Rekindled enthusiasm for teaching was evident in such teacher refrains as “I am inspired with my teaching again” [Jo-Anne] and “[QTR] really invigorated my idea of teaching” [Jan]. Moreover, teachers' frequent use of the prefix ‘re’ in such words as ‘reaffirmed’ and ‘reenergised’ signals a return to a previous state; a restoration, through QTR, of their previously diminished energy and motivation.

Perhaps inevitably, veteran teachers compare themselves to their younger colleagues, at times with a degree of envy as they acknowledge beginning teachers' enthusiasm, vitality, and the recency of their teacher education. However, after QTR, few teachers made self-critical comparisons. Instead, Sheree [19–21 years] relates how QTR helps recast her teaching as current and relevant:

I was a support teacher before this [for] 16 years, and I was getting bored well and truly ... [Now] I'm really buzzed about, you know, being in touch with the [QT] framework, which I heard the New Scheme [beginning] teachers talk about. I was thinking, “Well, do I really need to know this?” You do. You do. And [now] just feeling as though I'm not old. I know what I'm doing is current and relevant to the kids.

Working in PLCs in the context of QTR was also a powerful means of bringing younger and older colleagues together for mutual benefit and inspiration. Veteran Tony [24+ years] tells how this opportunity reinstated his belief in the profession:

It's good to see that there are so many other teachers who are so passionate about their particular job in the school ... Schools are interesting places, as you know, and you get this wide range of people in terms of their enthusiasm for the job, and it was really nice to actually work with people who were enthusiastic and so knowledgeable and so reflective [about] their practice ... that was really enjoyable.

Participation in QTR expanded teachers' horizons; it provided time to re-think their approach to teaching going forward. Wendy [16–18 years], for example, no longer has a myopic view of her career path. Rather, she sees new opportunities, such as mentoring junior colleagues, through which to channel her renewed energy:

It's made me look big picture, it's made me think, like, you know, I could just sit really comfortably here for the next 10 years and retire from this school. But I'm not thinking that way ... it's reinvigorated the way I think about my teaching practice and supporting and encouraging new teachers to the profession.

Clearly QTR is a potent means of disrupting the inertia gripping some experienced teachers. Ellen [19–21 years] describes participation in QTR as “a breath of fresh air,” recalling how invigorating it was to examine areas of her practice that still needed attention:

I didn't want to be one of these teachers who had been teaching for 25 years and was very stale, so it was great timing for me ... I said [to my Principal], you know, “I used to think I was a really good teacher, but when I did the Quality Teaching framework there are bits that I'm missing, that I need to fix up.”

It is important to note that veteran Gabrielle did not share these views and was the only experienced teacher who invoked the maxim “You can't teach an old dog new tricks.” Yet, her account after QTR—“I'm not saying [participation in QTR] was a bad thing but, truly, like my head is full up to here and [I'm] about to exit stage left”—puts her resistance in context. With the end of a long career in sight, Gabrielle understandably questions the relevance of new professional learning with little or no time to put it into practice. Her 24 colleague participants, by contrast, approached their teaching and their profession with greater reflexivity, new conceptual tools with which to refine their practice, and a more positive outlook.

The appeal of QTR to experienced teachers

How do we account for this rejuvenation? Three aspects of the QTR process emerged as central to the change. First, QTR afforded experienced teachers the time and space to get back to ‘core business.’ Second, it gave teachers time to observe teaching and learning in other classrooms and to be observed themselves. Third, QTR's processes were seen as trusting and respectful of experienced teachers.

Time to get back to business

The working lives of experienced teachers are characterised by competing demands, brimming workloads, and time constraints. QTR provided quarantined time to focus on improving the quality of teaching, thus offering respite from the complex, frantic world of teaching. Certainly, the notion of time—the passing of it and the paucity of

it—pervaded the interviews. Wendy, for example, demonises time, characterising it as the nemesis of quality teaching:

I suppose time is the enemy ... you know, it takes time to come up with creative lesson planning and sometimes we become a little bit complacent and just fall back on things we've done previously. So, it's time and opportunity to really evaluate what we're doing.

