



10by10 Findings

Antonia Clews. 10by10 Project Leader. Educational Researcher and Developer Centre for Learning and Teaching Development, Bath Spa University 30/9/09.

a.clews@bathspa.ac.uk

10by10 Project background

10by10 is a series of workshops designed for teacher-practitioners (those who work concurrently in professional creative practice and teach at HE/FE level).

10by10 was launched in January 2009 and has engaged over eighty teacher-practitioners from across the creative disciplines in reflecting on professional creative practice and teaching, exploring the role of the teacher-practitioner and how it affects both arts education and practice. Following two successful pilots and a full day staff development event, 10by10 has developed six inquiry-based workshops. Further presentations have been given at a number of research and learning and teaching conferences.

10by10 has a dual purpose; developing a body of material [predominantly visual] and exploring any professional development needs of teacher-practitioners, through using creative practice based techniques.

The initial review includes comments from the participants, the facilitators and the project leader/researcher from six workshops.

10by10 Findings

These points are drawn directly from the comments of 10by10 participants and facilitators, materials gathered from the workshops and the 10by10 project leader observations.

Professional development needs of Teacher-Practitioners:

Exploring different perspectives on the teacher-practitioner through bringing practitioners, teachers and teacher-practitioners together is an effective and established professional development approach, used with artists new to teaching and also artists who have become remote from their creative practice [as opposed to an approach which only focuses on 'the teacher'].

Teacher-practitioners value the time and space to collaboratively recognise and explore issues pertinent to their teaching, sharing their practice with other teacher-practitioners from different disciplines and institutions [emphasises a shared experience, unique to this group identity [although many issues about the F/HE context are raised by teachers, particularly part-time].

The opportunity to reflect on, and analyse arising issues, enables teacher-practitioners to establish more clearly how they operate in and across two worlds, how they manage tensions and their personal strengths and weaknesses, to the potential benefit of the personal and professional development; creative practice and teaching,

- Greater recognition that creative practice is an essential part of art education is needed, and creative practice needs to be pro-actively supported, along side teaching, within the educational context.
- Practice development should be considered in the same terms as academic development. *[To pursue this approach, greater emphasis needs to be given to exploring how practice and teaching inform each other, at both individual and institutional levels, for example in the area of employability of both student and practitioner].*
- Institutions rarely appear to have any specific policy in place, which either recognises the distinct contributions of practitioners to teaching, or supports teacher-practitioners through recognising their specific role as working across industry and HE.
- Further to this, there is little evidence of F/HE recognising the professional development needs of this specific group of teachers, as current industry professionals, not full time academics, *[there is more likely to be some recognition of the part-time nature of some roles].*
- There also appears to be a lack of explicit recognition that individual maintaining their creative practice is of value to the curriculum, the institutional culture and the student.
- In addition there is little consideration of the pedagogic approach and contribution to teaching and learning that practitioners may have.
- The status, and the profile of the teacher-practitioner and the contribution of creative practice to teaching and learning needs to be enhanced
- It can therefore be suggested that institutional policy [and national policy] may address these issues and that the professional development of teacher-practitioners [relating their practice to their teaching] should be considered.
- A key suggestion is that higher education teachers need to recognise the contribution of practice to pedagogy and that teachers and practitioners can benefit for taking the time to use creative practice approaches within their daily teaching.
- Further to this is the recognition of the value of 'practice as practice' and the value of 'practice as research' and to explore the connections between these, to challenge the emphasis on practice as research within academia.
- An issue also highlighted is the relationship between research and teaching expertise and the predominance of the PhD for teaching 'qualification' and the focus on research as potentially devaluing practice as an area of expertise.
- The expectations of practitioners new to teaching and their lack of awareness of what is involved and what is expected of them, prior to commencing their role was raised. This highlights a key area of mentoring and teacher-training specifically tailored for the practitioner, [rather than the new teacher].
- Teacher-practitioners also recognise a need to develop the tools/discourse to advocate for their practice and to find ways to connect and integrate their practice, research and teaching. This is a specific area that requires further support, resources, research and educational development – specifically to enhance the mutual benefit of the teacher-practitioner to arts education and industry.

