Bridging the gap: An investigation into Initial Teacher Education Partnerships using a “Teachers Teaching Teachers” model

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Bridging the gap: An investigation into Initial Teacher Education Partnerships using a "Teachers Teaching Teachers" model

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Declaration of Authorship

This thesis contains no material that has been extracted in whole or in part from a thesis that I have submitted towards any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety Committee (where required).

Graham Stephens

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Abstract

The focus of this thesis is rethinking school-university partnerships in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and the theory practice connection. It identifies a response from an Australian Higher Education Provider (HEP) to numerous national and international publications and government reports which had strongly advocated for changes in the way ITE is undertaken. At the centre of this investigation is an interstate campus established by the HEP which utilised an ITE delivery mode referred to as a 'Teachers Teaching Teachers' model (TTT) which employed lecturers with classroom teaching experience as teacher educators. The purpose of this thesis is two-fold: firstly, to present the results of an investigation into how this model dealt with the well-known challenges associated with developing school-university partnerships in ITE and secondly, to add insight into the 'Teachers Teaching Teachers' model from the participants' perspectives. Semi-structured individual interviews with participants (school principals, mentor teachers, university lecturers and preservice teachers) were conducted in a period after the program was closed due to an interstate accreditation issue. This systematic study of participant perspectives was used to gain insight into how the model negotiated the university-school partnership and especially in the context of connecting theory with practice. Cultural-Historical Activity Theory was used as a theoretical framework to theorise school-university partnership activity in the *boundary space* between the two systems. Open and axial codes were generated using NVivo reports with participants' responses used to identify salient themes supporting a narrative of who was doing what and where in the program. The findings showed how the characteristics of the TTT model supported activity in the boundary space theorised as a joint effort to expand or transform the abilities of the preservice teachers (PSTs). Mediating factors such as the blurring of traditional division of labour in the ITE process were identified as significant in creating this collective endeavour between the

school and university. This joint effort created a living curriculum for the PSTs, which bridged theory and practice that supported the PSTs' quest to become a quality graduate teacher. The model was found to address some of the historical contradictions in ITE provision, allowing for emergence of new forms of practice. This research illustrates the importance of adopting an integrated approach to ITE delivery through building strong university-school partnerships and contributes the need for the theorisation of effective partnerships between schools and future ITE providers.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

This thesis reports on a study of the partnerships between a Higher Education Provider (HEP) and schools to deliver Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Victoria, Australia. The study draws upon the accounts of program participants and concepts from Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) to better understand how effective partnerships can be theorised and developed. This chapter provides the background for the study and the researcher's positioning in relation to the ITE program before explaining the structure of the thesis.

1.1 The Problem Conceived as the Need for Quality Improvement in Initial Teacher Education (ITE)

The author's motivation for undertaking this study is due to a personal involvement in a unique ITE program that tried to address historically identified concerns in the delivery of ITE. A progressively higher level of interest has been growing amongst educators from Australia and internationally in how school-university partnerships could address some of these concerns. Involvement in a specific program as program director provided the author with a unique research opportunity to study school-university partnerships especially in the way they assist the connection of "theory" into the "practice" of teaching for the preservice teacher (PST).

Under the framing of this investigation, the author is defining "theory" as the academic work which underpins the PSTs' experience in an ITE program primarily undertaken by the university staff. "Practice" is defined as the practical work of teaching undertaken by the PST usually conducted by school based staff during professional

experience placements. Ryan and Jones (2014) note that school-university partnerships have been variously defined. In this thesis, it is defined as an activity where schools and universities create a mutually supportive alliance with shared aims, committed resources and effective communication (Kruger et al., 2009; Ure & Gough, 2009) that supports the translation of theoretical knowledge into practice for the PST. This thesis provides insight as to how staff from both systems could maximise opportunities for partnership development and cooperate for the benefit of the PST.

1.1.1 Policy Background

Initially, it is important to understand the background to the establishment of this specific ITE program. Australian state and federal governments, like those in the USA and UK were demanding changes in ITE in response to pressure to improve the performance of their education systems, especially in the way graduate teachers are trained to enter the profession (Ryan et al., 2016). The concept of teacher quality was a featured aspect of the global reform movement in the first decade of the 21st Century. However, "quality" remains an elusive concept in ITE (Brooks, 2021), particularly as stakeholders continue to prioritise different ways in which quality is understood. Responses to the "quality" debate from various governments reveal the contested nature of ITE. Whilst there may be disagreement about what quality looks like in ITE, teacher educators have ways of working within reform-focussed discourse in seeking to improve the experience of learning for the PST (Brooks, 2021). Official quality indicators for ITE tend to focus on the meeting of prescriptive standards but for the purpose of this study the author is also defining "quality" in ITE in terms of the educational transformation of PSTs. The Australian government commissioned review of teacher education by the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG, 2014) has been in broad agreement with university educators such as the Australian Council of Deans of Education (ACDE, 2014) in stating that high quality teacher

education is based on partnerships between schools and universities. The report echoes an accepted view in much of the contemporary teacher education reviews that high quality ITE is a shared enterprise between schools and universities, between the academic and practical aspects of teacher's work (Kruger et al., 2009; Ryan et al., 2016; TEMAG, 2014; Zeichner, 2012). The TEMAG report also argues that the critical indicator of quality teacher education should be reflected in "student outcomes" (p. 41) but indicated there is a lack of research on how partnerships might improve such outcomes. Many partnership models have been tried in the past to develop a quality teacher graduate with a number explained in detail in Chapter 2. An innovative aspect of the ITE program with which the author was involved, was in prioritising the value of using classroom teachers as lecturers to partner with school staff to not only augment the ITE process but to drive it.

Partnerships as the policy silver bullet then has been a global policy movement of ITE reform, especially those which involve school partnerships. In the UK, the government policy paper of 2011 titled: "Training our next generation of outstanding teachers: an improvement strategy for discussion" (Education, 2011) described a system to improve the standard of teachers through the creation of "teaching schools" to stimulate ITE partnerships and bring groups of schools together to develop skills and knowledge required of graduate teachers. The then UK government Education Secretary Michael Gove outlined his vision to boost this school led teacher education system by stating that: "the best people to teach teachers are teachers. School led systems put schools, school leaders and teachers firmly in the driving seat" (Education, 2013). The concept of school led or "teaching schools" is one of many models put forward to assist in ITE renewal bringing ITE into shared space with a significantly wider role for classroom teachers in partnership with university lecturers and school leaders. Zeichner et al. (2015) noted that some practice-based courses have evolved

even further to integrate the expertise of university and school-based teacher educators with community educators.

1.1.2 Graduate Teacher Performance Assessments

It has been noted that the link between ITE programs and student outcomes is complex and difficult to measure (Dinham, 2015). The suite of reform measures has included the establishment of graduate teacher performance assessments against a set of performance standards including the use of high stakes student testing. In Australia, the graduate teacher standards are set by government and institutional regulators to provide quality assurance across ITE providers. However, numerous publications and government reports such as the Parliament of Victoria Education and Training Committee, Step up, Step in, Step Out (Parliament, 2005), the House of Representatives "Top of the Class" report on the inquiry into teacher education (Education & Training, 2007) and the seminal Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group report Action Now: Classroom ready teachers (TEMAG, 2014) have advocated for changes in the way graduate teachers are trained to meet these standards. School-university partnerships were a response to increasing tensions about the quality and structure of ITE programs and their impact on student learning in the classroom. While an exploration of the many different types of partnerships conducted within ITE was beyond the scope of this thesis, it explores the facilitating factors of successful partnerships between school and university systems by investigating a model of ITE that employed experienced teachers as teacher educators, known as the Teachers Teaching Teachers (TTT) model. The findings provide rich insights into the challenges for participants engaged in developing new understandings about PST learning including the development of innovative approaches for partnership development.

1.2 The Origins of the Teachers Teaching Teachers (TTT) Program

The setting of this investigation is in the years 2015-2017 when the Australian Federal government rules for student entry into ITE courses had been recently relaxed, entry quotas abolished and further degrees of autonomy instituted for tertiary providers. What follows in the next section is a description of the Teachers Teaching Teachers model (TTT) of ITE which features at the centre of this research and the author's involvement in the program.

As previously noted, education systems have been placed under pressure to improve their performance in the area of ITE. Jian et al. (2010) suggested bold strategies were required to regenerate the quality of ITE programs. In their research, particular reference was made to Zeichner (2010) who proposed several strategies to build dialectical partnerships between university scholars and schools. The TTT model could be considered as a "bold strategy" which framed a number of Zeichner's capstone points in its development, especially the employment of experienced teachers as teacher educators. The TTT model employed strategies that addressed a number of historic tensions hindering partnership development. For Zeichner (2010) these principles were to: (a) involve experienced teachers in every aspect of teacher education programs (b) bring teachers' work into the university curriculum, (c) develop new methods courses that focus on issues of teaching practice in professional experience placements, (d) develop hybrid teacher educators who know both theory and practice, and (e) incorporate knowledge from educational communities into university curriculum and field experiences (Jian et al., 2010).

Points (a) and (d) above address the historic tensions in ITE due to separating academic and practical aspects as the responsibility of two separate systems: universities

and schools. This tension played out in research on PSTs perspectives showing that the theoretical knowledge and skills learnt at a university was perceived as separate, or in competition with, the practical knowledge and skills they gained in a school and more relevant to a future workplace (Adoniou, 2013; Capraro et al., 2010). For vocationally orientated disciplines like education, this disconnect can lead to student disengagement with course content and delivery.

1.2.1 How the TTT Model was Designed to Address the Historical Tension between Theory and Practice in ITE

The employment of lecturing staff with specialised expertise and institutional knowledge in both university and school systems was a feature of the TTT model. In a TTT model, lecturers utilise their background knowledge and experiences together with latest research to identify and enhance the PSTs' understanding of effective pedagogical practices to support student learning.

The TTT model specific to this study originated in a school. It was suggested by the principal of a multicampus school in regional Victoria, at which the author was employed. The principal sought expressions of interest for a focus group to investigate a potential framework to utilise the expertise of classroom teachers as lecturers to deliver reform-based ITE. The motivation for the initiative were concerns about the lack of availability of quality teacher graduates to fill teaching positions within the school, a view shared by other school principals. The framework that was developed responded to contemporary recommendations for reform. Key features of the framework were dedicated to the development of strong partnerships with schools to bridge the theory-practice divide.

A connection was made with an interstate Higher Education Provider (HEP) that shared similar concerns about the availability of quality teacher graduates to determine the

possibility of delivery of their ITE program in the state of Victoria. Under the guidance and direction of the interstate HEP, detailed plans and an agreement with the interstate provider were drawn up to enable the commencement and delivery of two ITE courses framed using the TTT model developed in a Victorian regional town. These were a Master of Teaching (a two-year course for those already holding an undergraduate degree) and a four-year Bachelor of Education degree. The interstate higher education provider through its established registration for delivery of tertiary education, received government funding as per registration guidelines. Consequently, funding for the Victorian campus was to be provided through a financial agreement designated by the interstate provider. Tertiary approved premises were leased to provide an appropriate site for program delivery. As a point of clarification, the interstate HEP was a nominated institute/college of higher education but did not have university status. This type of institution is relatively smaller than a university and is not self-accrediting but like all HEPs is required to be registered with Australian Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA, 2020) and meet the Higher Education Standards Framework which is a definitive set of requirements for regulation purposes.

For an HEP to obtain registration as a university it is required to have "realistic and achievable plans to build their infrastructure and capability further, along with the resources to make these a reality, in order to meet the requirements for scope and research capability" (TEQSA, 2020, p. 4). As well as the national accreditation body, there are also state based registration bodies which oversee the ITE accreditation process. In Victoria, it is the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT). The partnering HEP offered undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in Education in its home state and in several other relevant fields.

In line with the original intent of the delivery model at the centre of this research, experienced classroom teachers applied for and were chosen as suitable candidates for the Victorian campus as teacher educators (also referred to as lecturers) based on their qualifications and expertise in a specific curriculum area. Lecturer selection was guided by the interstate provider's staff recruitment, selection and appointment policy which exercised appointment practices based on merit, fairness and equity. Any person identified as a potential lecturer at the Victorian campus was expected to clearly demonstrate the academic credentials, teaching skills and the industry experience required for the position. Features of the TTT model drove the program inception. During interviews the concept of the TTT program was explained and its specific features elaborated. Potential lecturers were briefed on the benefits of partnership creation with schools and how this could impact the learning potential of the PST. Emphasis was given on the need to make early and consistent communication with schools and mentor teachers and ease of lecturer availability when organising school visits. The need to make explicit as often as practicable the connection of theory to practice in lectures was also communicated. This was to be further elaborated through team meetings and professional development activities once appointed.

Several applicants from the multicampus school noted above were appointed to lecturing positions. Other lecturing staff from outside the school system were also employed based on expertise and experience. Lecturing staff were subsequently allocated to one of a three-tier faculty structure based on academic qualifications. For on-campus lectures individual unit plans and resources were provided for each lecturer by the interstate HEP allowing for minor adjustments to reflect different state requirements and regional differences.

The physical teaching spaces at Crescent Beach College differed from other university spaces used for teaching conventional ITE programs. As per government tertiary guidelines, the lecturing facilities were required to be approved as suitable by the Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA). The lecture room set up and the model of active discussion employed in lectures was designed for PSTs to engage in realistic classroom experiences. Seating arrangements were designed to replicate what was happening in schools. Depending on the lecture content, PSTs faced each other in large circular shaped installations to maximise discussion and stimulate cooperative problem solving strategies. As required, this modular furniture could be moved to accommodate practical activities which stimulated the connection of theory to practice. Separate to the professional placement experience and under the supervision of a classroom teacher, PSTs were prepared by lecturers to conduct a micro teaching session in a school to assist in the connection of education theory to practice. General meeting facilities and social activity areas were provided, but these did not include a traditional tiered lecture theatre as individual connections between staff and PSTs were sought.

1.3 Crescent Beach College and the Author's role

Crescent Beach College (pseudonym) was the Victorian regional campus of the ITE program at the focus of this study. Designed to address recommendations in the literature and government reports for better connections between theory and practice for PSTs, a Teachers Teaching Teachers (TTT) model was developed whereby experienced teachers were employed as academic staff and strong partnerships with schools were supported. The TTT model was envisaged as countering historical tensions that have inhibited partnership development, especially from the placement school's perspective. Managing such issues as the timing of, communication during, and assessment of PSTs on professional experience

placement were a priority. For example, the model resourced lecturers and other experienced classroom practitioners to engage in a liaison capacity by visiting PSTs on professional experience placements, observing the PST in the classroom and facilitating appropriate feedback with mentor teachers.

Additional professional experience days were allocated for PSTs in the Crescent Beach College program compared to regulatory requirements. For the Bachelor of Education degree, Crescent Beach College provided for 103 days of professional placement, whereas the regulations required 80 days. For the Master of Teaching 91 days were provided when the minimum requirement was 60 days. The length of the professional experience varied from 10 days, 15 days or 20 days in earlier stages, culminating in a 40-day internship for the final year of both courses. A corresponding lessening of class lecture commitment created time availability for lecturers to conduct school placement visits. Lecturers' time spent in school visits varied according to the length of the placement. For the shorter placements, lecturers were allocated two to three PSTs to supervise on the same placement round. Lecturers would visit each PST twice for about one hour on each occasion and return at a convenient time for a roundtable discussion to assist in completing the PST assessment form. For the 40-day internship, three to four visits were scheduled, concluding with the roundtable discussion to complete the PST assessment form. Further information on lecturer roles and responsibilities is available in Appendix A In prioritising these issues the model aimed to establish a collective endeavour with schools to support the creation of a quality graduate teacher.

1.3.1 The Author's Role at Crescent Beach College

The author was embodied and embedded in the Crescent Beach College program from its inception to its closure. Not only was the author involved in establishing the Crescent Beach

College program but he also took an active role in its implementation over its 18 months of operation. Prior to his involvement the author taught in primary and lower secondary school classrooms and served in several senior administrative and leadership positions at a partnering school of Crescent Beach College. In 2015, the author was employed as the inaugural Senior Administrator and program director, overseeing the implementation of the ITE program in the Victorian regional city, and liaising with the interstate Higher Education Provider (HEP). With respect to the interstate HEP, progress reports and meetings were conducted regularly to ensure continuity of the program. Program administrative structures such as weekly staff meetings were also put in place to ensure regular communication with the staff, and to discuss and review the ITE practices. The author also coordinated course admissions, reported progress to senior colleagues, ensured moderation of assessments, and confirmed adherence to policies and procedures. Beyond his role as program director, the author was also professional placement coordinator, student welfare coordinator, and lecturer in Mathematics, History and Geography, and Internship pedagogy.

The research was conducted after the closure of the Crescent Beach College program. By way of explanation, under the corporate structure for the Crescent Beach College campus, accreditation and compliance to national and state regulatory authorities were the responsibility of the interstate HEP as the Victorian campus was not intended to act as a stand-alone provider but was simply a campus of the interstate HEP. However, a site visit from regulation authorities (national, interstate and Victorian) deemed that an interstate accreditation issue existed for the interstate HEP to operate a campus in Victoria. This led to the subsequent closure of the Crescent Beach College campus in July 2017 after 18 months of operation. The author's positioning within the Crescent Beach College program represents a unique opportunity for inquiry into innovation in ITE. Throughout the thesis, the author reflects upon the affordances and constraints of his positioning to

ultimately generate trustworthy participants' accounts from which to theorise partnerships in ITE.

1.3.2 A Participatory Investigation of Partnerships

As the researcher, the author's involvement to explore the creation of partnerships in ITE was initially framed by the significant personal and professional input into the Crescent Beach College program and the collaboration with other senior academics and administrators in its construction. From the program's inception, the value of partnerships had become increasingly evident in the way successful partnerships could benefit the growth of the PST. With considerable local and international academic research centring on partnerships, the author's involvement in the Crescent Beach College program presented an opportunity to add to the overall body of evidence regarding partnerships in a unique ITE program. In considering this opportunity the central research question for this study was:

How was partnership practice described in the Crescent Beach College program and how did this affect the connection of theory to practice for the PSTs?

Consequently, it was expected that themes from the ITE participants' experiences (lecturers, school mentor teachers, PSTs, principals) would be advanced in the way the program delivered the required skills and knowledge to PSTs and developed partnership practices with schools to connect theory with practice. This was in contrast to some alternative views which had represented universities and schools as different or even oppositional spaces of professional learning especially in the way theory is connected to practice (Ryan et al., 2016). Given that the Crescent Beach College program model utilised lecturing staff with classroom teaching experience to bridge this apparent theory-practice divide it was important to examine how these "oppositional forces" could be brought closer together in partnership to promote PST learning and classroom practice.

This research aimed to further develop understanding of the characteristics of partnerships, with particular interest in the way they support everyday professional learning and ongoing collaboration between schools and universities. It was designed to examine the experiences of the participants of the Crescent Beach College program and focused on how partnerships affected their learning, interactions, and the subsequent development of the PSTs. It aimed to provide insight into how lecturers and mentor teachers can create a collective endeavour to extend the capacity of the PSTs with effective learning dispositions especially in their professional experience placements. From a broader perspective, it was also intended to provide a deep level of insight into the experience of school and university staff undertaking reform in the area of ITE and to inform other teacher educators and schools interested in such work.

1.4 Framing the Research

This research required a method of analysis, qualitative in style that allowed for the shifting and dynamic nature of personal views and perceptions from participants of the now closed ITE campus. In educational research there has been a move away from investigation of singular variables to "focus on the whole configuration of events, activities, contents, and interpersonal processes taking place…" (Lim & Hang, 2003, p. 50). The author required a methodology which attended to the social location and shared meanings of language which contributed to the creation of partnerships to support the ITE process. As explained, the author was actively connected to the participants and the program and chose a participatory ethnographic line of methodology for this research. A series of open-ended interviews with selected participants was undertaken to obtain their perception of key areas of participation in the program. These evolved as conversations in part created by the author as well as the interviewees to reveal data on how the program managed partnerships.

This research project required a design framework, which provided a lens through which these participant interviews and responses could be analysed. Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) was used as it provided the scaffold from which to study human behaviour within its native context. It could zone in on the use of educational artefacts, motivation for behaviour, roles and rules within the community and environment in which people were operating, including how work was divided up between people to achieve a goal (Roth & Lee, 2007). It is a framework that "makes it possible to include both historical continuity and local, situated contingency in the analysis" (Miettinen et al., 1999, p. 9). It enabled the author to obtain and analyse multiple sources of evidence because the university and school systems involved in ITE generate "a variety of viewpoints or voices as well as layers of historically layered accumulated artefacts, rules and patterns of division of labour" (Engeström, 2008, p. 27). It was also helpful in revealing tensions and contradictions which may appear between the school and university systems or within the ITE process in general. The use of CHAT helped to make sense of the systemic factors behind the apparent individual actions of participants and resultant conflicts, deviations from the norm and program innovations which can occur in the ITE process. These systemic challenges are the key to understanding any sources of concern within the school-university partnership and link with the innovation and the developmental potential of such partnerships described within the Crescent Beach College program.