Teachers openly lamented how professional obligations outside the classroom increasingly drew their time and focus away from what they perceived as core business. Here, Carly speaks of feeling stretched to capacity, her resources and energy atomised:

All day every day you're pulled in every single direction and you're never pulled back to the classroom. You're never pulled back to the students; you're always pulled away from the students and away from the classroom.... I think the number of things that are expected of us means that we're worn down a lot of the time and so even if you want to do a particularly amazing lesson you don't have the time to actually prepare for it in the way that you would like to ... It's staff meetings, it's professional development, it's interviews with parents, it's school concerts, it's sporting events. It's all of those different things that get in the way when, at our heart, we actually just want to teach English and Maths and Art and Music and do a really good job of it.

Carly's frustration with managing myriad competing priorities is palpable. Her repeated reference to being "pulled" in multiple directions, but always away from what she wants to be doing, conveys just how wearing are the unremitting demands on teachers. In such a context, the prospect of engaging in PD can feel like just one more demand. But teachers like Kaylah delighted in allocated time away from day-to-day demands in order to focus on pedagogy: "I think it's just that element of focus, I think it's the element of refocusing and getting back to what I should be doing ... I think it's nice just to look straight up at teaching and learning."

In essence, being given time for QTR enabled teachers to do the job they want to do. Such commentary provides crucial insight into the pressures teachers juggle in their working lives which, in turn, explains why longer serving teachers were so appreciative of dedicated time to refocus on teaching and learning. Thus, QTR was seen as valuable, not as an unnecessary burden.

Time to observe and be observed

One might not expect mid-to-late career teachers to lack confidence in their classroom abilities. So, we were surprised at how often even the most experienced teachers expressed a sense of affirmation and validation from participating in QTR. Matt, for example, refers to the fragile nature of teacher confidence:

You know, you go through those months where you'd be going, "Right, I'm on top of it, it's all good you know, we're smooth sailing. I've got it all together."

And then you'd be going, "I'm the worst teacher" ... I guess for me, it's just having that, you're reaffirmed.

Clearly, experience alone does not protect teachers from professional insecurities, especially teachers who strive for perfection and are their own harshest critics. In the following account, Tony's use of the term *reaffirm*, is evocative in signalling how materially the confidence of experienced teachers can be undermined:

I'm always thinking, "I'm quite a good teacher," and I would say that the stuff that you do and the comments coming back reaffirms what you think of yourself—well to me it did ... Is that a bit ... over the top or weird? ... It was nice to actually have other people come in and saying what you do is really good.

Surprisingly, the most powerful mechanism for fostering confidence and renewal involved the most potentially threatening component of the QTR process, open-door teaching, as Wendy attests:

You know, we think "there's other people in their classrooms doing better than I am," and then QTR really demystified that. It really opened up classrooms ... I'm doing some things well. There are some things I could do better [but], at the heart of it, I'm always trying to improve, and I think that's really the best you can ask of anyone.

For most of our teachers, QTR lesson observations were a potent means of pulling back the curtain—uncovering the myths kept alive behind closed doors. Watching others teach was not only revelatory, it was ultimately reassuring for teachers. Adam, for example, relates how he no longer feels pitched against the spectre of 'better' teachers in 'other' classrooms: "Sometimes some teachers have the 'Best Teacher' label pinned to them or 'Amazing Teacher' label and you can go and observe their classes and think, 'Well, you know, it's pretty good but I do that too.'"

Processes founded on trust and respect

The democratising processes of QTR were fundamental to levelling power hierarchies and engendering trust. Participants came to feel their contributions held equal weight, regardless of their years of teaching experience. Karen explains:

Well, it was the trust; it's really based on trust. You've got people coming into your classroom. For a person who's been teaching for over 30 years, been teaching for over 20 years, and then you've got two who have been [teaching for] six—well, it was a matter of everybody was here, everybody is equal. And you know what? There's no talking out of turn. There's no dissing out on anybody there. It was just reciprocated, trust. Everything was there to make it work and everyone took it seriously and it was lovely.