The Teacher-Practitioner:

There are a number of different perspectives on the teaching-practice relationship because it is experienced differently, so how the interaction of processes and practices is defined and described, varies. Practice is viewed as containing multiple practices within it. Also individuals position themselves differently in relation to their teaching and practice. This in itself is of importance, because the depth of awareness of where and how individuals chose to position themselves may impact on their teaching approach. Within this research, the majority of participants said they were employed [over 50% of their time] as a teacher, although this may not be reflected in the values or importance they give to teaching and practitioner 'aspects' of their professional identity.

The majority of participants and related individuals [as evidenced by over 120 visual drawings] view the relationship between teaching and practice to be mutually beneficial, and the role is predominantly described positively. However there is less clarity about how and why the two fields of practice inter-relate, and under which conditions due to the complex nature of defining multiple processes. There is a sense of consensus about the nature of teaching and what is like to work in an educational context in an educational role.

The view on the teaching-practice relationship is often personal, as an individual's identity is often wrapped up in their roles and professional behaviours. The relationship is often described in emotive terms. Values [often

described in relation to integrity and in relation to being an artist-creative-practitioner] are often described as central to the role of teacher-practitioner.

The teacher-practitioner; a role undefined:

- It can be difficult for individuals to view the relationship objectively, which can lead to a lack of criticality or 'problematising' of the relationship by teacher practitioners and others. There is a lack of differentiation between the professional roles and practices, and the relationship is difficult to describe.
- There is a lack of definition of the role of the teacher-practitioner, which may lead to an underlying sense of insecurity.
- There is some resistance to considering the modes of practice as separate from one another as some feel that the two are intertwined, perceiving that by trying to understand the distinct nature of each and therefore how they meet and overlap, the researcher is attempting to establishing a false dichotomy or polarised condition between teaching and practice. [A theoretical and conceptual position on the teacher-practitioner role with F/FE may only be resolved if individuals engage with a process of exploration beyond 'the two are inter-related' and ask how or why].
- Practitioners see themselves as different, and as seen by others differently. There is also a sense that the identity of long term and short term teachers is different. The practitioner status impacts on the confidence and validity of teachers as an 'authentic' practitioner [you don't really know unless you are actually doing it].
- There is a clear sense that there are high expectations on the role of the teacher-practitioner as being transformative, passionate and inspiring to students. This role is described more often as being catalytic, rather than instrumental for students, and being more focused on creative process than full time teachers. It is common for teacher-practitioners to describe bringing their experience of their professional practice to the students. Teacher-practitioners also refer to their knowledge, but the context tends to be of their practice, rather than referring to a subject based or theoretical body of knowledge [often suggested as a distinct domain of the teacher – suggesting teachers and practitioners have different kinds of knowledge, the prior being more experiential and process driven].
- Passion and enthusiasm is often described as something practitioners bring to students, but there is little expansion of how this quality actually informs and enhances learning

The teacher-practitioner; managing the role:

- A view often expressed about the role is that of bridging education and professional practice, which brings with it a number of tensions. The need to manage or juggle different practices is described, the possibility of 'falling through the gap' in-between them is also highlighted. Some individuals describe the need to keep the two practices separate in order to manage.
- There is some evidence that the practitioner feels competent to deal with the 'un-comfortableness' of certain aspects of practice, such as insecurity and risk, but less comfortable with the pressure from academia which demands specific sets of behaviours such as 'brokering' and 'motivating'.
- A common difficulty for teacher practitioners working in two roles is the tension between maintaining an income and pursuing creative practice. Teaching is described as regular income but rarely as a purely 'needs must' situation. More pertinent to this is the fact that the teaching role tends to dominate and that maintaining creative practice takes time and creative energy often absorbed by the teaching role.
- The responsibility of the teacher-practitioner versus the creativity of the practitioner is commonly described. Creative practice tends to be described in different terms to teaching – emergence, the ephemeral, the 'not known' nature of knowledge.
- The practitioner tends to be described as a 'bricoleur' who draws on a number of sources, pulls things together, makes connections and this tends towards describing the relationship between teaching and practice. This is then used to establish that teaching and practice are inter-connected, related and cannot be separated as both roles create different connections [potentially in the same way as if a creative-practitioner is also a chef or gardener].
- Teaching and practice share processes in parallel activities [such as 'complete' listening, looking], which sometimes converge and are sometimes distinct, but both are viewed as being of equal importance.
- The nature of practice is described as 'a state of being' or experience, often temporal, as being in or 'tuning into' the moment, thinking through making, letting process flow to see what emerges and being engaged totally. It is also describe as a pause for thought. Teaching is described in different terms, as a conscious, deliberate [developmental] process, establishing the conditions of practice.