1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis has seven chapters and in the following section a short summary is provided which outlines the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 1 introduces the project, providing contextual background information regarding the rationale for the project and the author's personal orientation to the research.

In this chapter, a brief overview of the theoretical perspective is also presented, together with a statement of the main aim and subsequent research question.

A review of research literature relevant to the study forms Chapter 2. The author will present an argument that research in the past has called for ITE programs to better connect theory with practice which is best accomplished through an integrated application of school-university partnerships. Three models of Australian partnership practice are described which each connect with some aspects of the TTT program. However, while there are many models of partnerships there is little research which adequately conceptualises the evolution of school university partnerships with staff from both systems sharing space and working for a collective endeavour.

Chapter 3 details the chosen theoretical framework, Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) with an overview of its use in educational research. The chapter details the development of CHAT leading into Engeström's (1987) third generation model which depicts the university and school activity systems in the ITE process. It was used to understand the engagement of participants from both systems and their long-held views and specific individual practices. It was able to examine the effects of mediating factors in the ITE process, such as commonly understood rules of ITE engagement, university and school community norms and division of labour. It enabled an exploration of these experiences to investigate how mediating factors affected partnership development and the potential for activity to occur in boundary spaces between the two systems.

In Chapter 4 the research methodology used for the project is described. The chapter begins with an explanation of the research paradigm that informs the project. The methodology of this investigation is framed as being a qualitative research project, using a participatory ethnographic study. It sought the viewpoints of participants in the program

taking an ontological stance that ITE knowledge is socially constructed to reveal aspects of the culture of the Crescent Beach College program. The chapter then describes in detail how data were generated by conducting semi-structured interviews and the methods used for analysing such data.

Chapter 5 details the findings of the project. In this chapter, key findings from the data are organised and themes from the interviews are presented according to mediating elements of the activity systems. Through application of the NVivo software program, dialogue from the interviews was used to expand on how the CHAT constructs of tools, rules, community and division of labour strategies were employed by each activity system. Specific themes were developed to provide insight into the generating factors between the schools and university to establish partnerships and to connect theory into practice for the PSTs.

In Chapter 6, the findings of the project are discussed and theorised in relation to the research questions. Key themes from the Findings (Chapter 5) are revisited and placed in context with the Literature Review (Chapter 2) as to how Crescent Beach College supported the creation of partnerships to bring theory into practice. The discussion concentrates on the critical nature of partnership activity, where it occurred and how the TTT model influenced such activity. The discussion also theorises how the program mitigated some of the historical tensions and contradictions within the ITE process, especially connected to the professional experience placement. The discussion reveals the consequences of dealing with these historical tensions and how that affected partnership creation. The chapter closes with an analysis of the effectiveness of the program in generating partnerships and subsequent suggestions for future reform of the ITE process.

The thesis concludes at Chapter 7. An overview of the study is presented, and a conceptual framework is provided to illustrate the development of the Crescent Beach College program. New insights this research can offer are described, especially regarding the type of partnerships afforded to a TTT model. Conclusions and recommendations for further research are made. Finally, the chapter describes implications for future ITE practice which have arisen from the findings of this research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This review of the research literature on partnerships between schools and HEPs addresses the broad questions of how initial teacher education (ITE) has been positioned at the intersection of both university and school systems and how partnerships could best support the learning of preservice teachers. It provides a critical evaluation of key research findings relating to the value and composition of partnerships. It was found that, whilst the literature regarding partnerships is rich, diverse and complex, few studies focus on specific innovations in ITE partnerships, suggesting the need for case study research such as provided by this study. Thus, this review describes the educational landscape of ITE in Australia and overseas prior to the inception of the Crescent Beach College program and further builds the background against which the "Teachers Teaching Teachers" model (TTT) was created.

Contemporary literature is unanimous on the problem that ITE is not effectively preparing teachers for the realities of teaching. Many have suggested that this disconnection can be rectified best through strengthening of partnerships (Allen et al., 2013; TEMAG, 2014). The benefits of strong school university partnerships underpinning high quality teacher education have been researched for over a decade through a range of innovative initiatives by ITE providers and education jurisdictions. A seminal report produced by The Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG, 2014) suggested that the foundations are in place but where the challenge lies is in the implementation and change management strategies for embedding partnerships in ITE. The Australian Government response to TEMAG (2014) summarises that the consensus is implementation strategies for partnerships are on the right track, they are in some respects underdeveloped and variable. While stakeholders see the opportunity for a collective call to action, the next step should be

"to clarify roles and responsibilities among providers, education authorities and schools in advancing and implementing priority tasks through partnerships to build on the current momentum" (Government, 2015, p. 4). Consequently the Australian Government "instructed the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to establish and publish the essential requirements for practical experience, identify best practice examples in Australia, and model partnership agreements and other supporting materials for universities" (Government, 2015, p. 7).

Therefore, this review describes the educational landscape of ITE in Australia and overseas prior to the inception of the Crescent Beach College program and seeks to describe the impact generated by reports such as TEMAG. It builds a background against which the "Teachers Teaching Teachers" model (TTT) was created in an attempt to build momentum and champion the use of school university partnerships as part of this Australian Government response. This review of literature critically evaluates key research findings relating to the value and composition of partnership models and how they can transform the learning of PSTs. It contributes to what is known about successful practices of partnerships and how they could support the growth of the PST.

Relevant national and international partnership studies were sourced using a range of strategies. The selection criteria focussed on recent empirical research published in peer reviewed journals and written in English. This strategy yielded a variety of material on partnership types and their application to the ITE process but little in the area of how this applies to a TTT model. Subsequently, the search range was expanded to include recent literature reviews, scholarly publications and policy documents. Academic databases (Pro-Quest, A+ Education and Education Source) and publisher databases (Taylor and Francis, SAGE, Springer) and the library catalogue of Australian Catholic University were used to

source material. Key terms used to identify pertinent literature were: ITE, partner*, teach*, effective, model, teachers as lecturers.

This review outlines the historical background and the current issues which ITE providers in Australia and overseas have sought to address. It elicits seminal Australian government recommendations and reports for improvement in ITE which were foundational to the inception of the Crescent Beach College program. It reviews the concepts and practices of successful partnerships and their benefit to PSTs, schools, local communities and students in the classroom and also provides research information for locating spaces where partnerships may occur.

2.1 Background

2.1.1 Australian Policy Context which has Informed Partnership Practice

This section provides an account of developments in policy and research in an Australian context in the delivery of ITE and the role of partnerships. It focuses on a series of seminal government reports that led to the innovative approach undertaken by the Crescent Beach College program in the development of the TTT model. These reports set an agenda for the improvement of ITE through recommendations for future action but with little information as to how this could best be achieved. Hence there is a need to research such alternative programs and the principles used in the development of partnerships in the Crescent Beach College program. The account in this section is organised chronologically to situate the study in a changing policy landscape in recent decades. Whilst this changing policy landscape is also reflected internationally, this section is specifically oriented to the Victorian and Australian contexts where the Crescent Beach College program was situated.

Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Australia has been highly scrutinised in terms of its quality and structure with over 100 reports conducted in the past four decades. This has led to a number of researchers describing ITE as faulty and needing regeneration (Grudnoff et al., 2017; Jones et al., 2016; Rowan et al., 2015). Expert researchers suggest it can be better managed by adjusting key elements such as entry requirements, length, content, professional experience, standards and certification (Mayer et al., 2015). The link between these elements and effective partnership practices has been investigated by numerous federal and state government reports contributing to many recommendations regarding partnerships in ITE.

One of the most influential of these reports in the Victorian context has been The Victorian government's Education and Training Committee Step Up, Step in, Step out (Parliament, 2005). The recommendations derived from this report were pivotal in the initial design of the Crescent Beach College program. This report was a synthesis of submissions from a wide range of Victorian, interstate and international stakeholders, who were invited to contribute written submissions, or participate in personal or focus groups on the suitability of ITE policy and practice in Victoria. Specifically, it noted several key program design concepts that universities could focus on to improve the provision of ITE. The terms of reference published in this report determined the range and nature of preservice teacher training courses in Victoria and compared them to other courses across Australia and internationally. It focused on how these courses differ and how they met the needs of the teachers and education systems in the 21st Century (p. xiii). It recommended an agenda for the future in the way ITE should be conducted to meet the demands for modern education. Specifically, alternative models of delivery, effective partnerships, connecting theory with practice and the use of teaching practitioners were validated to be effective means of improving ITE programs.

These recommendations were justified as addressing problems identified in the provision of ITE for contemporary times. For example, it referenced the need for flexible timetabling of program delivery as "the typical 9am to 5pm university lecture and tutorial regime is increasingly restrictive in regard to the myriad demands on contemporary pre-service teachers' time" (p. xx). Further it also reported that within the content of ITE courses there were considerable gaps, and that capabilities consistently identified as lacking amongst ITE graduates were classroom management skills, capabilities for development of classroom resources and student assessment and reporting strategies.

The proposed solution stated in the report was for ITE educators to be composed from "a balanced mix of academic staff and outstanding practising teachers" (p. xxii). Achieving the right balance between the theoretical and practical components of ITE was identified as one of the most important challenges facing those involved in the design, delivery and accreditation of ITE courses. This was best achieved through the strengthening of partnerships between key stake holders as a priority. It stated a goal for ITE, "developing partnerships with schools and other appropriate education and training organisations for more effective, flexible delivery of appropriate course components" (p. xxi). It further recommended that ITE courses need to pay greater attention to:

- Heightening knowledge of the practical dimensions of teaching among pre-service teachers
- Improving the integration of practical experience into the structure and substance of teacher education [ITE] courses
- Modelling of effective teaching practices during teacher education [ITE] (p. 12).

These recommendations formed part of the core philosophical and practical considerations in the discussion and implementation phase of developing a TTT model for the Crescent Beach College program.

The second seminal report which referenced changes in ITE delivery was *Top of the Class: Report on the inquiry into teacher education*. It was produced by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training (Education & Training, 2007). It was significant in terms of background context for this thesis because it also made recommendations for change that echoed the Step Up, Step In, Step Out report (Parliament, 2005) but it extended the discussion by calling for robust research initiatives into the effectiveness of different models of ITE. According to the report there was an insufficient body of available rich research from which firm conclusions could be drawn about the overall quality of teacher education in Australia. One of its key recommendations for research involved gathering data to evaluate the effectiveness of different models of ITE.

The committee recommended that the Australian Government commission a comprehensive longitudinal study into the effectiveness of different models of teacher education across Australia. The longitudinal study "should follow cohorts of students from selection into courses, through pre-service preparation, the first five years of service and through their careers" (p. 10).

The "Top of the Class" report situates how a substantial body of research needs to emerge to provide rich data in the application of different models of program delivery. Mayer et al. (2015) believe there is value to be had from research that can simultaneously speak back to policy, teachers and teacher educators with new forms of evidence about the quality of ITE. These data, they suggest, "will not only allow us to get beyond the tradition of "quick fix" policy-driven "solutions" to fundamentally complex problems, but also allow

teacher educators to play an active, outward facing, powerful role in shaping teacher education for a changing world, extending our understanding of what teacher education actually is, and where teacher education takes place, and "reforming" teacher education where reform is shown to be required" (p. 17).

The "Top of the Class" report (Education & Training, 2007) differed from the "Step Up, Step In, Step Out" (Parliament, 2005) report where in addition to aggregating the opinions of stakeholders, it also involved surveying principals and recent graduates to gain a wider representation of views regarding the perceived inadequacies of the process. Yet it drew similar conclusions about the state of ITE specifying the following areas of concern:

- Inconsistent school based professional experience components of the course
- The weakness of the link between "theory" and "practice"
- The perceived lack of relevance of some of the theoretical components of the courses
- The capacity of beginning teachers to deal adequately with classroom management issues, to perform assessment and reporting tasks and to communicate with parents (Education & Training, 2007, p. 8)

In response to these areas of concern, the "Top of the Class" report recommended the promotion of effective partnerships which connected university staff to the mentor teacher and PSTs particularly through the vehicle of professional experience (Education & Training, 2007). Professional experience as applied to ITE programs refers to work-integrated learning where PSTs spend time on placements within school settings. During professional experience, PSTs generally work under the direct supervision of experienced teachers. Here, these supervising teachers are referred as mentor teachers. Mentor teachers

are trusted professional colleagues (Le Cornu, 2010, p. 200) who provide the essential guidance and support to preservice teachers as they learn to teach. Under this mentorship, PSTs assume increasing responsibility for aspects of the teaching role relative to progress through their ITE programs. These practical components of ITE are described as the "most intensive exposure to the teaching profession experienced by prospective teachers" (Cohen et al., 2013, p. 345) and constitute a fundamental component of what it means to learn to teach.

The "Top of the Class" Report noted that effective partnerships are often the result of determined efforts by inspired individuals in universities, schools and systems who have "the awareness that teacher education [ITE] is a shared responsibility and a willingness to work in partnership with other parties to fulfil that responsibility" (Education & Training, 2007, p. 79). It recommended an expansion in knowledge of what had previously been understood to be an effective partnership. Instead of being narrowly located in a single model of what partnerships entail, different models should be investigated and expanded across the system (p. 80). Following recommendations from this report, the National Teacher Education Partnership Fund was established by the Australian Government to develop resources, funding and the promotion of partnerships across multiple levels in education.

This report was deemed so influential in determining the value of partnerships in ITE that Teaching Australia commissioned Victoria University to undertake a study into university-school partnerships in 2009. The aims included identifying and analysing examples of effective and sustainable partnerships as part of preservice teacher preparation programs. This research together with other empirical studies have acknowledged that successful partnerships are "a social practice achieved through and characterised by trust,

mutuality and reciprocity among preservice teachers, teachers and other school colleagues and teacher educators" (p. 10). This has led to a broadening of what constitutes a successful partnership to include bringing stakeholders together around personalised and localised interests in learning, and school student learning in particular (Farrell, 2021; Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008). This broadening underlines the need for a framing of the school-university partnership model which fosters collaboration across stakeholders where the different interests, values and practices that exist are negotiated (Engeström, 2008).

The third seminal report discussed in this literature review is, *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* (TEMAG, 2014). This report was commissioned by the Australian Government, who appointed a Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group to advise on how initial teacher education programs could be improved. However, the recommendations differed from the earlier reports in being strongly focussed on policy regulation and integration of broad parameters such as PST testing, analysis of course subject matter and alternative entry pathways to teaching. It further recommended that quality partnerships be prioritised as a potential vehicle for such integration as evidenced by the Chair of TEMAG, in a letter to the then Federal Minister for Education:

> We have concluded that the single most important action to be pursued is the integrated delivery of initial teacher education. This can be achieved through close partnerships between providers, school systems and schools, and underpins improvement to all aspects of the preparation of teachers (TEMAG, 2014, p. xi).

While TEMAG advocated an integrated approach to ITE supported by close partnerships, substantial government policy dictates were announced to incorporate and strengthen measures of success. A national curriculum, strategies for teaching and learning and rigorous testing had been tied to behavioural outcomes, national benchmarks and school

results in the past. However, the introduction of Standards and Procedures for the accreditation of ITE programs with the national regulator, the Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL, 2015) were endorsed as a way of improving standards and measuring change.

The TEMAG review endorsed this and other state regulators such as Victorian Institute Teaching (VIT) with their benchmarking of official standards of graduate and experienced teacher performance in Australia. “The Graduate Standards will underpin the accreditation of initial teacher education programs” (AITSL, 2011, p. 3). The meeting of these standards was a key recommendation of The TEMAG report and emphasised a marked change of direction from the previous government reports in ITE reform. TEMAG (2014) considered the standards to be a measurable basis to build stronger links between coursework and practice. The standards are said to achieve this through the presentation of “…a common understanding and language for discourse between teachers, teacher educators, teacher organisations, professional associations and the public” (AITSL, 2011, p. 3). They allow for a more school-centred approach that aims to place the PST in active roles within the school and instructing them in how to teach.

With this more authentic role and coupled with enthusiastic and experienced mentor teachers, PSTs have a greater opportunity to “think like a teacher” (Rowley et al., 2013) and make meaning of the Graduate standards of practice, especially in terms of how they contextualise the theoretical concepts and principles of teaching.

The TEMAG (2014) report was seminal in the lead up to the commencement of the Crescent Beach College program. It heralded a policy initiative, different to the past. Apart from greater application to standards and accreditation procedures it accommodated suggestions from other researchers that the organisational functions and priorities of schools

should be incorporated into professional experience placements (Cohen et al., 2013). Consequently, from 2014, policy had begun to dictate that schools and ITE providers should enter into more formalised partnerships which met the needs of schools and employers, where professional experience was integrated with provider-based learning and data was used to validate their efforts.

The TEMAG report also highlighted what others have cited as a lack of longitudinal research literature on what constitutes rigour and educational achievement for graduate teachers and their students (Cohen et al., 2013). Professionals in the field of ITE were called upon to provide a blueprint and evidence concerning the ability of their programs to create partnerships and produce teachers who make a positive difference (AITSL, 2015; TEMAG, 2014). TEMAG stressed a strong preference for provision of teacher and ITE workforce data from partnership models to better align the needs of graduate teachers with the school workplace.

2.1.2 International Policy Informing Partnership Practice

International researchers have identified influential concepts which have driven the debate around the value and composition of successful partnerships in ITE. The following section outlines how processes such as collective endeavour, cross sector collaboration, strong connections between clinical practice and research theory and the spaces where partnerships occur can affect the creation of partnerships.

The school-university partnership is the bedrock of ITE across both time and space (Harford & O'Doherty, 2016) with international research indicating partnerships capitalise on the expertise of both university academics and school mentor teachers to connect theory to practice (Forgasz, 2016; Mason, 2013). As most partnerships centre around the professional placement, schools tend to be the place for PSTs to contextualise their

university studies into practice. Researchers have suggested that ideally, closer proactive partnerships with schools will serve diverse learners and promote coherence and integration between course work and clinical work in schools (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Zeichner, 2010). However, despite its centrality to ITE, the ubiquitous use of school-university partnership often diminishes its actual meaning, making its use unclear and complicated to those involved. Many policy documents contain references to school-university partnerships which lack detail, particularly in relation to roles and responsibilities (Harford & O'Doherty, 2016). This needs to be replaced by a considerably stronger sense of collective endeavour and collaborative professionalism (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018) that assumes a mantle of collective responsibility for ITE . This will require attending to systemic shortfalls in terms of time and space to create the necessary and sustained support for all participants involved in ITE programs. School leaders, cooperating mentor teachers, PSTs and university lecturers all have an important role to play in enhancing a collective endeavour to partnership creation in ITE. In order to do this well, they need to be resourced and supported and their insights and contributions need to be valued (Farrell, 2021).

Integrated partnerships between key stakeholders in an ITE program are more beneficial to the PST than a separated academic and practical approach, which tends to be traditional (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Ryan et al., 2016). Specifically, partnerships are more likely to be successful when mentor teachers and university lecturers collaborate and are willing to conceptualise ITE as a shared phenomenon. International ITE models such as those from Finland demonstrate university affiliated “model schools” enable the development of strong partnerships between schools and lecturers based on a shared focus of research and learning together (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ehlert et al., 2016). As a further example, Mason (2013) referenced a program at the University of Louisville USA that served cohorts of professional people with bachelor degrees and work experience who

wished to become teachers. In-service classroom teachers were involved in the design of this new program collaborating with university education faculty. According to Whitford and Metcalf-Turner (1999) this particular ITE program "is a collaborative responsibility of university professors and classroom teachers who are coordinating and pooling their talents as teacher educators" (p. 259). Survey data were gathered with particular emphasis on the willingness of the classroom teachers to be more involved in the ITE process. In summary, the results found that partnerships actively formed between university staff and the classroom mentor teachers did have lasting impacts on the quality of the ITE program.

Jackson and Burch (2016) found in their research that participants in quality ITE programs need to work together in such a way "…that the sum of the parts is greater than the whole" (p. 9). Partnerships need to capitalise on the expertise of both university lecturers and classroom mentor teachers to assist PSTs to better connect and translate academic knowledge into practice (Andreasen et al., 2019; Cope & Stephen, 2001). This is especially true when PSTs are presented with the what and how of teaching in lectures and then have to connect what they have learned to the lived experiences of the classroom (Mason, 2013; Sewell et al., 2018; Zeichner et al., 2015). International researchers also point to other benefits of strong school university partnerships. They suggest that high performing ITE programs build strong connections between clinical practice and research theory taught at university by working together in the development of partnership practices such as professional learning communities (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005; Mason, 2013; Sewell et al., 2018; White & Forgasz, 2016). These researchers are suggesting that professional learning communities arise when lecturers and mentor teachers have a shared responsibility for achieving high quality PST learning and are willing to learn from other colleagues through systematic collaboration to achieve this goal. From an understanding of shared responsibility comes a commitment to a shared practice of ITE (Vanblaere & Devos, 2016).