Critically, our mid-to-late career teachers were also challenged intellectually. The specific and structured processes of QTR appealed to them; they were not seen as

prescriptive or taking away from the art of teaching but, instead, as respectful of their capacities and experience. Indeed, weary of condescending and fatuous PD, teachers like Helen were looking for substance and meaningful input:

I'm quite critical of PD in general because I think very little of it is geared at teachers who are beyond a beginner level. So, for someone who's beyond a beginner level, I think this kind of professional learning is much more valuable because it's practical, it happens the day you do it ... I just think it's got so much more guts behind it than just sitting there and being non-responsive in a room for a whole day ... I don't think I've really enjoyed professional learning in the whole 12 years I've been teaching, and this is the first time I have been excited about it.

Finally, the QTR processes trusted teachers to take ownership for their ongoing learning and, with increasing confidence, appropriate the language of the QT model, integrating its dimensions and elements into their everyday practice. Here, Wendy captures the benefit of this form of PD in delivering transferable, tangible ideas and practical tools to improve practice:

Reading the research, looking at the evidence, thinking about what I'm doing in the classroom, you know, "Am I teaching? Is my lesson transmitting deep learning? Am I really asking the kids to demonstrate deep understanding?" ... It's just embedding that in my mind. But as I said, a lot of what we do is on our feet. But the way I might present it, I might try and explain things a little bit more explicitly with them, give the kids a little bit more opportunity to discover for themselves ... All change is incremental but, you know, so is a snowball.

Discussion

This study tells a compelling story of teacher change, a story that challenges deficit perspectives on experienced teachers. Given the right circumstances, teachers can and do continue to develop their expertise over the course of their careers. Despite initial scepticism and metaphorical eye-rolling at the prospect of the QTR pedagogy-oriented PD (Gore and Rosser 2020), our mid-to-late career teachers were open to change once they experienced a strong connection between participating in QTR, improving the quality of their teaching, and hence student learning. This finding complements results from a recent meta-analysis which found greater effects of interventions directed at classroom practice among teachers with an average teaching tenure of more than 10 years than among those with experience of 10 years or less (Garrett et al. 2019).

Two particular findings from our study warrant discussion with a view to teasing out the relationship between QTR professional development and teacher change: first, the dissonance between teachers' years of experience and their lack of confidence; second, the profound renewing effect generated through collaboration with

(often younger) colleagues and participation in a stimulating intellectual process that piqued their interest and engaged both their hearts and minds.

Doubting their own wisdom

We did not expect the experienced teachers who volunteered for this study to lack confidence in their classroom abilities. And yet, prior research has also found that even teachers with multiple degrees and years of experience share feelings of inadequacy and fear of failure (Intrator and Kunzman 2006). School reform efforts, in particular those involving so-called ‘one-shot’ approaches to PD, often leave teachers feeling less, rather than more, empowered. They create feelings of inadequacy and distrust, leaving many experienced teachers doubting their professional knowledge and pedagogical practices (Gore 2020; Flint et al. 2011). This begs the question of why such a pattern endures. However, given the current global education policy landscape, crises of confidence among experienced teachers become less mystifying.

The ramping up of strong-arm educational reform in Australia and internationally communicates an underlying distrust in teachers’ professional standing, judgment, and capability. This in turn produces high levels of professional vulnerability, stress, and dissatisfaction with working conditions (Gu 2014) and can alter the way teachers understand themselves and their histories (Buchanan 2015). Unintentional though these consequences may be, their effect on teachers’ sense of efficacy is significant, as our study suggests. The irony here is that improving teaching in order to improve student learning depends in no small part on teachers’ confidence in themselves and each other. Gore and Whitty (2017) argue that widely sought-after improvements in education will continue to elude the profession unless teachers are afforded more respect, trust and, in particular, professional support of the kind that QTR provides.