The teacher-practitioner; teaching impinges on practice:

- Creativity and play, as processes, are a continual theme which dominates practitioner's descriptions of how they and students need to learn – conditions for 'emergence' which are difficult to maintain, or are in conflict with institutional culture, economic and educational priorities. Teaching is a disruptive framework and switching between roles can interrupt creativity. This is an area of potential conflict commonly identified by teacher-practitioners and the role is often described as 'trying to teach for creativity' within a context where institutions do not take risks.
- Institutional agendas being pre-dominantly focused on research has had a strong impact on how creative practice is perceived, resulting in pressure on teacher-practitioners to meet institutional priorities and define their practice as research, potentially in order to validate it. [This is more often the case where a teacher-practitioner is a contracted member of staff].
- There are issues around the measures of success and quality where a practitioner view of quality may be different to institutional or management objectives, and issues with institutions not catching up with industry.
- Practice appears to be on the back foot to teaching for many individuals [not in terms of priority or identity] but in terms of demands, responsibilities and professional behaviours.
- Some teacher-practitioners say that if they are given freedom of time and an open brief then they can relate their practice to their teaching within the educational context so that students learn about their tactics [conditions of risk, getting lost and the happy accident]. There is some negotiation involved in establishing what is appropriate to the role of teacher-practitioner – in terms of how and what to teach, the educational context is not a genuine site of practice.

The teacher-practitioner; teaching enhances and informs practice:

- Teachers [full time] are recognised as being expert at teaching – as a distinct field of practice. The role of teaching requires practitioners to 'act' differently to their professional roles, focusing on an objective facilitative role, rather than [instinctive] subjective response to projects.
- Research, in order to up-date knowledge, may be required in order to feel confident teaching creative practice.
- There is some evidence that teacher-practitioners feel vulnerable about their teaching role; that they are not expert teachers and are also uncomfortable with being framed as expert [practitioners] in their field. Teaching is an emotive area.
- Teacher-practitioners often view the experience of teaching as one of co-learning with their students. They are often facilitating that process but they recognise that they too are learning through articulating their practice to another. For teacher-practitioners, teaching is a learning process, both about teaching and practice. Teaching is pre-dominantly described as a positive, mutually beneficial experience which enhances professional capacity.
- Although the context of F/HE is pre-dominantly described as limiting creativity, the learning is described as benefiting practice.

Summary of 10by10 Findings

Teaching enhances and informs practice. Teacher-practitioners describe co-learning with their students, creative collaborations, exchange, and inspiring dialogues with creative colleagues in a learning environment. Research to inform teaching also benefits and up-dates practice, and the process of articulating practice to another, prompting critical reflection and greater understanding of one's own practice (or at least exposing any contradictions between what one says through teaching and what one does) through being an exemplar and also HE being a kind of 'head space'. Teaching is also described as engaging beyond practice – more broadly, less self-focused. Ideas can be tested within and through teaching. Recognition of the practitioner being on a learning journey and navigating one's way through F/HE. Also, the practitioner is learning to teach.

A relationship undefined. Teacher-practitioners find it difficult to define the relationship between their teaching and practice but see the two as mutually beneficial and interconnected. They find difficulty in separating the two and reflecting on how the practices inform each other. There is a lack of clear understanding of the pedagogy of a 'practitioner-based' or practitioner approach to teaching. Teacher-practitioners find it difficult to describe how their experience and working processes inform student learning, although they are clear that they do, in a different [process-driven] way to full time teachers. The mutuality of the relationship is generally described positively. Practitioners see themselves as different and as seen by others differently

Teaching context impinges on practice. The impact of context on identity is seen as a key factor in terms of how positively the individual practitioner will engage with the educational context. The institutional impact on the practitioner appears greater than the impact of professional creative practice on the teaching and learning within it. The recognition of 'practice as research' and the specificity of arts practice as a different genre of research is more visible and commonplace in academia, but the downside to this may be a lack of focus on the relationship of practice and teaching. This agenda may also be having a negative affect on the value of 'practice as practice'.