Supported by an international body of research on what influences effective school-university partnerships, participants in an Irish study by Farrell (2021) were in agreement in their vocalization of the importance of building professional learning communities between the various participants of ITE programs which foster school-university partnerships (Bernay et al., 2020). Fundamental to the efficient and sustainable function of this professional learning community was forward and effective communication for planning, dialogue on the application of theory to practice for the PSTs and the use of a shared language regime underpinned by a shared knowledge base and understanding. These conditions assist in promoting a sustained focus on practitioner inquiry-a necessary requirement for effective learning community partnerships (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Dimmock, 2016; Gutierez, 2019).

There has been a widening discussion in international research of the theoretical concept of the "third space" or "boundary space" and how this can benefit partnership generation (Grudnoff et al., 2017; Mayer et al., 2015; Zeichner, 2010). This theoretical concept recognises that the participants in partnerships need not be isolated to their own localised experiences and knowledge (i.e., the school or university space). There is benefit in drawing on multiple dialogues to make sense of experience. Soja and Chouinard (1999) argue that third space offers new alternatives to current partnership thinking in ITE. In this third space, opportunities to develop new knowledge are heightened. This is not only a space for collecting ideas and for expanded forms of learning but is also a space for transformation of activity and innovation. Even though no participants in the Irish study of Farrell (2021) explicitly used the term "third space" it was transparent from their responses that the respondents were aware of the benefits in accessing a third space (Farrell, 2021). This was well conceived by school leaders and mentor teachers in the following elaborations:

- Finding a common space to really engage in joint dialogue and a shared agenda is central to any meaningful partnership between the school and the university. (School Leader)(Farrell, 2021, p. 30); and
- Working to find common ground, shared goals and a democratic partnership is vital if universities are really to work with schools in an equal way in support of the formation of student teachers. (Mentor Teacher) (Farrell, 2021, p. 30)

This has led some authors to suggest there is a case for a hybridisation of partnership processes between school-based and university-based teacher educators as working between and across boundaries have a potential to create positive change within the limits of reforms available (Grudnoff et al., 2017; Sewell et al., 2018). Some New Zealand universities are already responding to this vision through their support of the concept of "levelling" where positional leaders surrender outward status and come together in a hybrid space to form equal relationships. It is a space where the academic, practitioner and community-based knowledge could come together in new ways to inform the preparation of teachers (Sewell et al., 2018; Timperley, 2013). Further detailed information on third space or boundary space activity is provided in Theoretical Framework, Chapter 3.

While this literature review has identified key responsibilities and conditions under which ITE partnerships could foster the learning of PSTs, their application and impact to a TTT model have yet to be studied in detail. The review also sets the scene for further investigation into the concept of activity in boundary space and its potential to contribute to robust research-based policy development. Importantly, the research undertaken for this thesis was designed to illuminate the extent to which positional leaders conceptualised their role in the TTT model to actively strengthen school-university partnerships.

2.1.3 Reform and Innovation in ITE to Meet Future Needs of Students

Scholes et al. (2022) have encouraged a reconceptualisation of education and ITE if schools are to meet the needs of future students. To prepare students for life and work, schools may need to develop new pathways and move beyond traditional educational constructs by collaborating with business, industrial organisations and government to ensure that educational programs and assessments are meeting the needs of the future workplace (p. xii). This is best achieved with an emphasis on classroom and curriculum transformation which requires collaboration between policy makers, researchers, school leaders, teachers, students and parents (Scholes et al., 2022, p. xiii).

This supports earlier research which has noted social change over time and new community and technological norms (Kalantzis & Cope, 2010), conceived as an emerging "knowledge society". "In this sort of economy, value is increasingly sought in human capacity, organisational flexibility, business processes, customer relationships, brand identity, social networks, technological know-how, product aesthetics and service values" (Kalantzis & Cope, 2010, p. 201). Prompted by globalisation and changing technology, people now need to be prepared as lifelong learners to manage changing expectations. New models of student learning have found favour. One such model is referred to as a "Futures Framework" (Scholes et al., 2022) which supports the development of a newly identified skill for students called "futures thinking". This type of thinking promotes individual agency and confidence in students to make a difference in sustainability, global issues and future scenarios (Ernst & Burcak, 2019). This requires a much greater emphasis on human development and knowledge construction which favour enquiry-type practices, problem solving and the development of learning mindsets through rich, open-ended tasks (Allen et al., 2010; Grudnoff et al., 2017; Yeigh & Lynch, 2017). This kind of student learning should develop students who are strong thinkers and problem solvers. This is a challenge to

"teachers of the twenty-first century who require different complements of knowledge, skills and experience that enable the development of the skills necessary for lifelong learning" (Allen et al., 2010, p. 625).

In rethinking the broad parameters of ITE, other key researchers such as Hattie (2013), Smith and Lynch (2010) and Ingvarson et al. (2014) contend there is a need to build knowledge for teaching. New, innovative approaches to ITE are needed, that promote and sustain alternative pathways to teacher education. It requires a reconsideration of the knowledge base that informs ITE and how the generation of new knowledge will be formed and understood by those involved in the systems that support ITE, schools and local communities (Hattie, 2013). The future will see the need for renewed transformation of teaching workforce skill sets since teachers directly impact the way creative capabilities are developed and valued by learners (Soh, 2017). Teachers need to embrace interdisciplinary approaches in pedagogy that support learners in thinking that involves boundary crossing, core concepts, calling for conceptual frameworks which can be readily applied to unfamiliar problems (Harris & De Bruin, 2018).

2.2 Elements to Form Successful Partnerships

The following sections identify common practices required for the creation of successful partnerships between schools and universities. There are many types of partnerships in ITE. These are described as social practices involving PSTs, mentor teachers, and university staff. Bloomfield and Nguyen (2015) state that "a partnership commonly denotes notions of sustained relationship and equal exchange as well as reciprocity and mutuality achieved through a process of negotiation of relationship in terms of common purpose, forms and practice" (p.24). Partnerships are characterised by professional conversations, practices and collegial learning with the purpose of improving outcomes for school students.

Consequently, this thesis is concerned with how these characteristics were affected and managed in the Crescent Beach College program, particularly the alignment of processes and the construction of enabling conditions that spanned the boundaries of schools and universities (Kruger et al., 2009; Rossner & Commins, 2012). This involves analysis of sustainability, professional conversations and the development of locally relevant and collegial relationships in the program.

2.2.1 Successful Partnerships are Personalised, Localised and Enduring

The notion of a genuine university-school partnership suggests a social process of collaboration with professional conversations, collegial learning and aligned processes. However, establishing successful school-university partnerships is never a simple process (Rossner & Commins, 2012). Specifically, these researchers caution that "a hierarchal relationship characterised by irregular contact with the school, with a primary purpose of satisfying a provider's professional experience needs, neither equates to a partnership nor provides strengthened outcomes for teaching graduates" (p. 2).

In Australia, professional Standard 5.1 (AITSL, 2015) specifies the importance of the "enduring" nature of school-university partnerships. Policy now necessitates that ITE providers evidence the establishment of "enduring school partnerships" (p. 15). It has also been noted by a number of authors that partnerships which reflect local and specific issues and include collaboration with local community representatives, lead to a more authentic and enduring ITE program (Allen et al., 2010; du Plessis & Sunde, 2017). Bloomfield (2009) and Le Cornu and Ewing (2008) also note the creation of sustainable and collaborative programs, that develop locally relevant collegial learning have the best chance of long term success.

Partnership reform has led to a reconceptualisation of conventional professional experience around the concept of *learning communities*. While partnerships between schools and ITE providers have the potential to better connect theory to practice for the PST, they can also facilitate an openness towards the sharing of specialised knowledge and skills between sites. Simultaneously, they can allow for the renewal of the settings that are part of the partnership through a deeper understanding of the others' role (Stephens & Boldt, 2004). Allen et al. (2010) cite examples of successful Australian partnerships in teacher professional development and ITE, including the Teacher Renewal through Partnership Programme (Perry et al., 2002), the Australian Project for Enhancing Effective Learning (Erickson et al., 2005) and the Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM). A common approach employed by these partnerships was the use of careful consideration of the school context and the needs of the school or the school community as a focus for engagement. "Teacher and school renewal and the development of workplace capacity resulted from all of these projects, as did stronger school–university links" (Allen et al., 2010, p. 617).

The implication from the Allen et al. (2010) research is that ITE providers who respond, review and modify courses in partnership with employers and local education communities will further enable the partnership process. However, Smith and Moore (2006) warn that while reciprocal partnerships are fundamental to the success of ITE it is essential that all participants follow the same script. For example, the development of collaborative learning communities must be maintained over an extended period of time, so that the relationship between school and university personnel can encompass change and create enhanced understanding of different viewpoints and provide a basis for ongoing professional development (Allen et al., 2010; Rossner & Commins, 2012). Likewise, Kruger et al. (2009) suggest effort is needed to move beyond research and piloted studies into concerted and systematic action in the creation of partnerships. Finally, it must be understood that the

development of authentic, effective and sustainable partnerships, will not only bring stakeholders together around personalised and localised interests in learning, but will also benefit student learning in the classroom; a key focus of ITE reform.

2.2.2 Successful Partnerships have a Reciprocating Nature

Successful school-university partnerships are a social practice bounded by an attitude of sharing to achieve a common purpose (Kruger et al., 2009; Petersen & Treagust, 2014). The sharing invokes other qualities of trust, mutuality and reciprocity. These three qualities are consistently identified either collectively or individually as characterising sustainable, meaningful and successful partnerships (Kruger et al., 2009; Rossner & Commins, 2012). Trust is characterised by the understanding and knowledge that each participant – PSTs, mentor teachers, lecturers and school leaders – brings an expectation that it will provide them with the benefits they seek. Mutuality is the extent to which the participants recognise that working together leads to personal benefits. Reciprocity occurs when each participant recognises and values what the other participants bring to the partnership. Consequently, trust, mutuality and reciprocity provide a footing for coming together to discuss and share expectations for and about the partnership, without the nature of the partnership being tightly prescribed.

Petersen and Treagust (2014) recommended that universities and schools develop reciprocal relationships based on a mutual understanding of each other's purpose in ITE and cite examples of schools providing PSTs with practical experiences outside university prescribed professional experience or allowing university lecturers access to observe and work with students in the classroom. However, for successful partnership generation, effective support for discussions, observations and reflection needs to be made available and workloads in schools and universities have to be managed expertly (Kruger et al., 2009).

Importantly, the implementation of partnerships should not be left to the initiative of individuals only as this could lead to complacency, inertia and withdrawal. All stakeholders in a partnership need to have a clear understanding of purpose and have sufficient time to carefully negotiate arrangements including their respective roles. Therefore, successful partnerships need to be integrated rather than complementary and combine best efforts towards the goal of creating quality teachers (Jones et al., 2016). Rossner and Commins (2012) contend that complementary styles of engagement with schools in ITE are traditional. The complementary approach, depicted by Rossner and Commins as "lending a classroom," invokes a hierarchical relationship characterised by irregular contact with the school and an orientation towards satisfying the university's professional experience placement needs. This stretches the goodwill of the profession, and does little to support improved outcomes for teaching graduates (Rossner & Commins, 2012).

2.2.3 Successful Partnerships Connect Theory to Practice

A long-standing challenge for ITE programs has been striking the right theory-practice balance. This has been a perennial issue within ITE and is well documented in literature (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Mason, 2013; Taylor et al., 2014). However, according to Flores (2018) more needs to be done to foster these components in existing ITE programs. Flores suggests in general, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of the use of research to inform practice and to enhance teacher professionalism. This can be achieved by developing an inquiry approach in ITE and to integrate research into the professional placement experience (Flores, 2018). This thesis provides insight into research informed practice by investigating a TTT partnership case at Crescent Beach College.

For TEMAG (2014), greater cooperation and integration of processes between universities and schools in ITE creates better opportunities to connect theory with practice.

Traditionally, the university has been largely responsible for the development of the theory components of teaching knowledge and the school has been responsible for PSTs' practical knowledge and skill acquisition. Realistic and authentic engagement with the teaching profession implies relating theoretical insight to professional practice. This has been the role of professional experience placements. At schools during placements, PSTs can discuss and practise teaching strategies based on their studies. Professional experience placement has been shown to strengthen the link between theory and practice. Successful placements assist in the development of PSTs' classroom management skills and professional identity (Morrison, 2016; Yeigh & Lynch, 2017).

More recently, concerns of a theory-practice divide have stemmed from research suggesting that "PST's time in professional experience placement does little to support their implementation of, and reflection on, underpinning theories about effective teaching practice thus leading to what is often termed the 'theory-practice divide'" (Jones et al., 2016, p. 110). To minimise such binary division, "consistent integration of course work and field work helps PSTs to better understand theory, apply concepts they are learning in their course work and to better support student learning" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 307). Alternatively, Farrell (2021) argued for the development of school-university partnerships that go beyond bridging the theory/practice divide to provide a "third space". Such conceptualisation would promote the optimisation of synergies to foster innovative practice and experimentation required to meet the diverse learners' needs.

Despite the portrayal of partnerships as a vehicle for connecting theory to practice, without appropriate conditions the likelihood of success diminishes. Ledger et al. (2020) note resourcing limitations. One example from the Australian context is the practice of daily supervision payments to a mentor teacher, an approach not shown to support high quality school placements for PSTs. Other researchers caution that positive learning experiences are

only supported when experienced and enthusiastic mentor teachers work with PSTs to provide the necessary practical experiences. This position is supported by the TEMAG (2014) report which stated: "theory and practice in ITE must be inseparable and mutually reinforced" (TEMAG, 2014, p. 18). Finally, policy makers have a crucial role to play in developing a suitable framework for effective partnerships to ensure quality learning opportunities flow from the professional experience placement (MacTeer, 2010; Rowley et al., 2013).

2.2.4 Models of ITE Partnership

A significant body of literature is concerned with elaborating models of school-university partnerships. Central to the vision of most partnership models is the acknowledgement that effective professional learning for the PST is neither entirely theoretical nor entirely practical, but a fusion of the two (Tatto & Furlong, 2015). Yet PSTs often struggle to make the link between theoretical and practical learning as they move between school and university (Hobson et al., 2008; Raffo & Hall, 2006).

Various partnership models have been developed, each with a primary aim of supporting the integration of professional knowledge and practical skill. Burn and Mutton (2015), in a review of ITE programs, explained that clinical-practice models bring together the "practical wisdom of experts" and evidence from research in partnership. Central to this vision is mentor teacher collaboration (Smith, 2016). For Smith, mentor engagement can be characterised as a continuum from total separation (practice schools) to some integration (partner schools) to deeper collaboration (university schools). Smith (2016) elaborates that "practice schools" maintain a segregation of duties whereby universities take primary responsibility for the theoretical components of teacher education, whilst schools assume responsibility for teaching practice. "Partner schools" undertake formal agreements where

schools apply to become partners in the ITE process and are required to make a case as to their suitability. If accepted the university would offer continuing professional development and opportunities for teachers to be involved in research. The "university school" would satisfy four core principles of partnership: improving the professional experience, research and development initiatives, development of teacher and lecturer competence, and creation of links for dissemination of research information.

Hobbs et al. (2018) have described a university-school partnership framework "for the framing of strong, valuable and effective partnerships that capitalise on the differing strengths of universities and schools in shaping quality teachers" (Jones et al., 2016, p. 117). Referred to as Representations of Partnership Practice (RPP) the Hobbs et al. framework provides a useful heuristic for identifying the core purposes of a partnership. The RPP heuristic helps to make explicit the range of purposes, intended outcomes and commitments that can be afforded by partnerships, and that these all have a value (p. 84). "The value of a partnership regardless of its style needs to be determined by how it meets the needs of each partner" (p. 84). Four aspects of partnerships were noted for each style: purposes, institutional structures, nature or style and theory-practice links. Hobbs et al. argue that the RPP heuristic provides an important adjunct for ITE providers to reflect upon their current practices, potentially supporting more effective professional experience organisation (p. 84). Five university case studies in science education provided the basis for defining three distinct partnership models: connective, generative and transformative. These three models are described below and summarised in Table 2.1.

1. Connective partnerships:

In connective partnerships, engagement is based on curriculum provision or other service need. Partnership activities are short-term and opportunistic and sit within existing structure.

Both partners provide short-term services with a focus on one partner's needs but with mutual benefits and value for all. Both partners recognise schools as important sites for PSTs to link theory and practice.

2. Generative partnerships:

In generative partnerships, partners recognise opportunities for mutual professional learning. Partnership activities are considered long-term and are planned and catered for in both the teacher education and school programs. Partners jointly plan the structure of the school-based practices to the benefit of each partner. Opportunities exist for both partners to reflect on practice that may be linked to theory.

3. Transformative partnerships:

In this style of partnerships, partner involvement is based on active and mutual professional learning. Partnerships are embedded in the ongoing structures and practices of both institutions. Partners take joint responsibility for mutually agreed practices and outcomes that align with their respective core outcomes. Both partners engage explicitly in inquiry guided by theories of professional identity development (Hobbs et al., 2018, p. 85).

Table 2.1:
Representations of partnership practices (RPP) as described by Hobbs et al. (2018).

	A. Purposes	B. Institutional structures	C. Nature of partnership	D. Linking theory with practice
1. Connective	Engagement based on provision of curriculum or other service need	Partnership activities are short-term and opportunistic and sit within existing structure	Both partners provide short-term services with a focus on one partner's needs but with mutual benefits and value for all	Both partners recognise schools as important sites for PSTs to link theory and practice
2. Generative	Partners recognise opportunities for mutual professional learning	Partnership activities are considered long-term and are planned and catered for in the teacher education and school programs	Partners jointly plan the structure of the school-based practices to the benefit of both	Opportunities exist for both partners to reflect on practice that may be linked to theory
3. Transformative	Partner involvement based on active professional learning	Partnerships are embedded in the ongoing structures and practices of the institutions	Partners take joint responsibility for mutually agreed practices and outcomes that are embedded in their respective core outcomes	Both partners engage explicitly in reflective inquiry guided by theories of professional identity development

Table 2.1 describes the combination of elements which create the differing types of partnership practices, each with its own value derived from anticipated purposes and potential educational consequences. While the different types of partnership practice are defined, Hobbs et al. (2018) note that they are not presented in an order to suggest increased value of the partnership. Furthermore, the RRP does not imply a specific order that a partnership must move through to attain its set objectives, with the definition of a successful partnership to be interpreted according to the level of expectation of the partners.

The application of the RPP can also position why universities and school may want to engage in partnership and how to frame the success of the engagement. For instance, some schools may want to improve learning outcomes in a specific curriculum area such as science

and communicate this to the university. Others may want to improve professional learning within their own staff (Hobbs et al., 2018). The purpose of the partnership will impact on the way success is viewed. In the first case, the partnership may be deemed successful if the PSTs are seen to be teaching lessons in the curriculum area. Success in the second scenario could be measured by the degree to which teachers report professional learning taking place and impacting upon their classroom practice. Similarly, university staff may enter into partnerships for specific reasons and deem success in a variety of ways, for example, genuine and authentic teaching engagement for PSTs. Success for PSTs may be the extent to which they have been able to connect theory and practice. Hobbs et al. (2018) illustrated the structure and benefits of each of these partnership models and concluded that regardless of partnership type, it is important to ensure that relationships are handled carefully and nurtured.

The RRP can be used to structure evaluations, for example, by directing attention to the ways different partners or stakeholders viewed or gained meaning from a partnership. In this thesis it has been used to classify the partnerships in the Crescent Beach College program.

2.2.5 Case Studies of Australian Partnerships

Another arm of literature that examines partnership structures focuses on the different types of partnership models which have informed ITE practice in Australia. Studies from Australia on models of partnership are described in this section. Three Australian partnership models were found and were chosen for inclusion as they are representative of the timeframe of this research and each describing elements of partnership generation that were favoured by the Crescent Beach College program. These three case studies are: 1. an Alliance, 2. the Bachelor of Learning Management (BLM) program and 3. the Teach for Australia program. Each have supported an integrated approach to ITE reform through the establishment of

close partnerships between providers, school systems and schools as recommended by TEMAG (2014). Connections to the Hobbs et al. (2018) RRP have been made as appropriate.

An Alliance is a transformative model between a university and a certain number of schools. The intention is to engage explicitly in partnership to provide the highest quality professional learning experiences for PSTs and those working in the profession. Similar to the Crescent Beach College program, it draws on Cultural Historical Activity Theory as a broad conceptual framework that is useful for informing social problems that typically require effective collaboration between multiple human activity systems (Toe et al., 2020). For the alliance model, "the challenge is to build stronger, sustainable school-university partnerships, strengthen theory-practice links, and improve measures of PST readiness" (Toe et al., 2020, p. 105).