If, increasingly, what counts in teaching is only that which can be counted (Kamler and Comber 2005), we risk further alienating experienced teachers who are more likely than their newer counterparts to perceive standardisation and accountability as at odds with professionalism (Buchanan 2015). The ‘mega-narrative’ of teacher quality which prescribes functional strategies, such as professional teaching standards, risks overshadowing the human elements in teaching (Fransson et al. 2018). This is worrying given that teachers’ capacity to teach well has been linked to qualities often characterised as heart, passion, and connectedness which are largely ineffable and hard to codify (Intrator and Kunzman 2006). Certainly, many key aspects of teacher quality are not captured by indicators such as qualifications, experience, or tests of academic ability (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development 2011). The emphasis in our study on validating and affirming teachers through PD that privileges their knowledge, skills, and experience is a powerful antidote to how deeply disoriented many have become in an increasingly adversarial policy context.

Engaging teachers' hearts and minds

Teaching is work that demands much of teachers politically, intellectually, morally, and emotionally (Intrator and Kunzman 2006; Kamler and Comber 2005). With the benefit of hindsight, most experienced teachers in our study realised how close to the wind they had been sailing in relation to stereotypes of the older teacher: weary, jaded, and with one eye covertly on the door to retirement. Equally important and reassuring, QTR interrupted their declining commitment and effectiveness trajectories, and reinvigorated their passion for teaching.

Sadly, in a climate of high-stakes accountability and standardisation, teacher renewal might be viewed by administrators and policy makers as secondary to pedagogical technique, content knowledge, and curriculum development (Intrator and Kunzman 2006). And yet, our study demonstrates that rekindling teachers' deep sense of purpose is not a luxury, but a necessity. Moreover, as we have shown, QTR marries the ideological with the pedagogical, engaging teachers' hearts and minds. In fact, the language of the QT model, the pedagogical basis of QTR, was central to experienced teacher renewal. The power of dedicated time and structured collaborative work using a framework that focuses on classroom practice and emphasises teacher development rather than teacher assessment, cannot be overstated.

Our study demonstrates that temporary respite from the work of teaching to focus on structured analysis of teaching, refuels experienced teachers *for the very work of teaching*. And key to this rejuvenation is a process and framework that supports them to ask critical questions about the beliefs and assumptions underpinning their pedagogical practice. Through quite literally opening doors to problem-posing and creating opportunities for inquiry and healthy debate by way of professional dialogue, QTR was instrumental in cultivating a culture of inquiry where it was safe to question (Morris 2017; Snow-Gerono 2005).

In this sense, QTR not only marks a profound departure from these teachers' prior experiences of PD, but importantly contributes to theory in the field of educational change. The shift toward an inquiry stance, supported by a robust pedagogical model and way of working collaboratively, enabled teachers to 're-author' the process, making it their own. This represents a more agentic and learning-rich response to PD (Stillman and Anderson 2015) than is common, a result of QTR's aim to add to, not diminish, what experienced teachers have to offer.

In conclusion, we argue that QTR's deep respect for teachers, at all stages of their careers, can be transformative. QTR's approach differs profoundly from current moves by many government agencies to improve teaching through top-down accountability regimes. Instead, it takes the best of what we've learned about PLCs and adds a conceptual framework to help build a clear vision of good teaching. It enhances previous instructional rounds models by enabling holistic and collaborative analysis of teaching and learning at a new level of specificity. Importantly, as our study shows, QTR bolsters teachers' confidence by helping them fortify quality in their own and others' practice. It engages experienced teachers in the work of improving long-established patterns of practice while simultaneously tapping into the wealth of skills and insights they hold.

The mid-to-late career stage is one where teachers are capable of making an enormous difference to their students, their colleagues, and the communities in which they work. Renewed efforts to retain and support this valuable cohort of teachers are of paramount importance. Having demonstrated that the impact of PD is indeed mediated by perceptions of its value, it follows that if experienced teachers remain resistant to PD, this says more about the nature of the PD on offer than their willingness to learn. In the search for approaches to effective teacher PD, we contend that QTR offers a powerful way forward.