Tensions in managing the relationship. The need to manage or juggle different practices is described. Some individuals describe the need to keep the two practices separate in order to manage. There is some evidence that the practitioner feels competent to deal with the 'un-comfortableness' of certain aspects of practice, such as insecurity and risk, but less comfortable with some pressures from academia which demands specific sets of behaviours. The teaching role tends to dominate; maintaining creative practice takes time and creative energy often absorbed by the teaching role. Creative practice tends to be described in different terms to teaching – emergence, ephemeral the 'not known' nature of knowledge. Teaching and practice share processes in parallel activities [such as 'complete' listening, looking], which sometimes converge and are sometimes distinct.

Recognising a need for support. Teacher-Practitioners would like more recognition and support from their institution towards recognising the contribution of practice to pedagogy. Professional development opportunities would enable this. A practice-focused approach to professional development enhances the practitioner status within the academic environs.

10by10 Suggestions

Recognition and Role:

- **A Pedagogy of Practice.** There appears to be a lack of *explicit* recognition that an individual teacher maintaining their professional creative practice is of value to the curriculum, the institutional culture and the student. In addition there is limited consideration of the pedagogic approach and contribution to teaching and learning that practitioners may have. There is a lack of definition in the teacher-practitioner role.
- **Institutional Policy.** Institutions rarely appear to have any specific policy in place, which either recognises the distinct contributions of practitioners to teaching, or supports teacher-practitioners through recognising their specific role as working across industry and HE and their specific professional development needs beyond that of 'the teacher'.
- **Exploring the Relationship.** Exploring the tensions in the role of teacher-practitioner and the relationship between teaching practice and creative practice, industry and F/HE [predominantly contextual, individual and institution, personal and professional] validates the teacher-practitioner experience and perspective and clarifies and emphasises the value of practice to learning, and teaching, and the value of teaching to creative practice.
- **A Practitioner Way.** Teacher-practitioners recognise a need to develop the tools/discourse to advocate for their practice and to find ways to connect and integrate their practice, research and teaching. This is

a specific area that requires further support, resources, research and educational development – specifically to enhance the mutual benefit of the teacher-practitioner to arts education and industry.

Practitioner focused support:

- **Bespoke Professional development.** There is little evidence of F/HE recognising the professional development needs of this specific group of teachers, as current industry professionals [there is more likely to be some recognition of the issues relating to part-time roles or new teachers]. This could be redressed through educational and professional development programmes specifically for teacher-practitioners.
- **Network.** It was evident that teacher-practitioners rarely come together with those working in a similar role to share and reflect on their role, status and experience. A support network would elevate the status and value of the teacher-practitioner, as practitioner.
- **Practice-based techniques as development tool.** In designing an inclusive approach for industry professionals it makes a difference if the academic framework and language is deliberately avoided. Practice-based facilitation or inquiry is effective in valuing the practitioner perspective and ensuring educational development is relevant, responsive and inclusive. The immediacy of visual media is a good way of engaging people - it is bold, emotive and communicative, and often a succinct expression of issues in a powerful way.
- **Creative Space is important.** To avoid issues relating to institutional and higher education convention, working with practitioners in arts based cultural setting such as galleries, reflects a value in the 'external' engagement with F/HE. There are plenty of institutions that see the benefit of supporting the teaching-practitioner relationship through offering space at a minimal charge.
- **Balance in approach.** It is important to balance creative exploration and enjoyment with the time to explore the outcomes of this process in depth, through discussion. This process needs time as well as the right conditions – the conditions can be established through creative semi-structured activities, but to draw out criticality and reflection needs further and deliberate facilitation and on-going support.

<http://10by10.info/>

Antonia Clews.
a.clews@bathspa.ac.uk
30/9/09