In one such real life example, a specific alliance school was created as a result of a merger of nine schools into one college located on six campuses, consisting of Foundation to Year 12 classes. This college is located in a major regional town and is situated in a generally low socioeconomic area. The alliance program was designed to support the school improvement agendas of the partner school through a collaborative approach and to contribute to enhanced PST development, high quality teacher professional learning, research to support school improvement and the support of school-based initiatives. An important consideration for this association was the development of a shared understanding of what improvement initiatives were happening across the school alliance and how the mentor teachers and PSTs could add capacity to these initiatives to augment their authentic learning experiences.

The university alliance model is facilitated by the employment of a Site Director who effectively becomes a “boundary crosser” (Engeström, 2008), between the schools and the university, ensuring the professional experience is well coordinated with the ITE programs and facilitating the PSTs contributions to school improvement initiatives. The Site Director also coordinates the school-university partnership by facilitating professional development needs, identifying possible research opportunities, problem solving, and working with PSTs to link theory to practice. Data that is collected and analysed is used to examine the impact of the model on PSTs' professional development and transitions into the workplace, as well as the impact on schools and students' learning. Mentors are expected to draw extensively on the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers as a resource to facilitate PST’s deep, professional engagement, and in particular, to illustrate examples of the standards in their own practice. Mentor teachers have the opportunity to undertake professional learning around enhancing their skills and have significant professional support provided by the Site Director and university academic staff in the use of the Professional Standards, workplace learning and using the university’s evidence-informed approach to making judgements about PST’s learning progress.

The Bachelor of Learning Management (Allen et al., 2010), like the program at the centre of this research is an example of an integrated partnership approach where both university lecturers and classroom teachers worked alongside each other in a Queensland university partnership. It was an innovative ITE program developed to restructure the ITE system. It differed from others as it was developed in cooperation with key education industry players such as teachers, school authorities, and teachers’ unions. It was presented as a paradigm shift away from the traditional ITE program which relied on an assumption that theoretical foundations of teaching presented on-campus will automatically be transferred in some meaningful way to the PST when engaged in the professional experience

placement in the school classroom. Importantly, this approach had a similar feature to the Crescent Beach College program in that teacher practitioners were employed as lecturers. Their expertise, interest and practical knowledge of the classroom in key learning areas combined with the expertise of specialist university staff, offered a program parallel to the ITE program at the focus of this research. In a similar study, Smith and Moore (2006) noted, [the BLM] "consciously and directly attempts to bridge the theory-practice gap so often attributed to teacher education programs" (p. 20). Its focus was the learning of specific pedagogies of teaching and supporting the PSTs with instructional classroom practices more so than curriculum development capabilities.

In their evaluation of the BLM, Allen et al. (2010) determined that the level of communication between the school and the universities was an issue of the greatest importance. At times, there appeared to be a general lack of awareness of the others' daily operations and organisational structures. This led to indifferent and sometimes poor levels of communication with suggestions from some participants that "there is still a huge void between schools and the [university] Faculty of Education" (p. 622). As a way of improving communication, it was suggested that the PSTs should be promoted as linchpins between the two systems because many had made connections with their university work regarding the theory of student learning and wanted to transfer this knowledge to their school professional experience placements.

The Teach for Australia program (TFA) is the third partnership model which has been included in this review as it is an example of an alternative route to teacher certification as supported by the TEMAG recommendations (TEMAG, 2014). Like the Crescent Beach College program, it supports PSTs to develop methods of classroom practice in a timely manner. This model features minimal pedagogical or related preparation at university in

favour of on-the-job training. Programs such as TFA are promoted as a solution to disadvantage in secondary schools. The design works by placing high achieving academic graduate students who do not possess a formally accredited tertiary preservice education qualification as classroom teachers into public schools which are designated as underperforming. Whilst not holding formal teaching credentials candidates carry out duties expected of a classroom teacher with only introductory teaching skills. An "Initial Intensive" is provided "to develop the skills, knowledge, plans and relationships" to best prepare candidates "for the classroom on day one" (Skourdoumbis, 2012, p. 21). TFA has been cited in terms of its productivity and effectiveness in graduating academically capable teachers who have a suitable skill set for teaching in demanding circumstances (Evangelinou-Yiannakis, 2019). The program includes a condensed introduction to concepts such as emotional intelligence, communication skills and leadership capacity "with its imbedded necessity of superior judgement and decision-making ability" (Inverarity, 2017, as cited in Evangelinou-Yiannakis, 2019).

The use of highly skilled individuals as beginner teachers specifically to tackle educational disadvantage in Australian secondary schools has been a relatively recent innovation in ITE. However, Skourdoumbis (2012) contends that initiatives such as TFA will not overcome educational disadvantage nor will it over time improve student outcomes. Moreover, research suggests that "as alternative pathway teachers become more expert, student and schools gain benefits only if the teachers stay in the schools that have invested in their training" (Darling-Hammond et al., 2013). This program received support from the Australian Government Department of Education and Training in the form of assistance to schools utilising TFA candidates (Government, 2022). Yet, there are no guarantees that the fully trained graduate will stay and teach beyond the two-year course. Skourdoumbis (2012)

suggests that more investigation is needed to determine retention rates and their impact on the TFA program and its implementation as an alternative teacher certification pathway.

2.2.6 Tensions and Contradictions in School-University Partnerships

In this section, the known limitations and inhibiting factors associated with generating partnerships in ITE are provided. Much has been written about the facilitating factors required for partnership development such as: student learning, resource availability, institutional conditions, the creation of supporting systems and the engagement of staff from both the university and school systems (Kruger et al., 2009; Waitoller & Kozleski, 2013). While it is a collective endeavour from both the school and university which brings participants together for improved learning, there are a number of historic tensions and contradictions within ITE that tend to hinder such a process.

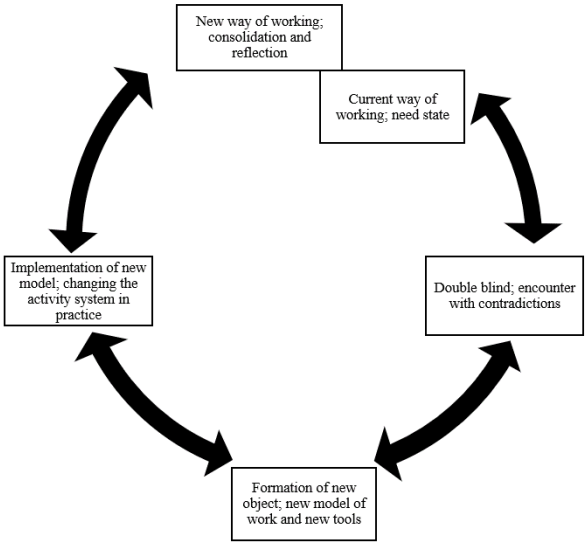
Engeström (2008) has defined contradictions as historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems. Contradictions are not the same as problems or conflicts (p. 205). They are systemic paradoxes and not to be confused with localised arguments or differences of opinion that may appear within a system. At their core, contradictions can be likened to need states which arise from inconsistencies that may be identified within each element of the activity system. They are the expression of a fundamental underlying driver of user behaviour and mindsets, which cuts across pre-existing categories and formats. They can be used to trace the formation of current tensions through earlier cycles of development. Once identified, contradictions can become a positive engine of change for practice where practitioners seek alternative activity to eliminate or reduce the impact of such tensions or disturbances. According to Ellis et al. (2010, p. 168) priority should be given to contradictions which directly affect the object of the activity. This represents a step change in the way participants reflect on their activity choices and

provides a framework for product (re) development of activity where established structures have lost resonance.

The cycle depicted in Figure 2.1 is used as a framework for understanding how tensions and contradictions can aid expansive learning in ITE systems. It begins with individuals questioning or criticising the current practice of the activity of which they are a part. For example, the connection of theory to practice in ITE is seen as problematical by many researchers (Flores, 2018; Jones et al., 2016). If the creation of a quality graduate teacher is the object of the activity, a required need state is that PSTs should seamlessly move between the theory and practice of teaching. While the creation of a theory practice nexus is the desired outcome, achievement can be impeded as the process has historically been separated into two systems: the school and university. At this point a resultant underlying tension or contradiction is evident as there are now two systems in place to guide the growth of the PST in this area. This can lead to jurisdictional issues between the school and the university.

Figure 2.1:

Engeström's (2001) expansive learning cycle



However, being situated in a double bind situation such as this can energise ITE practitioners to search for new solutions (i.e., new models, tools and ways of working to better deal with the connection of theory to practice in ITE). The implementation of new models creates new activity and new ways of working to achieve the object. This new way of working will require further consolidation and reflection to fine tune the activity (Engeström, 2001).

The literature reveals certain tools are available to ITE providers and schools to review procedures and processes for developing improved partnership practices focusing on these tensions and contradictions of professional experience placements. However, little has been researched to create a body of evidence as to how tensions and contradictions may have appeared in a TTT model and how they can be ameliorated. Audit tools such as one created by The Victorian Council of Deans of Education, the Victorian Institute of Teaching and the Australian Learning and Teaching Council can assist in this area. It can be used to gain

insight on a number of historical tensions and contradictions which have hindered the development of such partnerships especially in the professional experience placement. The Report's audit recommendations considered the quality of organisational support and processes; communications and reporting; integration of academic content; alignments of philosophy; diversity of placement across the schooling spectrum; teacher workloads; the provision of high quality mentors; and the length and timing of professional experience. Of particular interest is Draft Recommendation 3.2, which calls for all higher education providers and schools participating in PST teacher placement programs to conduct an audit of the procedures and processes supporting placements. Most notably the university should audit:

- The quality of the organisational and academic support provided to placement communications with preservice teachers, schools and supervising [mentor] teachers
- The purpose, form and quality of information regarding the goals of the placement and how these are to be achieved
- The design of the placement program, and how it promotes integration of academic content with practical teaching experience
- The assessment of professional experience requirements to ensure they align with program philosophy and the VIT Professional Standards for Graduating Teachers
- The timing of placements to ensure they provide teaching experiences in the senior school years for PSTs
- The length of placements to ensure they are long enough to provide high quality professional learning experiences for preservice teachers

Expanding on the last two points, there are several contradictions associated with the length and timing of the professional experience placement. Accredited ITE courses must conform to the Standards and Procedures for accreditation of ITE programs as developed by AITSL where it is stipulated that PSTs must undertake no fewer than 80 days of professional experience in undergraduate and double-degree programs, and no fewer than 60 days in graduate programs. These experiences should be as diverse as possible and should occur as early as is practicable within a program (AITSL, 2015). However, there are few other guidelines for the professional experience placement which is usually organised by the university with scheduling to fit in with its program and timetabling requirements. There are multiple versions of professional experience which can occur as a number of consecutive weekly blocks or one day per week over one term or a combination of both. They may be scheduled at the beginning, middle or end of the school year. While they are likely to be scheduled at times which are practical to the university this could be impractical to the school and mentor teacher.

Depending on the timing there can be added pressure to the PST for lesson preparation, to undertake teaching, complete assessment tasks and a reduced capacity to reflect on theoretical frameworks that underpin practice. Engeström (2001) nominates this as a "primary contradiction" as ITE is historically not the main focus of activity for schools and there are inherent logistical difficulties in supporting PST placements. Edwards and Mutton (2007) in their research, noted repeated comments from school co-ordinators and mentor teachers about lack of sufficient time and resources to work with PSTs to fully develop understanding and reflective practices in their class engagement. This pre-empts an inherent contradiction that while on professional experience there is a focus on PSTs as learners at the same time as working on pupil performance in a context of standards and accountability which must be met.

The literature also reveals contradictions can occur when PSTs need or are required by their university to work in ways that are not part of a school's accepted practices. Douglas (2012b) observed that it was evident in how the norms of the school and the classroom were acknowledged as being highly influential on the PST's teaching practices and ideas, and this was something that schools sought to protect. Douglas (2012b) also noted how critiquing and debating ideas on pedagogy as part of the university curriculum could be seen as negatively impinging on a PST's personal support and working relationship with their mentor teacher. Importantly, PSTs and lecturers should negotiate meaning in designing lessons so PSTs might understand and negotiate potential contradictions in their professional knowledge with practice in the classroom. Essentially, managing contradictions is an important part of the ITE process.

2.2.7 Theorising Partnerships in ITE

More data is required to demonstrate how ITE programs and the TTT model in particular, are affected by tensions and contradictions, how they are resolved and whether their resolution can result in expansive transformation of PST development. In order to do this, and investigate the grounds for partnership creation, the author engaged a Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) analysis as a theoretical framework to deliver a detailed exploration of the partnership activity which occurred between the schools and Crescent Beach College. Its relevance lies as a theoretical and philosophical framework for studying different forms of human practices and their interaction within a bounded system (Hasan & Kazlauskas, 2014).

It was chosen for this study as it "is increasingly viewed as a potentially fertile paradigm for research in education" (Bakhurst, 2009, p. 107). It has the capacity to explore the when and where of partnership activity and how Crescent Beach College program dealt

with the inherent contradictions and tensions of ITE. This theory's importance lies in organising, sifting, sorting, and clarifying complex phenomena found in activity, in and beyond the classroom (Nussbaumer, 2012). CHAT "… has power to deal with the complexity in educational systems" (Jaworski & Potari, 2009, p. 222) and it has the capacity to expose points of intervention and indirect relationships that might not otherwise be considered. Using a CHAT lens to view data generated on school and university ITE activity helps to focus vital social, cultural and historical dimensions of practice (Daniels, 2004; Douglas, 2012a). It uses the activity which occurred between the school and university systems as a descriptive heuristic to illustrate differences in the kinds of teacher learning possible, afforded in relation to the ways in which the outcome (i.e., the development of a quality teacher graduate) of the ITE activity system was constructed. A detailed analysis regarding key aspects of the CHAT theoretical framework is provided in Chapter 3.

2.3 Chapter Summary

In ITE programs, school-university partnerships have been advocated as a method to meaningfully connect theory and practice for PSTs by utilising and connecting the expertise of lecturers, mentor teachers and in some cases, the wider education community. This systematic literature review has identified policy and peer reviewed research related to partnership creation and how this influenced the conception of the Crescent Beach College program. It provided a balanced view by making clear the many benefits of partnerships while also acknowledging the tensions and contradictions that may be encountered in their implementation. It has also presented a collective understanding of the key elements of successful partnerships and ways to categorise them. However, while this review has highlighted the underlying factors responsible for the success and sustainability of school-university partnerships, their application to a TTT model has not been explored in depth.

These factors include the categorisation of partnership practice in a TTT model and spaces where it may have occurred. The theoretical framework of CHAT was pre-empted as a method to reveal insights into partnership creation at Crecent Beach College and whether this resulted in a collective endeavour to transform the PST. From this comes a deepening of understanding of how school-university partnerships can enhance the connection of theory to practice and better prepare PSTs for the realities of the teaching profession.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework Cultural Historical Activity Theory

The previous chapter showed that more research is needed to better understand how ITE programs can be affected by tensions between the historical practices at partnering institutions, how they can be resolved and how resolution could result in PST development. In order to do this, and investigate the grounds for partnership creation, the author engaged Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a theoretical framework.

In this chapter, after an explanation of the origins of CHAT, the central tenets of CHAT relevant to this study have been elaborated. Importantly, CHAT provides the theoretical framework for conceiving of a partnership in ITE as *activity* or practices that can be influenced by two institutions or *activity systems.*

3.1 The Origins of CHAT

Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) is based on the work of Vygotsky who had profound insights into fundamentals of human consciousness. Vygotsy's main thesis explained human reasoning as emerging through practical activity in a social environment. This work, expanded by Leontiev and Luria in the 1920's and 30's, is seen as one of the

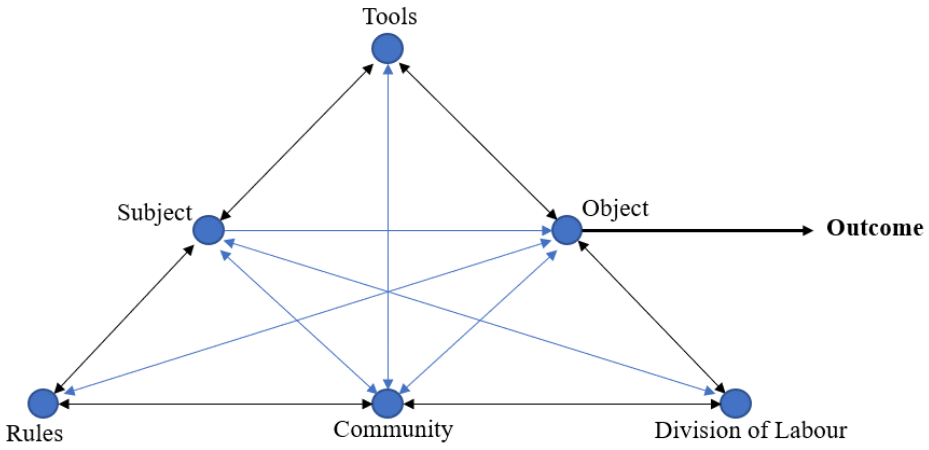
more important legacies of the soviet philosophy and psychology. The Russian founders concentrated on two related ideas: the notion of the *social self* and the concept of *activity* (Bakhurst, 2009). The social self relates to the belief that humans are essentially social beings and the very core of human existence revolves around membership and participation in a community. Activity within that community or system was seen as a fundamental explanatory category used by Russian philosophers and psychologists to analyse certain human behaviours and endeavours. Engeström (1987) further developed theory to incorporate the concepts of cultural and historic contributions into an activity system.

Engeström described three generations of development of Activity Theory through to Cultural and Historic Activity Theory. The first generation focused on the work of Vygotsky and in particular his conceptualisation of the actions and agency of individuals and how these linked the subject and object of the activity. The process was mediated by cultural artefacts or tools, both conceptual and practical. In this case activity theory focuses on individual persons. Vygotsky claimed that "the self could no longer be understood without his or her cultural means; and that society could no longer be understood without the agency of individuals who use and produce artefacts" (Engeström, 2001, p. 134). The second generation activity theory, influenced significantly by Alexei Leontiev (Burner & Svendsen, 2020), and like Vygotsky, emphasised the social basis of learning and situated individual and group activity but located this within a collective activity system. The crucial point here to note is the shift from the individual and their learning as an internal cognitive act to then placing it within the complex social interactions and activity of a community. The individual subject and his or her community become the context for the learning process. Thus, the unit of analysis moved from an individual focus (on learning, meaning making or practice) to that of a collective activity system and the production of an end objective.

According to Engeström (2008) an activity system represents collective endeavour towards a desired object, mediated by the tools, rules, community and division of labour that is committed to producing the outcome or product. In CHAT, the relationship between the subject (human doer) and object (the thing being done) forms the core of the activity. "The object of an activity encompasses the activity's focus and purpose while the subject, a person or group engaged in the activity, incorporates the subjects' various motives" (Hasan & Kazlauskas, 2014, p. 9). Engeström (1987) graphically displayed the concept of an activity system and the interconnection between all components in a triangular depiction. The subject is a person or group working to achieve an object leading to an outcome. Tools, rules, and division of labour mediate or reciprocally influence the achievement of the object and the final outcome. (See Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1:

Engeström's (1987) mediational structure of an activity system.



This second-generation model was expanded as the third-generation model to theorise interaction between two systems of activity. This was considered an important distinction to make because according to Hasan and Kazlauskas (2014) the outcomes of an activity may be many and not always those anticipated or desired, "Often what people seem to be doing, what they say they are doing and what they actually do, can be quite different" (p. 9).

3.2 Engeström's Third Generation Model

In developing a theoretical framework for this research project, it was Engeström's third generation model of activity theory which had the greatest application. The relevance of the Engeström (2008) third generation model lies in its capacity to investigate joint activity between two interacting activity systems (i.e., school and university) as the unit of analysis. It is this third generation model which offers the greatest insight into ITE reform because it can be applied as a conceptual tool "to understand dialogue, multiple perspectives, and networks of interacting activity systems" (Engeström, 2001, p. 135).