Acknowledgements The authors would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions of Debbie Drew (deceased) and Rosie Barron to preliminary data analysis for this study and thank the teachers who so willingly participated.

Open Access This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

References

- Alvy, H. (2005). Preventing the loss of wisdom in our schools: Respecting and retaining successful veteran teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 86(10), 764–771. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003172170508601009>.
- Ben-Peretz, M., & McCulloch, G. (2009). International perspectives on veteran teachers: Introduction. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 15(4), 403–408. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600903057153>.
- Bentley, T., & Savage, G. C. (2017). Educating Australia—Why our schools aren't improving. *The Conversation*. <https://theconversation.com/educating-australia-why-our-schools-arent-improving-72092>. Retrieved May 24, 2018.
- Bolam, R., McMahon, A., Stoll, L., Thomas, S., Wallace, M., Greenwood, A., et al. (2005). *Creating and sustaining effective professional learning communities*. Bath: University of Bristol/Institute of Education.
- Bowe, J. (2016). *Quality Teaching Rounds: Strengthening the knowledge base and collaborative processes for teacher professional development* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia.
- Bowe, J. M., & Gore, J. M. (2017). Reassembling teacher professional development: The case for quality teaching rounds. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 23, 352–366. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2016.1206522>.
- Brass, J., & Holloway, J. (2019). Re-professionalizing teaching: The new professionalism in the United States. *Critical Studies in Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17508487.2019.1579743>.
- Buchanan, R. (2015). Teacher identity and agency in an era of accountability. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 21(6), 700–719. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2015.1044329>.
- City, E. A., Elmore, R. F., Fiarman, S. E., & Teitel, L. (2009). *Instructional rounds in education: A network approach to improving teaching and learning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education.
- Corden, A., & Millar, J. (2007). Qualitative longitudinal research for social policy—Introduction to the themed section. *Social Policy and Society*, 6(4), 529–532.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Darling-Hammond, L., & McLaughlin, M. W. (1995). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76, 597–604.
- Day, C. (2004). *A passion for teaching*. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2009). Veteran teachers: Commitment, resilience and quality retention. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 15(4), 441–457. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600903057211>.
- Dinham, S. (2013). The quality teaching movement in Australia encounters difficult terrain: A personal perspective. *Australian Journal of Education*, 57(2), 91–106. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0004944113485840>.
- Elmore, R. F. (2002). *Bridging the gap between standards and achievement: The imperative for professional development in education*. http://www.shankerinstitute.org/Downloads/Bridging_Gap.pdf. Retrieved May 30, 2019.
- Elmore, R. F. (2007). Professional networks and school improvement. *School Administrator*, 64(4), 20–25.
- Flint, A. S., Zisook, K., & Fisher, T. R. (2011). Not a one-shot deal: Generative professional development among experienced teachers. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 27(8), 1163–1169. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2011.05.009>.
- Fransson, G., Gallant, A., & Shanks, R. (2018). Human elements and the pragmatic approach in the Australian, Scottish and Swedish standards for newly qualified teachers. *Journal of Educational Change*, 19(2), 243–267. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10833-018-9321-8>.
- Freeman, C., O'Malley, K., & Eveleigh, F. (2014). *Australian teachers and the learning environment: An analysis of teacher response to TALIS 2013—Final report*. <https://research.acer.edu.au/talis/2/>. Retrieved April 13, 2018.
- Garet, M. S., Cronen, S., Eaton, M., Kurki, A., Ludwif, M., Jones, W., et al. (2008). *The impact of two professional development interventions on early reading instruction and achievement (NCEE 2008-4030)*. Washington, DC: National Centre for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pdf/20084030.pdf>. Retrieved August 16, 2019.
- Garet, M. S., Heppen, J. B., Walters, K., Parkinson, J., Smith, T. M., Song, M., et al. (2016). *Focusing on mathematical knowledge: The impact of content-intensive teacher professional development*. Washington, DC: National Centre for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED569154.pdf>. Retrieved August 16, 2019.
- Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., Birman, B. F., & Yoon, K. S. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38, 915–945.
- Garet, M. S., Wayne, A., Stancavage, F., Taylor, J., Eaton, M., Walters, K., et al. (2011). *Middle school mathematics professional development impact study: Findings after the second year of implementation (NCEE 2011-4024)*. Washington, DC: National Centre for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED519922.pdf>. Retrieved August 16, 2019.
- Garrett, R., Citkowicz, M., & Williams, R. (2019). How responsive is a teacher's classroom practice to intervention? A meta-analysis of randomized field studies. *Review of Research in Education*, 43, 106–137.
- Goodson, I., Moore, S., & Hargreaves, A. (2006). Teacher nostalgia and the sustainability of reform: The generation and degeneration of teachers' missions, memory, and meaning. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 42(1), 42–61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X05278180>.
- Gore, J. (2014). *Towards quality and equity: The case for Quality Teaching Rounds*. Proceedings of the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) Research Conference. Quality and equity: What does research tell us? (pp. 86–91). Melbourne, Australia: ACER.
- Gore, J. (2020). Why isn't this empowering? The discursive positioning of teachers in efforts to improve teaching. In A. Brown & E. Wisby (Eds.), *Knowledge, policy and practice: The struggle for social justice in education* (pp. 199–216). London, UK: UCL IOE Press.
- Gore, J. M., & Bowe, J. M. (2015). Interrupting attrition? Re-shaping the transition from preservice to inservice teaching through Quality Teaching Rounds. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 73, 77–88. [10.1016/j.ijer.2015.05.006](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2015.05.006).
- Gore, J., & Rosser, B. (2020). Beyond content-focused professional development: Powerful professional learning across grades and subjects. *Professional Development in Education*, <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2020.1725904>.