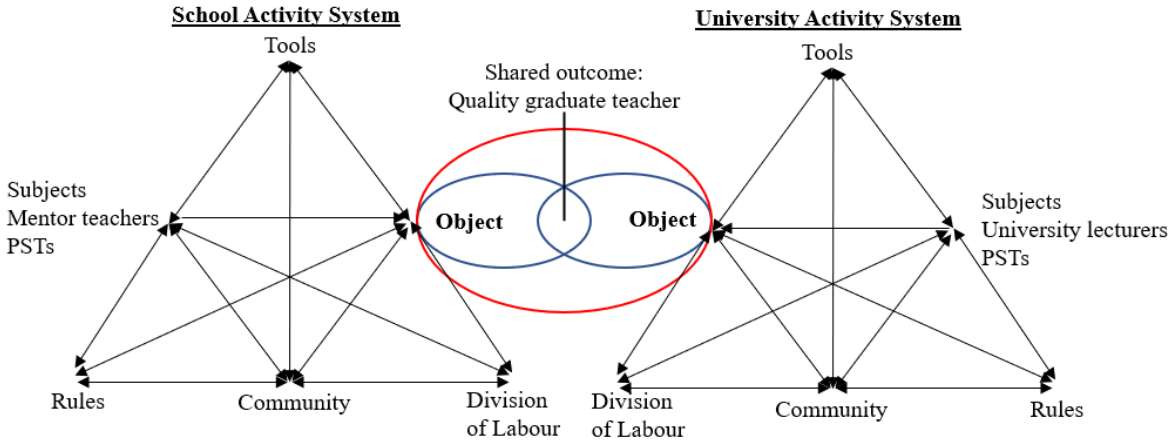
Figure 3.2 below is a theorised representation of Engeström's third generation model and how it can be applied to the structure of school-based and university-based activity systems in ITE. The left triangle is representative of the school-based activity system and the right triangle is the university-based activity system. Over time, these two systems have generated long held views and specific individual practices with regard to the constructs of ITE (i.e., rules, community, and division of labour) which has led to a degree of separation of the systems within the ITE process over time. However, to effect change and bring the two systems closer together through the development of a joint objective is not a simple task. Engeström likened the process to a metaphor of an iceberg.

The Government reports and goal oriented, publicly-voiced calls for action as noted in Chapter 2, identify that ITE programs need to be revised and that effective partnerships between schools and universities need to be established. This is the easily discernible tip of the iceberg. On the other hand, individual system constructs support the underneath social structure providing stability and inertia to change. (i.e., the base of the iceberg). In order to bring the two systems closer together, Engeström's theory suggests that the foundational constructs of each system (tools, rules, division of labour) must be explicitly communicated

and negotiated amongst all members of each system and requires a clearly described joint object. While each system may articulate an object similar in nature it is through effective collaborative work within the overlapping boundary space which allows for the possibility of new forms (objects) to emerge. This is highlighted as the red zone in Figure 3.2 and is the core area for investigation in this research. It is in this boundary space (physical and/or theoretical) where potentially, stakeholders from the separate systems come together to encourage partnerships, exchange ideas and renegotiate roles for a successful shared outcome. The third generation CHAT framework offers a lens to examine these processes.

Figure 3.2:

CHAT structure of school and university systems and their shared object.



The following section defines key words and their specific meanings as they apply to Engeström's third generation model and the context of this thesis. These key words form the basis of the following findings and discussion chapters.

Activity: Engeström (2008) describes activity from a CHAT perspective as systemic formations that gain durability by becoming institutionalised. McNicholl and Blake (2013) identify activity as the deliberate purpose or object to which such action is directed. In CHAT, the relationship between subject (human doer) and object (the thing being done)

forms the core of an activity and is defined by the "dialectic relationship between subject and object", in other words, "who is doing what for what purpose" (Hasan & Kazlauskas, 2014). Consequently, in the process of ITE, the author is defining activity as individual or group work undertaken to support the connection of theory to practice for the PST. This means more than just being involved in the ITE process, it is doing something significant and meaningful towards achieving the object.

Object: The object of an activity system is constructed through a collaborative and dialogical process in which different perspectives and multiple voices meet, collide and merge (Ellis et al., 2010). According to Engeström (1999a) the object of an activity, in a CHAT analysis, might be understood as the potentially shared problem or societally significant goal that humans are working on or towards. This is often described as the true motive of an activity (McNicholl & Blake, 2013). Therefore, the author is defining the object in ITE activity as the production of a quality graduate teacher as supported by the research of Ellis et al. (2010).

Mediational means: McNicholl and Blake (2013) suggest these are material artefacts that mediate the practical activities and shape the interactions of PSTs with students and significant others. Ellis et al. (2010) describe it as the interplay of material and conceptual instruments used for mediating learning and developing practice. Collating this information, the author is defining mediational means as social and physical constructs that develop historically and within ITE, and therefore create a link between historical and social processes and an individual's mental processes.

Transformative: Walshe and Tait (2019) argue that transformative learning involves a shift in consciousness which affects a deeper level of understanding and, perhaps more importantly for the PST, a change in behaviour. It encourages learners to move beyond

simple acquisition of knowledge "to a level of holism and depth capable of changing ways they understand, experience or conceptualise their world" (Evans, 2016, p. 447). For the purposes of this research, the author is defining transformative learning practices as practices which enable PSTs to be engaged in new and interactive ways through the process of collaborative concept-formation leading to a refinement of skills as a graduate teacher.

Boundary space: Farrell (2021, p. 216) defines boundary space as "space where elements from two activity systems enter into contact". This creates the kind of oscillating and malleable space where the academic, practitioner and community-based knowledge can come together in new ways to inform the preparation of teachers (Sewell et al., 2018; Timperley, 2013). The author is defining boundary space as being either a physical or conceptual overlapping space, between school and university systems which combines multiple cultures and where members build a sense of joint enterprise and identity around ways that foster PST learning.

3.3 Theoretical Significance of CHAT for this Research

Engeström's third generation model enlarged the concept of "activity" from Vygotsky's idea of mediation to include the constructs of community, rules and division of labour. His expansion aimed "to represent the social/collective elements in an activity system while emphasising the importance of analysing their interactions with each other" (Warmington et al., 2004, p. 5). Therefore it is able to provide "a unit of analysis in the concept of object-oriented, collective, and culturally mediated human activity, or activity system" (Miettinen et al., 1999, p. 9). It is the analysis of activity with each other, between each other and where it occurred which can inform educational debate and provide a platform for future ITE reform. CHAT constructs further elevated the privileged information gained as an insider researcher. These constructs were derived by the author from ideas

presented in the literature review, as well as from insights gained during the research process and participation in the program. They were designed to elicit information regarding partnerships and connection of theory to practice for PSTs as per the main research questions and with interview questions carefully worded so as not to convey a predictable favourable response. It was chosen as a theoretical framework to theorise the collective act of ITE participation because it is effective in facilitating a scaffold of discourse with the participants (PSTs, lecturers, mentor teachers, and principals) to challenge and reveal ways that the Crescent Beach College program conducted partnerships with schools, how it connected theory to practice and determine whether this was a transformative practice for the PSTs.

3.3.1 To Identify Mediational Means

In framing the collective act of participation CHAT theorises that mediational means can and do impact the object of the activity. Vygotsky (1978) devised the concept of mediation, by maintaining that human beings as agents react to and act upon mediating objects of the environment such as tools, signs, and instruments in their attempt to achieve the object of the activity. He theorised that this is how humans build a link between social and historical processes, on the one hand, and individuals' mental processes, on the other. It is because humans internalise forms of mediation provided by particular cultural, historical, and institutional forces that their mental functioning is socio-historically situated. Wertsch (2007) states that mediation involves "… our contact with the world … [that is] mediated by signs [instruments or tools]" and either explicit or implicit intervention. *Explicit* is defined as when "… an individual, or another person who is directing this individual, overtly and intentionally introduces a 'stimulus means' into an ongoing stream of activity". *Implicit* mediation is more complex due to its abstract nature. It is "… not explicit, not the object of conscious reflection … [but is] automatically and in most cases, unintentionally built into mental functioning" (Wertsch, 2007, p. 184).

CHAT constructs of tools, rules and division of labour (Figure 3.1) as depicted at the triangular points of the diagram, are conceived as the major conceptual resources or mediational means that can affect change across both systems. The object (what the subjects are working on) and conceptual resources mutually mediate one another as shown by bidirectional arrows in the triangle representation of activity. The CHAT framework suggests that significant and enduring change to the object of the activity can be achieved by manipulating *any* single element or groups of elements within the system. CHAT was utilised to investigate the use of the specific elements of mediational means in this ITE program such as tools, rules and division of labour and to determine whether they were manipulated in a way to create an enduring change to the object of the activity.

As mediational means will vary, depending on the different activity systems, it is important to define how they apply to the activity of ITE. Tools refer to signs, language and artifacts and are generally visible as handbooks, lesson plans, PST assessment forms, discussions and classroom aids. Rules are generally applied to such things as program norms, government and Education Department regulations, professional experience length and school classroom interaction and management rules. Division of labour is observed in the specific roles that university staff undertake in the process as distinct from the school staff (principals, coordinators, mentor teachers). In this case, university staff operating within a TTT model had previous experience of the school system and thus it was important to research how activity was influenced and how these conduits were used by the subjects to assist in achieving the object. It is important to note that the object cannot be fully achieved without mediational means because the collective would have no way of sharing meaning without these, that is, practice would be just individuals doing their own thing and there would be no collective endeavour to share labour and resources in the production of the object. To grow and transform the object, the mediational means of the activity systems

need to be understood and make sense to the participants. The CHAT framework is able to theorise what mediational means were involved in the Crescent Beach College program, at what level were they communicated and shared between systems and how these structures and processes impacted participation and partnership building.

3.3.2 To Identify Tensions and Contradictions

Ilyenkov (1974) first identified contradictions as a historically accumulated dynamic tension between opposing forces in an activity system. The concept was further developed by Engeström (1987) in the third generation activity theory as a source for change and development, which opened up opportunities and called for novel solutions that can lead to transformations in activities (Engeström, 1987). They can occur within and between activity systems and form the basis for understanding both the negative and positive consequences of behaviour within the systems. As contradictions arise, or are observed, they expose the dynamics, inefficiencies, and most importantly, opportunities for change and action (Karanasios et al., 2017); precipitating the development of an activity. By so doing they reveal opportunities for creative innovations for new ways of structuring and enacting the activity and learning (Engeström, 2001; Foot, 2001).

It is clear that CHAT research lends itself well to identifying current tensions and contradictions within an activity system, however, these may have been more difficult to elicit using the retrospective approach of this research. In this case the CHAT theoretical platform was used to identify contradictions which may have specifically occurred within the Crescent Beach College program or which *historically* occurred within the ITE process in general. As an insider researcher and practitioner, the author's personal experience in dealing with contradictions was advantageous in gaining rich and meaningful data and offering additional meaning to the reader.

A specific area of ITE activity where CHAT was used to reveal contradictions concerned the professional experience placement. It is conceived as an "expansive learning" experience (Engeström, 2008) when PSTs learn to teach in a placement school under the guidance of a mentor teacher. It is at this time when PSTs experience activity in a second system (i.e., the school system) that can lead to some tensions and contradictions within the ITE process. According to Engeström (2001), ideally the two interacting activity systems should be regarded as a minimal unit of analysis with components in both activity systems being considered together as in a whole learning system. However, due to the cultural dissonances between the university and the school as two different activity systems (Smagorinsky et al., 2004; Tsui & Law, 2007) such activity may give rise to contradictions between the objects of the two activity systems. For example, the object of the university activity system aims at helping the PSTs apply their university-taught theories and knowledge to the classroom practice while that of the school activity system aims at equipping them with the necessary practical and management skills required to teach (Tsui & Law, 2007).

If tensions emerge during the professional experience, they are likely to have arisen from the contradictions between interrelated components of both systems and the asymmetrical power relations between student teachers, mentors, and supervisors (Tsui et al., 2009; Tsui & Law, 2007). Engeström (2008) suggested that these inner contradictions emerge when one component changes or advances beyond operational capacity of the other component.

According to Engeström (2008), teams run into difficulties and find their limits when faced with objectives and structures that require constant updating and revamping. This can lead to adverse and divisive behaviour that can cause disharmony and inefficiency

in the team. This is especially true when the activity generates rules regarding the division of labour with other activity systems. However, if identified they can illustrate potential areas for developing and transforming the workplace to achieve higher levels of productivity by allowing negotiations to occur, not to search for a singular isolated compromise or decision, but to reach for higher levels of efficiency.

By identifying contradictions within the ITE process there is a potential to craft a coordinated approach between the school and university systems to reduce knowledge deficit between the two and encourage activity in the boundary space. These contradictions within the school-university partnership activity system are seen as driving forces of change (Engeström, 2001) which also contribute to the transformation of PSTs' identities (He & Lin, 2013). In such a transformative approach, conflicts are no longer problems to be resolved; rather they are opportunities to create a new negotiated order, a different definition of a partnership or a transformed situation (Engeström, 2008).

3.3.3 To Examine Activity in Boundary Space

Engeström's third generation model is a useful theoretical framework for its capacity to analyse individual teams or cooperating systems and it is ideally placed to provide a lens in this research to examine activity in the shared space between the two systems. Numerous terms have been coined for this intersection of the two boundaries, such as the "third space" (Gutiérrez, 2008) "hybrid zone" (Zeichner, 2010) and "boundary zone" (Konkola et al., 2007). In this thesis it is referred to as "boundary space" and is best described by Dooly (2011) as a space for users to co-create a "third" culture, through the combination of multiple cultures and where members build a sense of joint enterprise and identity around a specific area of knowledge and activity. It is a space where participants share a repertoire of ideas, commitments, memories and ways of doing and approaching things.

Whilst in some activity theory exemplars, the boundary space has been developed as a physical space (Gutiérrez, 2008), it is more generally conceptualised in terms of practices and processes that facilitate discursive and social interactions between two or more activity systems. Activity in this space examines long-standing practices and assumptions and allows for deep learning and improved practices. It can be a multi-contextual, multi-voiced and multi-scripted area that can also be a source of potential tensions and contradictions. Tsui and Law (2007) propose in a positive sense that working in the boundary space provides opportunities for innovation and renewal and can lead to profound changes in the activity system. Engeström (2001) links notions of boundary space to Vygotsky's "zone of proximal development", in terms of the potential for a collective journey leading to "expansive transformation" (p.137). Gutiérrez (2008) refers to "collective third space in which both joint and individual sense making occurs" (p.152). In theorising activity in boundary spaces as work which is "going beyond customary boundaries…in the openness of third space, [the] ensuing creative combinations and restructuring of ideas can provide new alternatives to oppositional thinking" (Martin et al., 2011, p. 2). This suggests a degree of cooperation, innovation and dynamic movement aimed at creating a level of success for the various communities or teams can occur in this boundary space. However, Engeström (2008) warns that this is not a simple process and it requires a collective endeavour from both systems working together "to construct a new object and cultivation of corresponding new motives" (p. 90).

It cannot be assumed because the work of separate systems is perceived or even required to intersect, as in for example mandated school-university partnerships, that productive boundary space activity will necessarily arise. As with all good relationships, attention needs to be given to the quality of the interactions and communication as well as the facilitating conditions. A number of studies (Allen et al., 2013; Yamagata-Lynch &

Smaldino, 2007) have stressed the importance of creating these conditions to nurture the effective partnership. A major focus of a transformative partnership is on developing activity in a boundary space where such different elements of the two systems come into view and can be renegotiated from past experiences.

However, while this is desirable, activity systems are complex and according to Engeström (2008), "they (the teams) are often breeding grounds of defensive routines and protective encapsulation" (p. 22). Engeström (2008) having likened them metaphorically to an iceberg, suggests the big challenge for the teams is to go beneath the surface of their "iceberg" in their efforts to effect change. This can be achieved by "…questioning the hidden curriculum of the tacitly accepted rules and boundaries that structure the motivational sphere of schoolwork" (Engeström, 2008, p. 117). Engeström (2008) proposes that if there is a common point of reference then argumentation is fruitful because it may trigger important and useful concept formation on either or both sides of the boundary. CHAT was able to analyse whether there were facilitating conditions to support the processes of collaborative and/or partnership work in the boundary space especially as it was based within and around the professional experience placement of the PST and the professional learning of all parties. It was used to reveal information about activity that occurred especially in relation to the formulation of partnerships as recommended by the TEMAG (2014) report and how the boundary space between universities and schools can be established and nurtured.

3.4 The Potential of CHAT for Researching Partnerships in ITE

It is expected that utilising CHAT for this research will demonstrate how it can be applied in meaningful ways as a research unit of analysis in ITE and be accepted with realistic expectations as all theories have some shortcomings (Nussbaumer, 2012). Bakhurst (2009) notes that in spite of philosophical problems, such as defining "activity", the CHAT model:

> … seems to work particularly well for the sorts of activity systems that activity theorists typically study: health care, work settings, some educational contexts … where you have a reasonably well-defined object, a pretty good sense of desirable outcomes, a self-identifying set of subjects, a good sense of what might count as an instrument or tool (Bakhurst, 2009, p. 206).

Although initially appearing straightforward, the complexity of the framework in the application of CHAT can be perplexing to the uninitiated. However, Nussbaumer (2012) suggests that to dismiss CHAT as a theoretical framework would be unwise, as it can be used to make a major contribution to the investigation of certain complex situational teaching and learning activities. Application of CHAT, in either educational research or practice, is based on the developmental nature of an approach that provides flexibility in a comprehensive contextual view of an activity as it introduces "… the crucial distinction between collective activity systems and individual action" (Engeström, 1999b, p. 63).

CHAT is sufficiently robust to accommodate a variety of contexts with different approaches and instruments. In addition to analysis of activity in boundary space, it can be adjusted to clarify educational issues. Not only can CHAT explain situations in terms of

dynamic relationships but also reveal mediational means (social resources) as they influence changes in human endeavours and educational practice (Roth & Lee, 2007). CHAT provides an adaptable integrative road map for educational research and practice. Essentially, understanding CHAT involves comprehension of its constructs, its adaptability to educational research as well as applicability to various learning situations (Bakhurst, 2009). The use of CHAT may reveal future recommendations for how both the university and school systems could go beyond the confines and boundaries of their usual assigned tasks and routines to create more effective partnerships. It enables an exploration of mediational means such as specialised tools of ITE (artefacts, language, and signs) and their role in stimulating activity in boundary spaces. CHAT will help to make sense of the factors behind apparent individual actions and resultant contradictions, deviations from the norm and program innovations that occur in the daily practice of ITE. Such actions can therefore be understood as potential sources for practice improvement.

In summary, CHAT was used as a lens to explore the practice of partnership creation from shared activity conceived in the boundary space of the school and university systems at the Crescent Beach College program. While there has been an emphasis on descriptive analysis of ITE programs in previous studies, CHAT gets to the heart of where systems challenge each other, why this occurs and understanding how this can benefit both systems in the long run. Douglas (2012a) suggests the use of a CHAT analysis is a useful means to address the core questions of what, how and where PSTs are learning in their ITE programs. It is useful because of its emphasis on settings, the social contexts and practices which are the product of cultural history and have historically been embedded in the ITE process. The PST professional experience placement and the corresponding partnership development are embedded historical practices which CHAT can be applied to.

Nussbaumer (2012) suggests CHAT lends itself not only to a thorough collection of rich data that contribute to the depth and quality of description of the context, but also manifests its applicability to classroom research. Although the complexity of CHAT may appear challenging, applying it to relationships between various constructs and components can reveal embedded organisational and contextual influences (Yamagata-Lynch, 2007). Some of these embedded organisational and contextual issues can lead to tensions and contradictions in the ITE process. CHAT has the ability to identify some of these issues and offer suggestions for a coordinated approach between the school and university systems to reduce any knowledge deficit between the two.

Having sourced participant perceptions of partnership creation further information regarding the nature of activity in the boundary space was revealed. This "area" is conceptualised in terms of practices and processes that would facilitate discursive and social interactions between the university and school activity systems. Tsui and Law (2007) proposed that working in the boundary space provided opportunities for innovation and renewal and can lead to profound changes in the activity system. In the following sections through the lens of CHAT, the author has theorised how the Crescent Beach College program managed partnerships, connected theory to practice, and how it could promote further collaborative research as the ITE process is challenged by similar issues in the future.

Chapter 4: Methodology

In keeping with the aims of the study, to explicate the ITE partnerships forged from the Crescent Beach College TTT approach that the author had had privileged access to, and to investigate the utility of Cultural Historical Activity Theory for theorising school-university partnerships in ITE, interactive ethnography was the chosen methodology, Firstly, it honoured the insider positioning of the researcher that was explained in the introduction and provided the means to generate data required for CHAT analyses pertinent to the focus of this thesis; stake holders' accounts of their activity in partnership for the purposes of ITE.

This chapter provides an explanation and justification of the methodological approach. The chapter has been divided into sections that outline the reasons for selecting interactive ethnography to frame the research, the research design, methods of data generation, and the approach to data analysis, which was informed by CHAT. Finally in this chapter, the ethical considerations related to this case study have been outlined, along with a reflexive account of how context-specific challenges and limitations that were considered at the outset were addressed in the research practice.

Interactive or participatory ethnography was chosen as the methodological approach. Interactive ethnography has "emphases on respecting the empirical world, penetrating layers of meaning, facilitating taking the role of the other, defining situations and grasping a sense of process" and has been described as "the natural methodology for seeking to understand the art of teaching" (Woods, 2013, p. 7). The author was uniquely situated in the Crescent Beach College program. The chosen methodology provided a way to cater to the author's insider role as the director of the program and the author's outside role as the researcher. The research sought to understand the program from multiple perspectives.

The role as Senior Campus Administrator provided the author with **privileged access** (Heil, 1988) to the program practices that were being investigated. The design framework for this study also needed to accommodate the author's knowledge, personal reflections, thoughts, actions and processes that connected with the author's actual involvement in the program. Importantly, the approach of interactive ethnography was adapted to accommodate participants' retrospective accounts as the Crescent Beach College program commenced in 2016 and ceased to exist after mid-2017. It is important to acknowledge and explain these issues and their possible impact on the generation of data in the research process and how they framed methodological choices for this study.

It was anticipated that, a suitable methodology would provide data that would go beyond the general critiques of ITE as being faulty and needing regeneration (Rowan et al., 2015) to provide a platform of ITE planning and practices which could assist in the future creation of quality graduate teachers. The perceptions of the participants in the ITE program were sought on a variety of issues that impacted on their participation in the Crescent Beach College program. The specific data collection methods, which will be elaborated later in the chapter, were carefully chosen as a way to generate discussion and insight from multiple layers of participation in Crescent Beach College. Resulting records of participants' talk about their experiences of the ITE program were analysed inductively relating to how the partnerships in the ITE program were perceived and influenced by the university and school systems.

4.1 The Context of the Study Including the Author's Role in the Crescent Beach College Program

The ITE program at the centre of this research, known as Crescent Beach College, was situated in Victoria, Australia and was a campus affiliated with a Higher Education Provider (HEP) operating in another state. The author/researcher was the Senior Campus Administrator, program director, and professional placement coordinator. This role included supporting student welfare and lecturing units in Mathematics, History and Geography and Internship Pedagogy. Crescent Beach College was initiated in 2016 and operated until July 2017. Retrospective accounts were sought from participants and stakeholders who participated in the Crescent Beach College program during these years because the Victorian-based program ceased operation in July 2017. This was due to conflicting State-based accreditation requirements. Briefly, the closure followed a site visit from regulation authorities (national, interstate and Victorian) which concluded that the interstate provider while having authority to operate in its home state, had not obtained the relevant permission to operate in another state.

The author's involvement was intertwined with the professional lives of the PSTs and staff. As such, privileged access to the site as an "insider" was gained (Unluer, 2012). According to Greene (2014) an insider researcher is one who is concerned with the study of their own social group or society. Interviews with group members will therefore have significant social meaning and are likely to have differentiated meaning from interviews that would be conducted by an outsider (Scheurich, 1995). As the researcher, it was important to acknowledge that the accounts of the program that were provided, the way in which they were related, and the narratives, which the author formed and shared with others, were inevitably influenced by the position and experiences as a Senior Administrator of Crescent

Beach College. Although a participant information letter (see Appendix B) repositioned the author as the researcher rather than the Senior Campus Administrator, it is possible that the author's role and identity was defined and re-defined by the participants. Stanworth (2003) describes how her status as an insider researcher was transformed into confidante, confessor, comforter and judge when researching the sources of meaning of people who were afflicted by serious illness. This malleability and fluidity of identities given and taken could be deemed characteristic of most relationships and advantageous to this research because it gave privileged access to the author. The participants may have spoken more explicitly to the author as program director and provided detailed answers which were embedded in contextual information understood by both. The participants were able to provide their views couched in familiar terminology but under a framework of discourse which was recognisable to both the participant and the author. This facilitated the author to understand better the meanings underpinning people's actions and illuminated their attitudes, motivation and rationale. The reader is likely to be granted greater insights into the factors and processes that influenced actions and attitudes towards partnership generation and the connection of theory to practice. Consequently, the author is suggesting that valuable, richer and more realistic data were obtained.

4.1.1 The Research Questions

According to Creswell and Creswell (2017) the research questions are the hub of any investigation and the research techniques and data collection should always reflect the research questions. The central question for this research was:

How was the partnership activity described by participants of the Crescent Beach College program and how does this explain connections made by PSTs (if any) between theory and practice?

The following additional questions were used to guide the analysis of the data:

1. What mediational means do the participants evoke in their accounts?
2. How did these mediational means support the partnerships?
3. What historic tensions and contradictions emerged from the participants' accounts of participation in the Crescent Beach College ITE program?

4.2 Research Methodology and Design

4.2.1 Formulating a Research Strategy

The introduction to this chapter outlined the basic methodology requirements of this research and its prerequisite to accommodate the researcher's personal experiences in the ITE program. The methodology was impacted in the first instance through personal knowledge and experience as Crescent Beach College Senior Administrator and then subsequently as a university researcher. Peshkin (2000) observes that we are not indifferent to the subject matter of our enquiries and that the questions we ask and the manner of seeking evidence are a function of our starting points and values which assist in crafting an individual's core beliefs. The belief system and the world view within which researchers operate is commonly referred to as their paradigm or interpretive framework (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Denzin (2009) believes it is essential that a researcher be explicitly aware of the paradigm which guides and influences their research. However, the positioning of a methodology for this study within one specific paradigm is somewhat problematical.

The methodology was chosen for this research which reflected the uniqueness of the situation and its importance as a research study for partnership generation rather than one which could be neatly defined in a single framework. This methodology was able to move the study beyond a plain description of the ITE program to an inductive process where the author was able to connect the information and look for common themes regarding school-university partnerships at Crescent Beach College and the connection of theory to practice for the PSTs. It allowed flexibility to work between both emic and etic perspectives. From an emic perspective, the research design assisted the author to find out how local people think, perceive and categorise the world around them (Kottak, 2005) without specifying any theoretical propositions at the outset of the research inquiry. From an etic perspective the methodology allowed a comparison of data from different cultures (school and university) in an effort to uncover general rules regarding human behaviour. It allowed for the author's participation as an insider researcher but incorporated the limitations of reflexivity and the intervening historical time lapse since Crescent Beach College's closure. It permitted the author to come out of an individual space as the program administrator to contextualise the participants' involvement in the ITE program. Most importantly the design was able to accommodate these limitations to reveal how ITE systems of practice come together to initiate partnership practice to assist in transforming the PST. The methodology also needed to be adaptable to a retrospective study design as the Crescent Beach College program commenced in 2016 and ceased by mid-2017

4.2.2 Characteristics of Participatory Ethnographic Inquiry Methodology

A methodological design which employed many aspects of a participatory ethnographic study was chosen for this research. It linked with a general definition of ethnography as being a qualitative research approach characterised by in-depth exploration of social phenomena taking place in a particular time and cultural context (Creswell, 2014;

Yin, 2014). This methodology was aligned with qualitative research parameters where such research is fluid and ever-changing and does not necessarily have to follow one particular way of doing things. Lichtman (2013) asserts that qualitative researchers have changed the way in which they study culture particularly when they operate in a dynamic rather than static manner as they pursue such research (p. 15). The use of ethnographic methods of inquiry have had a long and notable history in the social sciences, especially in anthropology and sociology (Miller et al., 2003) and bring with them an embedded multicultural perspective, a perspective that is often made clear within particular research programs (Watkins & Noble, 2019).

Similar to other interpretive methods, ethnographic research procedures are oriented to the study of meaning, but, in the case of an ethnographic methodology, meaning is understood to be structured by culture. Importantly for this study, an ethnographic approach can provide insight into collectively shared and transmitted symbols, understandings, and ways of being for the Crescent Beach College program (Miller et al., 2003). The goal of this research was to understand a particular culture of ITE and the way it generated its own specific partnerships and to present the meaning of actions from both the school and university systems involved from "the native's point of view". In support, Hammersley (2018) states an ethnographic approach "emphasises the significance of the meanings people give to objects, including themselves, in the course of their activities, in other words-culture" (p. 4).

According to Miller et al. (2003), the use of ethnographic methods continues to be the preferred domain for inquiry into cultural anthropology but it should be noted they have become increasingly important in the fields of education and communication. In attempting to capture local meanings, ethnographers should "…try not to mistake their own deeply

taken-for-granted, culturally saturated understandings for those of the study participants" (Miller et al., 2003, p. 224). Therefore, the methodology chosen had to incorporate the author's personal involvement as a Senior Campus Administrator and program director and lecturer to provide information on the culture of partnership creation in the Crescent Beach College program.

However, before we turn to specifics of how ethnographic methods were used in this research, additional background regarding the nature of this process needs to be provided. Firstly, it is important to understand that ethnographic modes of inquiry are not constructed from a single, unified perspective or set of methods. Rather, as in qualitative inquiry in general, there are a multitude of perspectives which formulate the direction in which the research proceeds. As ethnographic methods have been taken up by researchers in education and psychology, they have been applied to investigations of personal interest where the researcher often enters a research site in which they have been actively involved and "are acquainted with 'local' linguistic, social, or institutional histories and practices" (Miller et al., 2003, p. 224). Baym (2015) offers fresh insight by emphasising the ongoing communicative practices and skills of building and maintaining interpersonal and group relationships are now so central to building and maintaining successful careers.

> We can begin to unpack the interpersonal and cultural tensions at play in relational labour, the perspectives that workers use to frame those tensions, and the skills they deploy as they negotiate them in each localized interaction (p. 11).

This parallels with the situation at Crescent Beach College where the author's time "in the field" taking descriptive notes was limited compared to other ethnographic researchers. However, this compensated in being able to draw more heavily on personal experiences and communicative practices in customising data collection. In this way, the author was able to

clarify and understand participants' meaning systems, and be familiarised with the participants' community; the physical and institutional settings in which they worked, the daily routines that they and their companions followed, the beliefs that guided their actions, and the linguistic and other signs and symbols that mediated all of these contexts and activities (Miller et al., 2003).

Through such sustained contact and involvement with the program as the Senior Administrator and lecturer, the author consequently became involved, as an ethnographic researcher, with the lives, academic practices, celebrations, and problems of the participants. Furthermore, Engeström (1999a) contended that a method to measure the validity and generalisability of research findings is to look for successful collaborations between the researchers and the participants. In ethnographic studies, researchers often find that due to relationships created with participants and their developing emic understandings, they are in a rare position to speak across cultures on behalf of the group being studied (Basso, 1996). This is important in providing a more holistic understanding of how people dwell in place, for "the possibility arises that as speakers communicate about the landscape and the kinds of dealings they have with it, they may also communicate about themselves as social actors and the kinds of dealings they are having with one another" (Basso, 1996, p. 74). Hunter (2012) suggests this is a good starting point for a continued and invigorated exploration of the modern form of interpretation we experience in daily life and the active construction of meaning, both individual and collective.

Thus, the methodology chosen was designed to elicit responses from the participants that could generate meaning about partnership culture between the school and university systems which would be useful to policy makers and practitioners in ITE. It could explore the ways ITE was locally enacted and how its multiple and dynamic contexts influenced the way resources were used and interpreted by individuals and groups. The purpose of which

was to gain insight into what meanings and understandings participants constructed within the different contexts of the program (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005).

As noted earlier, ethnographical research does not constitute a single, unified perspective or set of methods. In Table 4.1 below a list of general characteristics of ethnographical studies has been compiled and attributed to the following researchers: (Barton, 2008; Frank & Uy, 2004; Hammersley, 2018; Johnson & Christensen, 2019; Spindler, 2014; Van Maanen, 2011; Yin, 2014). While the methodology for this study accommodated many recognisable features generally attributed to classic ethnographical studies, some were not evident (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1:
General attributes of ethnographic research

Attribute	Explanation	Incorporated in this design
Data collection	Taken from the process of human interaction and experiences to elicit knowledge from the participants	✓
	Persistent observation and use of field notes to enable the immersion of the researcher in the world of the participants	×
	Prolonged engagement to assist with building a relationship between the researcher and the informants	✓
	Field work used to describe social practice concerned with the study and representation of culture, holistic in nature	×
Inductive research (Emic)	Provide insightful descriptions and develop new theory	✓
	Practical and direct relevance for practitioners and a potential to effect change in practice	✓
	Hypotheses emerge in-situ	✓
Triangulation	The use of multiple measures and data sources	✓
	Check interpretation with other members of the group	✓
Practitioner ethnographers	Are members of the group being investigated	✓
	They live and have lived the experience that they want to investigate	✓
Interviews	Questions for interviews should be generated in-situ	×
	Must not predetermine responses by the kinds of questions asked	✓
	Any form of technical device will be used to record	✓
Reflexivity	Analysis of data while simultaneously acknowledging the influences from the researcher's insider role	✓

Take for example the use of fieldwork. Commonly, ethnographical researchers have extolled the use of fieldwork to explore the group culture over an extended period of time and to gather data on the participants' involvement and interpretation of their systems and community (Frank & Uy, 2004; Hammersley, 2018). Van Maanen (2011) suggests fieldwork of the immersive sort is largely definitional of the trade and allows the ethnographer to be informative and bring a sense of documentary status to the public. In this

way it focuses on the dynamics of the people and systems it seeks to study, and generally immerses the researcher in the culture and activity of a program largely through extensive note taking and observations. However, in this case, as a retrospective study, detailed note taking and observations of practices as they occurred were not possible.

While the focus was on the dynamics of the people and systems the research sought to investigate, insight was gained into the culture of the participants of Crescent Beach College through semi-structured interviews and responses to an anonymous survey rather than extensive fieldwork. Spradley (2003) argues that interviews of this type are supported by many qualitative researchers as a method to gather data, especially when the interview questions are of a descriptive type and tend to be broad and open rather than structured and rigid. One of the main advantages is that the semi-structured interview method has been found to be successful in enabling reciprocity between the interviewer and participant (Galletta, 2013). Spradley (2003) continues that in an ethnographic approach, descriptive questions prompt the participants to tell their stories in their own way and encourages a participant to talk about a particular cultural scene. Rubin and Rubin (2011) suggest that "qualitative interviewers capture change through retrospective interviews as well as through repeated interviews across time" (p. 4). The ability to capture participants' retrospective accounts was an important requirement of this methodology given the subsequent closure of the Crescent Beach College program. The main data gathering process for this design then evolved from semi-structured interviews and an anonymous survey to describe the participants' lived experiences to gain richer insight into how individuals experienced the program. From these lived experiences it was expected that information regarding partnership generation and connection of theory to practice would flow. According to Lichtman (2013) it is this dynamic nature of qualitative interviewing that is a critical element in the development of a successful qualitative study.

Contemporary views about qualitative research also acknowledge the importance of reflexivity. Given that this design holds the researcher as the primary instrument of data collection an analysis and discussion of the implications of reflexivity is imperative. Crucial to understanding the concept of reflexivity is the way a researcher's self, or identity in a situation, intertwines with his or her understanding of the object of the investigation. Deliberately and/or unconsciously reacting to respondents' actions determine what data can be collected, which voices will be heard in the research account, and what happens after the study. By drawing attention to the fluid and multiple nature of insider research in the field, clarifying the various ways in which we may position ourselves in relation to our research participants, there will be potential implications for identities, methodology and the research design of this study. In building a conversation about ethics writing and qualitative research, Fine et al. (2000) warn about the concept of "Othering":

> When in an 'Othering' mode a typical response might be 'no need to hear your voice when I can talk about you better than you can speak about yourself. I want to hear your story and then I will tell it back to you in a new way. Tell it back to you in such a way that it has become mine, my own (p. 70).

Fine calls this the "Self-Other hyphen" where the hyphen both separates and merges personal identities of "Self" with our inventions of "Others". In particular, Fine et al. (2000) contend that we should rethink how researchers have spoken of and for "Others" and offers the notion of hyphen-spaces as a way of emphasising not the boundaries, but the spaces of possibility, between researchers and respondents. In other words, understanding how we "work the hyphen" means reflexively probing how our presence influences and/or changes people and practices. Conversely, how their presence influences us (intentionally or otherwise), surfacing the identity relations that may occur between ourselves and our

research participants and examining the implications for research practice (Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013; Peshkin, 2000).

Through careful application and understanding of the concept of reflexivity, the design methodology of this research allowed the author as the previous Senior Administrator, to understand how personal investments in the ITE program could influence the outcome of the research. It was able to accommodate the potential contradictions of the Self-Other hyphen and delve into the data, making connections from the participant interviews. The author became the research instrument through which other information looped. Lichtman (2013) summarises:

> Since it is the researcher who designs the research, collects the data, analyses the data, and writes up the results, it behoves us to think about what the researcher thinks about the meaning of knowledge and how it is made known to him or her (p. 5).

Therefore, all research information was filtered through the eyes and ears of the author and was influenced by personal past experiences, knowledge, skills, and background. As a research instrument, deciding what was to be studied, how information about this topic was derived, the meanings to be made of that information, and what could be done with the information were all critical factors taken into consideration in designing a suitable methodology. DeFelice and Janesick (2015) contend that there is no single reality that exists independent of the researcher's interpretation and reminds us that the researcher needs to rely on the self as the research instrument and fine-tune the senses. The author understood that what was seen and heard in the interviews was interpreted through a reflexive lens with care taken not to create a colonising discourse of "othering" (Fine et al., 2000).

4.3 Participant Selection

Participation in this study was sought from persons occupying the different social positions within the ITE program, satisfying the design requiring multiple perspectives. These included: lecturers, mentor teachers, school principals and preservice teachers.

4.3.1 Recruitment of Participants

The recruitment process for PST involvement in this study began in November 2018 through to May 2019 (16 months to 22 months after the program closure). Consequently, there was some difficulty in contacting all PSTs involved in the Crescent Beach College program. An email was sent to the PSTs' email address first recorded on the ITE provider's data base at the time of enrolment as the Crescent Beach College program email address was redundant.

Using all available records, PSTs invited to participate were chosen at random from the data base list to represent a cross section of courses and time spent enrolled in the program. Choosing the number of PSTs to invite was informed by the practical consideration of evenly distributing interview time and resources over the ensuing weeks. In all, there were nine PST participants, eight having been at the institution for 18 months and one for six months. Two of the nine had undertaken the two-year Master of Teaching course and seven had undertaken the four-year Bachelor of Education course. The age profile of the PSTs interviewed was representative of the cohort as a significant majority of the group were PSTs who had started or experienced other career options but subsequently accepted the opportunity to undertake a teaching degree later in life. This accounted for the larger numbers in the 35 to 45 age demographic (see Appendix F). There were three PSTs who commenced the program in 2016 as Y12 graduates and none in the 2017 intake. One of the 2016 graduates declined to be interviewed but the other two were interviewed. Even though

there was a delay impacting accessibility to PST recruitment, the author did manage to get a representative sample for interviews. Further implications of this time delay are discussed in Chapter 6.

The recruitment process for the mentor teachers and principals involved an introductory phone call or personal approach to explain the purpose of the research project. Making contact was also difficult as in the intervening time since the Crescent Beach College closure (some two years previously) several mentor teachers had moved schools and two principals had retired. Participants in mentor teacher and principal roles were chosen on the basis of their knowledge and involvement in Crescent Beach College across its full 18 months of existence. A follow-up email with project information and consent form were sent. Mentor teachers and principals returned their consent forms, clarifying conversations were conducted and a suitable venue and time were arranged to hold the interview. Principal permission was sought to access the school and interview the nominated mentor teachers. There were no declinations from principals or mentor teachers. In total, three principals and three mentor teachers participated in the study.

There were two types of university lecturer in the Crescent Beach College program, permanent staff members and visiting lecturers. Participation from both types was sought. The recruitment process for the lecturers was undertaken with a focus of seeking the experiences and views of permanent faculty lecturers who were involved for the 18 months duration of the Crescent Beach College program. This was balanced with those designated as visiting lecturers who had particular skills and experience in a curriculum area or were from other institutions and were seconded for a semester. It was hoped that their experiences and knowledge from outside the program might bring a different perspective to the study compared to those who were primarily employed in the program. Six lecturers were

contacted personally, a follow-up email with research project information and consent form were sent. Lecturers returned their consent forms, clarifying conversations were conducted and a suitable venue and time were arranged to hold the interview. There was one lecturer declination. In total, three permanent staff members and two visiting lecturers participated in the study.

4.3.2 Participant Demographics

The participants consisted of nine preservice teachers, three mentor teachers, five lecturers and three school principals, who were participants in the Crescent Beach College program between 2016 and July 2017 (upon program closure). See Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2:

Participant demographics Crescent Beach College program

Participant Type	Male	Female	Total	Age Range (years)	Degree Type
Preservice Teachers	3	6	9	20 – 50	Bachelor of Education (7) Master of Teaching (2)
Mentor Teachers	2	1	3	30 – 50	Not Applicable
Lecturers	4	1	5	40 – 65	Not Applicable
Principals	2	1	3	50 – 65	Not Applicable

4.4 Data Generation

4.4.1 Use of Semi-structured Interviews

Creswell (2014) advises data collection techniques should reflect the chosen research questions and with this study falling under the category of a social science investigation, the

author considered that semi-structured interviews were an appropriate way to collect data (Yin, 2014). Therefore, all participants undertook a qualitative semi-structured interview, being one of the most dominant and widely used methods of data collection within the social sciences (Bradford & Cullen, 2012). Semi-structured interviews were considered a valuable technique for data collection because they allowed the author as researcher to explore subjective viewpoints and to gather in-depth accounts of people's experiences (Gibbs, 2007). Their use within the social sciences partly reflects their flexibility and independence from a single theoretical framework or epistemological position. Braun and Clarke (2006) argue the versatility of qualitative semi-structured interviews which can be used as much to consider experience, meanings and the "reality" of participants' experiences as they can be used to explore how these experiences, "realities" and meanings might be informed by discourses, assumptions or ideas which exist in wider society.