- Gore, J., & Whitty, G. (2017). *Improving teaching: Some lessons from Australia*. <https://internationalenews.com/2017/07/26/leading-futures-alternative-perspectives-on-education-reform-and-policy-2/>. Retrieved June 6, 2018.
- Gore, J., Smith, M., Bowe, J., Ellis, H., Lloyd, A., & Lubans, D. (2015). Quality Teaching Rounds as a professional development intervention for enhancing the quality of teaching: Rationale and study protocol for a cluster randomised controlled trial. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 74, 82–95. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2015.08.002>.
- Gore, J., Lloyd, A., Smith, M., Bowe, J., Ellis, H., & Lubans, D. (2017). Effects of professional development on the quality of teaching: Results from a randomised controlled trial of Quality Teaching Rounds. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 68, 99–113. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.08.007>.
- Gu, Q. (2014). The role of relational resilience in teachers' career-long commitment and effectiveness. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 20(5), 502–529. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2014.937961>.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Guskey, T. R. (1989). Attitude and perceptual change in teachers. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 13, 439–453.
- Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age*. London: Cassell.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (2012). *Professional capital: Transforming teaching in every school*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hawley, W. D., & Valli, L. (1999). The essentials of effective professional development: A new consensus. In L. Darling-Hammond & G. Sykes (Eds.), *Teaching as the learning profession: Handbook of policy and practice* (pp. 127–150). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Holloway, J., & Brass, J. (2018). Making accountable teachers: The terrors and pleasures of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, 33(3), 361–382.
- Huberman, M. (1989). The professional life cycle of teachers. *Teachers College Record*, 91(1), 31–57.
- Intrator, S., & Kunzman, R. (2006). The person in the profession: Renewing teacher vitality through professional development. *Educational Forum*, 71(1), 16–32.
- Kamler, B., & Comber, B. (2005). Turn-around pedagogies: Improving the education of at-risk students. *Improving Schools*, 8(2), 121–131.
- Kennedy, A. (2005). Models of continuing professional development: A framework for analysis. *Journal of In-service Education*, 31, 235–250.
- Kraft, M. A., Blazar, D., & Hogan, D. (2018). The effect of teacher coaching on instruction and achievement: A meta-analysis of the causal evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 88(4), 547–588.
- Ladwig, J. G. (2007). Modelling pedagogy in Australian school reform. *Pedagogies: An International Journal*, 2(2), 57–76. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15544800701343919>.
- Lampert, J., Burnett, B., Comber, B., Ferguson, A., & Barnes, N. (2018). Quality teaching discourses: A contested terrain. In R. Hattam, S. Gannon, & W. Sawyer (Eds.), *Resisting educational inequality: Reframing policy and practice in schools serving vulnerable communities* (pp. 150–158). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Lather, P. (2017). *(Post)critical methodologies: The science possible after the critiques. The selected works of Patti Lather*. Abingdon-on-Thames: Taylor & Francis.
- Lingard, B., Martino, W., & Rezaei-Rashti, G. (2013). Testing regimes, accountabilities and education policy: Commensurate global and national developments. *Journal of Education Policy*, 28(5), 539–556.
- Little, J. W. (1990). The persistence of privacy: Autonomy and initiative in teachers' professional relations. *Teachers College Record*, 91, 509–536.
- Louis, K. S. (2007). Trust and improvement in schools. *Journal of Educational Change*, 6, 1–24.
- McCulloch, G. (2009). The moral universe of Mr Chips: Veteran teachers in British literature and drama. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 15(4), 409–420. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600903057161>.
- McLaughlin, M. W., & Talbert, J. (2001). *Professional communities and the work of high school teaching*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Moher, D., Hopewell, S., Schulz, K. F., Montori, V., Gotzsche, P. C., Devereaux, P. J., et al. (2010). CONSORT 2010 explanation and elaboration: Updated guidelines for reporting parallel group randomised trials. *British Medical Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.c869>.
- Morris, W. V. (2017). Culture of inquiry in professional development. *International Journal of Educational Reform*, 26(2), 123–131.