A semi-structured interview has the advantage of adding depth to the conversation and clearing up misunderstandings. It can encourage collaboration between interviewer and interviewee and also help to establish rapport (Elligate, 2007). Specifically, in this research project they were designed to elicit a response around the key research questions of school-university partnerships, the connection of theory to practice, the TTT model, tensions and contradictions that may have arisen in the program. The semi-structured interviews allowed for the participants to take the given question in a direction which allowed them to develop their personal observations and responses to the Crescent Beach College program. They were designed to elicit the participants accounts and provide evidence of the participants' ways of talking about and being within the program.

Semi-structured interview protocols were developed as a guide for each group of participants prior to the interviews. Typically, an interview schedule was used, which

enabled the researcher to address several defined topics regarding the partnership generation at Crescent Beach College whilst allowing the respondent to answer in their own terms and to discuss issues and topics pertinent to them (Choak, 2013). The schedule, reflecting key aspects of the main research questions guided the interview, but also allowed other relevant themes to develop throughout the interview (Choak, 2013). In this sense, the interview resembled a "flowing conversation" (Choak, 2013). The questions used were not a script but rather a set of reminders on the key topics into which the author wished to gain participant insight. They were also sufficiently broad and flexible to allow the participants to introduce information and comments they saw as relevant. The author had flexibility in the way the questions were asked and in what order they were covered but were still adaptable to suit what the participant was saying. The socially interactive nature of the interview also meant that certain sensitive topics regarding the Crescent Beach College program could be difficult to discuss face to face. As an insider researcher the author was able to appreciate this and introduce factors to mitigate the problem. Careful planning meant that potential sensitivities such as the program closure and redeployment of lecturers and PSTs to other institutions could be anticipated with variations for data gathering available. For example, use of more anonymous qualitative methods such as the anonymous survey were utilised to cater for such situations. The interviewer elicited elaborations of participants' responses to the key research questions with prompts such as "Tell me more about…" There were no time limits set for the interviews with a range of 19 minutes to 45 minutes with the average around 30 minutes duration. See Appendix C for sample lecturer questions.

4.4.2 The Anonymous Survey

Participants were also given the opportunity to provide feedback through an open-ended question survey if there were aspects that they would have rather discussed anonymously. This was seen as an important option for any participants wishing to provide

information that they did not feel they could directly convey to the researcher who was also the program administrator. The anonymous survey was created using the "Forms" software program from the "Office 365" suite. Each participant was sent an email link to the survey after their interview. There were two questions on the survey: one asking the participant if they were a PST, mentor teacher, lecturer or principal; the second asking if there was anything else they would like to add to their interview. There was no word limit for the second question. Of the four participants who responded to the anonymous survey, an assortment of replies in length and detail were received (Section 5.5).

4.4.3 Ending Data Collection

A key decision that had to be made in this project was when sufficient data had been collected to reach a position of interview closure. The iterative nature of ethnographic research makes it difficult to know when this point has been reached and it is time to stop adding data. This level of saturation becomes obvious when there is minimal incremental learning as the researcher encounters previously seen phenomena or when pragmatic situations intervene such as lack of time or resources dictate the conclusion of the project (Eisenhardt, 1989). In determining the appropriate time to cease interviewing and processing information, the author used criteria developed by Yin (2014) who nominated saturation of categories and emergence of regularities as suitable criteria in determining a stop to data collection. In addition, it was necessary to gain information while relevant and timely to the participants. The author reached a point of saturation, where no new information was forthcoming which also could have been due to length of intervening time since the Crescent Beach College closure.

4.5 Data Analysis

4.5.1 Generation of Transcripts and Coding

Each interview was audio recorded, transcribed and formatted for inclusion in the NVivo software program. Complete orthographic transcripts were constructed of the twenty interviews. Participants' dialogue was represented as verbatim text created through the Trint™ software transcription program. However, some editing was required through repeated reading and listening to correct errors generated through the transcription process. Some punctuation was added and speech inarticulations were removed to allow for ease of reading. The transcripts comprised participant talk in the form of personal accounts reporting about their role and participation in Crescent Beach College prompted by a series of predetermined but not inflexible questions. Using inductive analysis, a series of nodes (key ITE constructs) were devised for each group of participants which could then be applied to the NVivo software program to source specific participant examples relevant to each node. These nodes were chosen as a reflection of the main research questions such as partnerships, theory/practice connection and the TTT model.

For the data analysis process, it was not assumed that the first transcripts read would provide all the important insights expected by an insider researcher then all that effectively followed in reading the later transcripts was to confirm the initial findings. The author followed the advice of Menter et al. (2011) that it is good practice to be looking for countervailing evidence that seems to contradict previous judgement or at least represents a very different experience or perspective.

Therefore the author reread the transcripts repeatedly to identify themes, writing notes in the margins when having identified something of potential importance. As the insider researcher, participant discourse concerning the CHAT nodes of tools, rules and

division of labour and how they may have affected the Crescent Beach College program were considered especially important for investigation. NVivo software was used to assist the managing, sorting, indexing, arranging and rearranging of data. Quotations were thus organised thematically. Being the insider researcher also afforded the author the capacity to search for deeper meaning rather than take what was read in the transcripts at face value. Consequently, participants' accounts were compared, contrasted and triangulated with other evidence gathered from the anonymous survey, observations, documentary sources and researcher/practitioner sources for consistency. Whilst time consuming, the data collection process was rewarding by offering visual and numerical evidence of the dominant themes. As suggested by Menter et al. (2011) procedure of this type helps to promote the robustness of the research findings.

The differing CHAT nodes represented the different foci of the participant groups in their accounts. The nodes for each group of participants are presented in Table 4.3 below with examples of participant response themes, considered representative of that node for inclusion as research data. Deductive analysis, drawing on concepts from CHAT was applied to these responses with the most frequently named concepts and themes revealed from the participant interviews. The thematic analysis is further developed in Chapter 5.

Table 4.3:

The nodes as foci of participant responses

Node	*Comment*
	PST nodes
Tools	Pedagogical artifacts and practices of ITE, learning the 'how' of teaching, the use of specific contextual language of education
Theory and Practice	Connection of theory to practice in lectures and on professional experience, with mentor teachers in classroom practice
Perception of Purpose	Understanding how students learn, experiencing success at teaching, personal motives to be a teacher
Partnerships and Program Context	Crescent Beach College Campus experience, size of cohort, career choice teaching, choice of course, lecturing staff, program closure
	Lecturer nodes
Tools	Pedagogical artifacts and practices used on professional experience, used in lectures
Connecting Theory and Practice	Provision of resources, modelling in lecturers, in classroom
Crescent Beach College experience	Crescent Beach College students, lecturer self-learning, perceived role, program organisation, employment journey, tensions or conflicts, program closure
Perception of Purpose	Producing quality graduate teachers, connecting with PSTs, passing on knowledge, linking theory with practice
Partnerships	With other universities, at Crescent Beach College, with PSTs, with schools, with mentor teachers
	Mentor Teacher Nodes

Node	*Comment*
Tools	Pedagogical artifacts and practices, their connection to a TTT model, tools to support whole program
Crescent Beach College experience	Understanding of program, connection to Crescent Beach College staff, program closure
Perception of purpose	Self-reflection and learning from program, provision of rich experiences for students, developing PSTs' classroom management skills, building up PSTs, connecting theory and practice for PSTs
Partnerships	With Crescent Beach College, level of communication, contradictions or tensions, created during PST professional placement
Principal Nodes	
Connecting theory with practice	For the PSTs
Crescent Beach College experience	Program closure, PSTs professional experience, impact on school staff, a different experience compared to other universities
Perception of purpose	Passing on knowledge to PSTs, linking theory with practice for PSTs, reflecting on a changing teaching culture
Partnerships	With Crescent Beach College, with other universities
Employment opportunities	PSTs as potential employees

4.5.2 Generating Themes from the Interviews

Careful consideration was given in the way the semi-structured interviews framed data generation and developed consequential themes in this study. The author followed three key points outlined by Evans and Lewis (2018) that researchers may wish to take into account when conducting a thematic analysis of semi structured interviews.

Consideration 1: Is thematic analysis useful for this research? Thematic analysis is a hugely popular analytic method. Its popularity partly reflects its independence from any particular theoretical approach or epistemology persuasion. For this reason, it is useful to the author who positioned this work within an interpretivist paradigm within the social sciences (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Consideration 2: What counts as a theme? Thematic analysis is the process of identifying patterns and themes within the data. This begins at the stage of data collection and continues throughout the process of transcribing, reading and re-reading, analysing and interpreting the data. As the interviewer, having read and re-read the transcripts, it was necessary to be mindful of the overarching research questions, as these questions guided thinking about the data and what was considered to be worthy of a theme. Braun and Clarke (2006) maintained that generated themes should represent some level of patterned meaning or response within the dataset and should capture something important about the research questions.

Consideration 3: How does the researcher represent the themes that have been identified in the data? One of the biggest challenges the researcher might face when working with qualitative interviews is how, exactly, to report or represent patterns or themes that you have identified within your data. This required careful thinking from the researcher's position. Sometimes the researcher will find it appropriate to use "pseudo quantitative terms" to report the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was evident in this methodology with some quantitative analysis employed to generate data regarding the number of times a theme was referenced by the participants.

As ITE programs tend to carry with them an inherent culture and endurance of long held social and cultural practices, the nodes used provided key words and phrases that related

to such practices at Crescent Beach College. By centring on the nodes, the NVivo software program was able to support analysis and generate multiple reports. Key search words and phrases were used to frame the search parameters using the NVivo program, such as “partnership”, “theory”, “practice”, “tools” and “educational language”. Specifically, the number of references which related to each node was noted and considered. This provided vital data upon which the major themes relating to partnership and the connection of theory to practice from each group of participants were populated.

This process having facilitated an awareness of initial thoughts and what may have been suspected as major themes, was chronicled through the means of analytic memos. The analytic memos highlighted the various reoccurring themes relating to partnerships, such as connecting theory to practice and several other themes (see Appendices D and E). The participant responses featured in the analytic memos were chosen because their comments related directly to the language of the theme/node as well as providing a cross section of participant demographics. In writing these memos, the author was continually reflecting on immersion in the program and whether the findings would provide an authentic and realistic narrative for future program directors in ITE.

4.5.3 Theoretical Framework to Analyse the Themes

To further analyse these themes, concepts from the Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) theoretical framework were chosen. CHAT provided the overarching structure to make sense of what was discovered through the researcher’s observations, interviews and other methods (Hasan & Kazlauskas, 2014). CHAT was perfectly suited to analyse the social interactions among the participants, thoughts individuals have about a topic, and the inner workings of a cohort of people. This framework was also able to explore the space (real or imaginary) where these narratives and counter narratives converged in

ways that make it possible to challenge existing ITE processes in partnership development and the connection of theory to practice.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

The author followed the advice of Yin (2014), that researchers must never use their research to substantiate a preconceived position or bias. Several strategies were undertaken to minimise this risk by viewing the participants as autonomous agents and who were not the means to someone else's end, as reflected in the substantially open-ended protocol. The author entered into this investigation of partnership activity with a respect for the privacy, confidentiality, cultural sensitivities of individuals and communities, and the ability of individuals to make their own decisions. All participants were volunteers and adults and were able to make an independent assessment of the requirements of the interview and were able to withdraw from the project at any time without penalty. Specifically, the author:

- Provided a detailed account of previous positions and connections to the Crescent Beach College program repositioning the author as the researcher rather than the Senior Administrator and program director
- Gained Ethics clearance from ACU, Christian Education Melbourne and the Department of Education and Training
- Informed all participants with a Participant Information Letter
- Obtained a Permission form from all participants
- Obtained a Permission form from principals to enter school premises as needed

- Conducted the interviews at a time convenient to the participants and in a location of their choice

- Informed participants that the interview will be audio recorded in the information letter and again at the start of the interview

- Allowed for participants to withdraw at any time or to request a stop to recording

- Pseudonyms were used in all writing and data analysis to ensure anonymity of participants (see Appendix F for a list of thesis pseudonyms)

- Provided participants with access to an anonymous survey where they could add any comments that they did not want to provide to the interviewer face-to-face

- Collected and stored data on password protected computer equipment

- Transcripts of all audio and/or video interviews were coded using NVivo software and grouped for recurrence of emerging themes and underlying tensions and contradictions

A possible ethical concern or limitation of this study is that of researcher reflexivity. According to Creswell (2014) reflexivity "refers to the researcher being aware of and openly discussing his or her role in the study in a way that honours and respects the site and participants" (p. 502). As the insider researcher, the author was able to have a deeper appreciation and understanding of the participant responses because of a connection to, and knowledge of the Crescent Beach College program. Therefore, it was important for the author to be independently positioned in the study by declaring this background, the issues of interest and the study design with the participants. This was done in the information letter and again at the commencement of each interview. Yin (2014) succinctly summarised the

situation by warning that “your perspective unknowingly influences the interviewee’s responses, but those responses also unknowingly influence your line of inquiry. The result being an undesirable colouring of the interview material” (p. 112). That said, there appeared a willingness to fully cooperate by all participants. They were forthcoming in their responses to questions and able to elaborate in greater detail when asked. No participant asked for the audio or interview to be terminated.

4.7 Reflections on the Design

For the author’s research findings to carry maximum weight, it was imperative that the data gathered, the way it was organised, and the vehicle used to present the research findings were appropriate. The design chosen allowed the author to listen to participant discourse about what they considered the object of the Crescent Beach College program was and how the various components of the university and school systems came together (or not) to create partnerships. Interviews commenced with a list of general reference questions, conversation starters and extension prompts, but with no preconceived idea of length or direction as to how they would proceed. It was a one-off interview designed to probe how the participants perceived the program. Using inductive techniques, aided by the software program NVivo and the writing of analytic memos, participant responses framed a general description of their experiences but also allowed for a piecing together of how the program managed certain aspects such as the inherent tensions and contradictions in the provision of ITE. The individual interviews allowed the participants to give meaning and explanation to what happened around them and recall culture-specific phenomena. The application of a CHAT theoretical framework to analyse this information revealed insights into Crescent Beach College culture, shared beliefs, values and norms from the perspective of those who experienced it.

In summary, this methodology design was not offered as a model or recipe for other cases but as one example of how forms of ethnographic work can proceed when addressing a problem in studying a group culture. It departed from classic ethnographic research in which the ethnographer begins as an outsider, focuses on a single culture and operates out of an implicitly comparative framework (Miller et al., 2003). By contrast, this design involved a researcher that occupied a complex insider-outsider position from the inception of the Crescent Beach College program.

Like classic ethnographic studies, this case exemplifies the systematic but flexible deployment of method that lies at the heart of ethnographic practice that is, a flexibility that is disciplined by the goal of understanding meaning from the perspectives of the participants (Miller et al., 2003). Primarily it was designed to offer rich insights into the way participants made sense of school-university partnerships, the connection of theory to practice and how these translated into actions within the school and university system. Secondly, it placed importance on mediational means including material dimension of activity. This allowed for the consideration of how the different contexts of the lecture room and classroom shaped ITE in practice. Thirdly, it was sufficiently broad-based and versatile to allow for diverse philosophical assumptions as well as robust enough to support both theory testing and theory development. Bass and Milosevic (2016) suggest that this type of design and data collection can result in innovative and practice-relevant studies.

Chapter 5: Findings

In this chapter the author addresses the findings of this study in terms of the main research question:

> **How was partnership practice described in the Crescent Beach College program and how did this affect the connection of theory to practice for the PSTs?**

Consistent themes from the interviews have been pieced together to form a narrative in response to the research question. This allows the reader to better understand the type and nature of the partnerships which were generated and whether activity occurred within a boundary space between the two systems to transform the object of the program. The perspectives of participant groups are presented in separate sections in this chapter and offer multiple viewpoints. These sections, when combined, provide a richness for understanding boundary activity that forged partnerships between two institutions for the purpose of ITE and what mediational means assisted such activity.

The research was framed as a participatory ethnography because the researcher drew upon personal knowledge, reflections and prolonged engagement as Senior Administrator of the ITE program as additional resources to the participants' data. This was an important consideration in methodological choice as the researcher had also established positive working relationships with the respondents prior to the commencement of the study. Due to the "common knowledge" (Hopwood et al., 2016) that was shared with participants and efforts to mitigate researcher reflexivity, the interviews unfolded like conversations and were likely to be genuine. As explained in Chapter 4 Methodology, coding of the interviews was conducted deductively using CHAT constructs as well as themes from the literature,

and inductively to identify further aspects of the participants' accounts that were salient to the inquiry.

Participants were grouped in terms of their roles within the program (e.g., lecturers). Whilst the lecturers are considered as a relatively homogenous group, those participating from the school system (mentor teachers and principals) could not be considered as homogenous or representing practices from like school systems. This due to there being a variety of school-types that had worked in partnership with Crescent Beach College in the delivery the ITE program. Variation in the schools was evident in their geographies, school populations and socioeconomic conditions. Partnership expectations with small rural schools, where the school often represents the hub of the community, were different to large K-12 city schools which were populated from a much wider geographical area.

In the following sections, important themes generated through the coding analysis have been represented using excerpts from the interviews. A summary of the analysis for each participant-group is presented in Table 5.1 and Table 5.2, outlining the main research question themes regarding partnerships and the connection of theory to practice as identified from each group. The author has used verbatim excerpts as a true representation of participants' accounts of their involvement in the ITE program. These excerpts have been chosen because they illuminate significant aspects of participants' subjectivities, that is, how they were making sense of themselves and their participation in the ITE program. The excerpts are understood as "small stories" (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) in the sense that they were provided whilst interacting with the researcher, who was a co-participant in ITE at Crescent Beach College, albeit in a role that differed from the participants' roles, and to varying extents already had a history of shared meaning that participants could draw upon. The idea of the small story reflects the meaning-making purpose of biographical accounts

provided in conversation. The excerpts have been provided as representations of the participants' subjectivities in situ. The author has used this as a method of making the data analytically visible for further discussion and meaningful scrutiny as:

> …central to the quality of qualitative research is: whether participants' perspectives have been authentically represented in the research process and the interpretations made from information gathered (authenticity); and whether the findings are coherent in the sense that they "fit" the data and social context from which they were derived (Fossey et al., 2002).

Participant interviews encouraged collaboration between interviewer and interviewee and also helped to establish rapport (Elligate, 2007). In taking part in an individual interview the participants shared in what Florio-Ruane and Clark (1993) describe as "authentic conversation" by means of story and personal narrative. This was a process to authentically represent participant perspectives as "small stories" (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) which has an advantage of adding depth to the conversation and clearing up misunderstandings, an important feature of this research methodology. In opting for a dialogic rather than a transmission-oriented approach to the findings of this research, current developments in the psychology of learning are supported which parallel what teachers are now learning is best for educating students in their classrooms. The work done in education is shaped by the perspective that learning is a socially constructed process that is influenced by the culture and needs of both learners and teachers (Fuller, 1969; Sparks & Hirsh, 1997).

In the following sections the participant responses are explored, having been given the opportunity to reflect on and review their attitudes and beliefs in how the program developed partnerships. The use of CHAT constructs allowed the author to drill down and examine how these beliefs were affected by this program and how that accounted for

changes in participant thinking and actions. To guide this analysis further questions developed regarding mediational means and how that affected their decisions and behaviour and how the program managed historic contradictions and tensions. Collectively, the participant groups then framed educationally relevant themes of how the program attempted to generate partnerships and connect theory with practice.

5.1 Coding Results

For activity, or as in focus in this thesis, boundary activity, to be transformative, Engeström (2008) suggests that the foundational constructs of the activity (tools, rules, division of labour) need to be explicitly communicated and negotiated amongst all members of each system, including a clearly described joint objective. In this research, the data were analysed to explore facilitating conditions that would support such a process.

In an initial reading of the interviews with a focus on partnerships and connecting theory to practice, NVivo codes were created to reflect participant responses linked to the constructs noted above. From cross-analysis of coded excerpts, substantive themes were located based on frequency of occurrence and the quality of response was noted. Interview excerpts linked to the themes were selected as representative data. These provided narrative representations, that is, small stories from individual participants' perspectives and connections were made between them.

The author has used a three-step process (Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008) to analyse the selected interview excerpts.

Analytic phase 1: Who were the actors in the small stories and how are they positioned? (Leading to the selection of interview excerpts).

The focus here was on a narrator's positioning in the interactions within an interview. The excerpt contextualises the person's involvement and assists the reader to develop a sense of the participant's subjectivity.

Analytic phase 2: What is the relationship between interview excerpts? (Leading to an identification of themes).