- Newmann, F. M., Marks, H. M., & Gamoran, A. (1996). *Authentic achievement: Restructuring schools for intellectual quality*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- NSW Department of Education and Training. (2003). *Quality teaching in NSW public schools: A classroom practice guide*. Sydney: NSW Department of Education and Training/Professional Support and Curriculum Directorate.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2011). *Teachers matter: Attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers. Pointers for policy development*. <https://www.oecd.org/education/school/48627229.pdf>. Retrieved April 13, 2018.
- Orlando, J. (2014). Veteran teachers and technology: Change fatigue and knowledge insecurity influence practice. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 20(4), 427–439.
- Penuel, W. R., Fishman, B. J., Yamaguchi, R., & Gallagher, L. P. (2007). What makes professional development effective? Strategies that foster curriculum implementation. *American Educational Research Journal*, 44, 921–958.
- Pierre, E. A. (2013). The posts continue: Becoming. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 26(6), 646–657. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2013.788754>.
- Schaefer, L., Downey, C. A., & Clandinin, D. J. (2014). Getting beyond elevator stories. In D. J. Clandinin, L. Schaefer, & C. A. Downey (Eds.), *Narrative conceptions of knowledge: Towards understanding teacher attrition* (pp. 1–11). Bingley: Emerald Group Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-368720140000023001>.
- Snow-Gerono, J. L. (2005). Professional development in a culture of inquiry: PDS teachers identify the benefits of professional learning communities. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 21, 241–256.
- Stillman, J., & Anderson, L. (2015). From accommodation to appropriation: Teaching, identity, and authorship in a tightly coupled policy context. *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*, 21(6), 720–744. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2015.1044330>.
- Stroud, G. (2018). *Teacher One woman's struggle to keep the heart in teaching*. Crow's Nest: Allen & Unwin.
- Vescio, V., Ross, D., & Adams, A. (2008). A review of research on the impact of professional learning communities on teaching practice and student learning. *Teaching & Teacher Education*, 24(1), 80–91. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2007.01.004>.
- Weldon, P. R. (2015). The teacher workforce in Australia: Supply, demand and data issues. *Policy Insights* (Issue #2). <https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=policyinsights>. Retrieved April 13, 2018.

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.