NVivo coding was used to link excerpts reflecting participants' perspectives on the ITE partnership and connections between theory and practice. The base word "partner" plus endings such as "ship", "s", "ing" were taken as key search forms. Other words such as "relationship" were interpreted by the author as indicative of, or reflective of, partnerships in ITE. Similarly, words such as "practice", "practical", "theory", "connected", "balanced" and "modelled" were considered as key search forms for the connection of theory to practice. The number of occurrences of repeated partnership related concepts was noted and the most frequent were listed in Table 5.1 below with the most frequently noted for the connection of theory to practice in Table 5.2.

Analytic phase 3: What was the relationship between the themes and the interactive flow between characters in the excerpts? (Leading to an illustration of the key findings).

Excerpts from participant interviews which connect the key themes are presented and summarised as relevant findings from the data.

5.2 Themes on Partnerships

Table 5.1 below, illustrates research themes for partnerships created on the basis of the participants' accounts of their participation in the program. Responses were aligned to the NVivo codes with frequency of occurrence and quality of response being key

determinants for inclusion in the table. The themes outline the collective participant voices of key characteristics to create partnerships in this program. Further explanation with specific examples are provided in the sections below.

Table 5.1:
Participant themes on partnership generation in the Crescent Beach College program.

Partnership Themes		
Participant	**Theme**	**Number of Occurrences**
Lecturers	High level of verbal communication and discussion assisted in forming deeper relationships	10
	Partnerships with schools were strengthened through mutual effort	4
Mentor Teachers	Communication assisted planning for the professional experience	6
	Lecturers' involvement in professional experience was beneficial.	8
Principals	A relational partnership, different to other partnerships	9
PSTs	A joint effort between university and schools to develop partnerships for PST growth and care	13

5.2.1 The Lecturers' Themes

Analysis of the interviews with the lecturers provided descriptions of boundary activity and explanations of how the partnership was mediated from a lecturer perspective. The lecturers described the boundary space as a place where high levels of verbal communication formed deeper relationships. They explained this activity as deriving from mutual effort. In this section after introducing the individual lecturers, data excerpts have been included to elaborate and substantiate the themes.

Nathaniel was a lecturer in the M Ed degree with particular interest in state education. He had had previous experience supervising PSTs from another local university as a teacher educator liaison. Nathaniel was an ex-Primary school principal aged in his early sixties at the time of the study.

Will was a lecturer in both B Ed and M Ed with expertise in mathematics and science education. Will was an ex-Head of a school campus for Years 5 to 9, aged in his late fifties at the time of the study.

James was a lecturer in the Master of Education course with expertise in curriculum design and development. James was an ex-Primary school principal. He had previous experience in tertiary education and was aged in his late sixties at the time of the study. James was the only participant who held a PhD during his Crescent Beach College employment.

David was a lecturer in both B Ed and M Ed courses with expertise in pedagogy. He was an ex-principal of a K-12 school and aged in his early sixties at the time of the study.

Felicity was a lecturer in the M Ed course with expertise in Arts education. She was in her early fifties at the time of the study. Felicity had separate lecturing commitments to another university as well as her lecturing commitments at Crescent Beach College.

Will, James and **David** had all been working as educational colleagues in a school setting prior to the commencement of the Crescent Beach College program.

5.2.1.1 Lecturers Theme 1 – High Levels of Verbal Communication and Discussion Assisted in Forming Deeper Relationships

From the interviews operational words such as “talk”, “classroom”, “feedback” and “relationship” were used to identify excerpts indicative of verbal communication between

lecturers and mentor teachers. The descriptor “high level” of verbal communication was chosen to capture the professional collegiality evidenced in the participants’ accounts. Examples of professional collegiality included extended professional discussions to understand each other’s perception of the program. These kinds of conversations were theorised as concretising the object, making the object explicit. There was “buy in” or commitment to a shared object established in these kinds of conversations between staff of both systems. Such communication was determined as illustrative of a collective endeavour to transform the boundary activity to create successful partnerships.

Nathaniel elaborated this theme in the following excerpt from his interview:

> **“**I was invited into the classroom, ‘stay as long as you want’. The mentor teachers had plenty of time to talk to me as well as me finding time to talk to student teachers”. (Nathaniel, Lecturer)

In the excerpt, Nathaniel revoiced the partnering classroom mentor teacher, providing insight into the process of relationship building and also a sense of the teacher’s generosity from Nathaniel’s perspective. In the excerpt below, James refers directly to the relationship, describing it from his perspective in terms of the shared object:

> “I was made welcome by the organiser of the program and the actual classroom teacher as well. So, the relationship was very much a collegial one in which they were supportive of what we were doing”. (James, Lecturer)

The following excerpt from Will’s interview illustrates his perception of the nature of the communication and feedback that was involved in developing the partnerships:

> “Not only was I getting feedback from the supervising teacher but the leadership in those schools spoke to me about our students [PSTs] and what they saw as being strengths and

weaknesses as well. So, I saw those relationships as being very positive and strong". (Will, Lecturer)

In this excerpt, Will indicates that the responsibility of partnership development did not just rest with the mentor teacher but also involved discussion and communication at a school leadership level. David also voices his understanding that the mentor teachers felt their input was valued which assisted to transform partnerships at the school level and also across different types of education jurisdictions:

> "I think one of the things that I loved about the partnership we had with their classes, with our teachers within the schools, and it goes right across state schools, Catholic schools, was the desire for those teachers in control of our student teachers [PSTs] to buy in to what we were trying to achieve, that their opinion mattered". (David, Lecturer)

These excerpts highlight common perceptions of the lecturers that significantly higher levels of communication and discussion promoted the forming of successful partnerships. Communication and discussion were mediational means for the boundary activity. Their accounts supported the claim that there was a collective endeavour in the activity occurring in boundary spaces. The lecturers' presence in schools and within the individual classes was storied as welcomed and not a distraction or an added pressure to the mentor teachers. Explanation and discourse with mentor teachers were encouraged by the lecturers, which was also conducive to gaining mentor teachers' support for the object of ITE. While Featherstone (1993) and Zeichner (2010) have noted independently and at different times that in contemporary ITE, attempts have been made to bring together various constituents of ITE in a relationship of mutual benefit in some college and university-based teacher education programs, this type of renewal process has been limited with mostly both systems maintaining separate cultures and means of communication. However, in the case

of Crescent Beach College, there appeared to be mutual respect for the role of the lecturer and mentor teacher in an effort to bring academic and practitioner knowledge together. This mutual effort transformed the object of the program, that is, preservice teacher development.

The data shows that the communication and discussion regarding the object of the program and the combined role that the school and university played brought about mentor teacher "buy in". There appeared to be a shifting of the epistemology of PST preparation where academic knowledge obtained from the university was once valued as the primary source of instruction to a situation where academic knowledge and the knowledge of expert teachers are treated with equal respect. In summary, effective communication between the mentor teachers and the lecturers meant each understood their role, that their respective opinions mattered which laid the foundation for a transformative partnership.

5.2.1.2 Lecturers Theme 2 – Partnerships with Schools were Strengthened through Mutual Effort

From the lecturer excerpts, operational words and phrases such as "indicative", "connected", "come back", "go back", and descriptions such as "deeper" and "real", were coded within this theme. These excerpts indicated that the lecturers developed professional relationships with mentor teachers to support PST development. The lecturers recounted stories about drawing upon school practice in follow-up discussions in lectures and providing university resources to supplement school resources. These evidenced lecturers' commitments to deeper and more realistic experiences for PSTs and boundary activity. Lecturers' stories regarding partnerships being created and sustained over a period of time and the concept of reciprocity in partnership development were considered an important indicator of this collective endeavour. The following excerpts illustrate the theme of strengthening a partnership through mutual effort.

In this excerpt from Will's interview, the key words "deeper" and "relationship" are indicative of the theme:

> "In second year when I organised the placements, I guess my **relationship** with the leadership was **deeper** from the point of view of I'd been in contact and spoken with them both over the phone and personally on a number of occasions and so I felt that there was a relationship there". (Will, Lecturer)

Will described the need to build long term partnerships to accommodate the professional experience for PSTs. Placements generally are difficult to source from the university perspective, due to an increasingly competitive market space for ITE courses. The lecturers' accounts show that communication and mutual effort were sustained over time and across institutional boundaries with personal visits to create and sustain the partnerships. Likewise, James in the excerpt below provided insight into how the partnerships were strengthened through the blurring of the division of labour with the commitment of university resources to match the classroom content as a way to counter the dichotomy of "we lecture, you supervise". Key words used by James were, "partnership", "responsibility", and "I think", positioning himself as authoritative on historical pitfalls in partnership creation and differentiating the Crescent Beach College program from an historical division of labour:

> "**I think** sometimes the tertiary institutions let themselves down in that they place the student into a school and then think that is the school's **responsibility**. And so there's not really a **partnership**. It is a case of okay you do this for us and we pay you x amount of dollars a day and then we'll lecture to them when they come back and see what went on". (James, Lecturer)

In this excerpt James again takes up authoritative positioning, voicing how he sees the combined effort in boundary activity. His small story here suggests a combined effort to expand the object of ITE. In other words, he took responsibility for becoming familiar with preservice teachers' school practices and endorsed and supported these in his endeavour to connect university activity with school-based activity. The result was a boundary space where school and university activity overlapped:

> "**I think** the **real** strength comes…in having a very **real connection** with the school so that you can not only be there to see that preservice teacher and advise them and support them but also with the classroom teacher. Know what they are going to be teaching next week and say right **I've** got this resource back it at the institution. I can bring that out for you and make it, making it a **real** partnership not a dichotomy of we lecture, you supervise the teaching round, the practicum". (James, Lecturer)

David elaborated the theme of mutual effort in his interview. In the excerpt below he described a back-and-forth approach between the schools and university that relied on mutual effort. The mutual effort created a boundary space that assisted PSTs in making sense of their school experience:

> "…and letting them [PSTs] discuss some of those questions with the [mentor] teachers and then **come back** and discuss it among themselves. **I think** that was one of the things I loved about the **partnership** we had with their classes, with our teachers, within the schools". (David, Lecturer)

> "…but because we had such a good **relationship** between the ITE program and what we were doing and our students and in the schools. I know many of those students who I taught pedagogy to, they'd **go back** and visit that school and they might spend another day pursuing those attributes that we talked about that way. And, you know, I just know that they **came**

> **back** with such a more **in-depth, broader knowledge** that then was proved again by the academic study". (David, Lecturer)

The lecturers' theme working with schools to create successful partnerships where there was a joint responsibility and mutual effort for the intended outcome was clear in all of the interviews with the lecturers. They indicated that effort or responsibility in supporting PST development was reciprocated with the schools and mentor teachers and that this effort was conducive to partnership growth. The data indicated that the university-school partnerships in the Crescent Beach College program were supported by the social processes of collaboration. Professional conversations, collegial learning and aligned processes were features of the boundary activity (Rossner & Commins, 2012). The excerpts from the interviews with Felicity and James illustrate how the lecturers saw the need for reciprocity in effective partnerships. Often, negative examples of how partnerships with schools could become little more than a one-way relationship, a type of "connective" partnership (Hobbs et al., 2018), were recounted by the lecturers to differentiate the Crescent Beach College partnerships from practices in ITE they had experienced prior to their engagement as lecturers at Crescent Beach College:

> "So even being you know some of the **benefits** that that universities get from being **connected** to schools, is that it grounds the university the university could be a huge bubble. If they're only researching you know. Because it could be a bubble. And fly off in a completely different direction that's not **grounded**. So the **connection** is absolutely non-negotiable. And it's, that's why I really love having a good time for professional conversation". (Felicity, Lecturer)

The lecturers illustrated the mutual effort in this ITE program in their small stories. Two clear examples were the sharing of university resources to support the specifics of the PST's classroom teaching and the reciprocal nature of lecture topics and discussions based

on the PSTs' placement experiences. Importantly, the school-university partnerships developed by this Teachers Teaching Teachers model were bounded by social practice and an attitude of sharing to achieve a common purpose (Kruger et al., 2009; Petersen & Treagust, 2014) and were therefore more likely to result in a success. Also noted in the data was how the reciprocal nature was storied as evidence of successful partnerships by the lecturers, where each participant recognised and valued what the other participants brought to the partnership. The lecturers indicated that the school played an essential role in the partnership by grounding universities in the reality of teaching practice. The need for the lecturers to stay connected to what was happening in the classroom was an aspect of the lecturers' accounts and they took personal responsibility for achieving such a connection. The lecturers explained in their accounts that the creation of the partnerships provided opportunities to work with mentor teachers and evidence of object expansion was provided in their short stories recounting personal experience within a boundary space. For the lecturers, the successful partnerships were foundational in connecting theory with practice.

For the lecturers, there was a mutual effort, which characterised boundary activity as collectively mediated. Deeper connections with schools supported linking of theory and practice of teaching. The lecturer could draw upon the classroom practices experienced by PSTs in their lectures. They could encourage conversations about PSTs' experiences on placement because they had witnessed them or had engaged in discussing them with the mentor teachers. In their small stories, descriptions of lectures included providing opportunities for PSTs to discuss situations that had occurred on professional experience including how the mentor teacher may have acted or reacted. PSTs' experiences on placement became resources for achieving the object of PST development. PSTs in turn were positioned as co-constructors of knowledge in these discussions, encouraged to draw upon their experiences to reflect on the purposes and content of classroom activity. These

were integral for connecting theory to practice for the PSTs and were indications of the establishment of successful partnerships.

5.2.2 The Mentor Teachers' Themes

Analysis of the interviews with the mentor teachers provided descriptions of the partnerships and explanations of how boundary activity was mediated from a mentor teacher perspective. The mentor teachers described the boundary space as a place where convenient lecturer availability facilitated detailed and timely communication to plan for professional experience placement. They explained that the partnerships were enhanced by the lecturer's participation in the professional experience especially in the way lecturers connected with the PSTs and understood classroom protocols and rules. In this section, after introducing the mentor teachers, data is drawn from excerpts to elaborate and substantiate the mentor teachers' themes.

Dan had been a primary school teacher in both government and independent systems. He had taught most primary year levels and had been a principal in a small regional school. He regularly took on the mentor teacher role and had an interest in theories of learning. At the time of the study, he was aged in his late forties.

Madison was a primary school teacher in a mid-sized city school in the government system. She had had experience in most primary year levels and regularly had taken on mentor teacher roles. Previously, Madison had taught in a range of small regional schools. At the time of the study Madison was aged in her late thirties.

Mitchell was a primary school teacher in the independent system. Mitchell had previously taught most primary year levels. He had regularly taken on the role of mentor teacher. At the time of the study, he was aged in his early forties.

5.2.2.1 Mentor Teachers Theme 1 – Communication Assisted Planning for the Professional Experience

From the mentor teachers' perspective, an important aspect of the success of partnerships in the Crescent Beach College program was their ability to access university staff and information in a timely and effective manner. The following key words: "communication", "email", "information", "knew", "available" and "organised", located small stories in the mentor teachers' accounts that led to the generation of this theme. These words were found to be descriptive of communication that allowed the mentor teachers sufficient preparation time, which they explained assisted them with their planning both prior to and during the professional experience. For the mentor teachers, boundary activity was mediated by lecturers' availability. Lecturer availability corresponded to their presence at school sites or timely responses to emails. The mentor teachers particularly valued lecturer presence on school sites where they could answer queries or discuss PST progress within the constraints of the school day.

The excerpts below from Dan and Mitchell's interviews show how the key words located small stories about timely information leading up to professional experience placements. Key words in these excerpts included "communication", "knew", "information" and "available":

> "There was always an excellent level of **communication**. You know, **I think** that the documentation and the ability to have opportunities to comment on preservice teachers, stages of development and you know, how they were going. There was certainly a lot of support there. **I knew** I was always an **email** or phone call away [from a lecturer]. So they were very **available**. They [the PSTs] felt cared for. And so there was a good relationship. There was good lead up to having the student teacher and good follow up and sort of **regular**

visits and how are you going and **regular** communication, great resources in supporting what we were doing for sure". (Dan, Mentor Teacher)

"So the **information** was all passed on. There was a there was a booklet that I read through about where the ITE program guys were and the mission statement and what's expected and things like that". (Mitchell, Mentor Teacher)

In these excerpts Dan and Mitchell revealed insight into how the organisational requirements of the professional experience were communicated and supported in a timely way. Dan also referenced a sense that the lecturers were invested in the program and made themselves available for follow up questions and resources. Madison reiterated similar opinions by voicing that sufficient lead up time was a consideration for mentor teachers in taking PSTs. In this case the various methods and times of communication made available which took into consideration the scope of daily classroom activity, were mediational means which supported the boundary activity:

"We got lots of emails, which was great because often we're in the class, so you haven't got time to answer the phone. And it was as soon as we asked a question, they were answered straight away. So I think it was many emails. Yeah, that was fine". (Madison, Mentor Teacher)

"It tends to be a bit thrown upon schools. We need this. Whereas this ITE program at least, it was organised, and this was a request came in [from the ITE program]. We've got some students. Have you got the time? These are the dates. And there was plenty of notice. Whereas other universities - some universities - now we've had the students [PSTs] approach us and they approach it with like a month's notice. And it's really tricky to fit them in". (Madison, Mentor Teacher)

For Madison, information was communicated from the university system in a timely and effective manner. Madison saw this as contributing positively to the PST's professional experience. From a CHAT perspective, timely and effective communication was found to mediate ITE boundary activity. The clarity of expectations not only for mentor teachers but also for PSTs expanded the object. The key word in the excerpt below was "knew":

> "Whereas these students [PSTs] came **knowing** what they had to do. They **knew** they had their portfolio organised. Observations. They **knew** all the different parts. And so that made it really smooth. Because they **knew** what they were doing and we **knew** what they were doing". (Madison, Mentor Teacher)

The mentor teachers' small stories provided counter examples of programs where communication was not timely or effective. For the participating mentor teachers, and in alignment with previous studies, communication issues and lack of shared understandings can exacerbate the impact of unfamiliar roles and expectations within school-university partnerships (Ryan et al., 2016, as cited in Brandenburg et al., 2016). Oerlemans (2017), noted that communication breakdown at times interrupted relationships and participant satisfaction within a partnership. It is well known that "the biggest challenge with communication [is] in relation to the Community Engagement experience" (p. 186). In this program, the professional experience placement deviated from the standard placement format in length and methods of supervision. It required the staff involved to engage in constant communication with partnering schools. Through this, a boundary space was created to sustain the partnership. Cited in the literature as important for sustaining partnerships in ITE (Brandenburg et al., 2016; McDonough, 2014; Neal & Eckersley, 2014; Towndrow, 2015), the university staff were willing to have difficult conversations with one another if needed, and to see the situation from another person's perspective.

Due to the high demand for professional experience placements for PSTs in the local region, early notification, and information from the ITE provider was beneficial for the school's preparation prior to the PST placement. Schools were described by the mentor teachers as extremely busy places with little time during the school day for them to attend to emails, phone calls etc. Nevertheless, this problematic situation of mentor teachers' (over) load, as noted by Rodrigues and de Mattos (2018), can lead to emergency participant agency when participants invested in the object respond with the required actions. Punctual responses from lecturers to mentor teachers' queries and attention to detail can be understood as mediational means that supported mentor teacher agency as well as object expansion. Easy availability to the university and lecturers stimulated a collective endeavour on behalf of the mentor teachers to transform the object. The ITE boundary activity was mediated by flexible protocols to solve problems and support the establishment of positive relationships.

5.2.2.2 Mentor Teachers Theme 2 - Lecturers' Involvement in Professional Experience was Beneficial

The mentor teachers valued the lecturers' experience and knowledge of classroom practice and the ease with which they interacted with students. The words associated with theme 2 included "watch" and "come out", "talk", "experienced", "invested", and "discussion". These words were associated with small stories recounting the positive impact of the lecturer's involvement in school practice. In their small stories, the mentor teachers positioned the lecturers as active in PST development by embedding key aspects of classroom practice in follow up discussions in lectures. Madison and Dan elaborated this theme in the following excerpts from their interviews:

> "So it was great to see them come out and have a chat prior to going to the lesson and they'd go in and watch the lesson and then have a chat with them [PSTs] afterwards. So they [the

lecturers] were obviously doing the pre work and the reflection sort of thing". (Madison, Mentor Teacher)

"You know for sure there was, definitely a **partnership**. It wasn't, it didn't feel like a ticking a box. We've got to get this person through. It [the partnership] was warm. It was professional, friendly. It was. I think you felt. I think I mentioned at the start you felt like that institution was **invested**." (Dan, Mentor Teacher)

Madison voiced an understanding that the lecturers' involvement at school level prompted timely feedback to the PST and follow up discussions and explanations in lectures. Madison continued with an elaboration of how the lecturers' interaction with PSTs and students at the school reflected their knowledge and experience of classroom processes. The mentor teachers storied the lecturers' involvement in school practice as welcomed. Dan's small story below positioned investment from the university and lecturer involvement as meaningful and not just token:

"And they've always been really good in that they, because they're **experienced**, they **know** how to get along, how to walk into a classroom and not disrupt the students. So, he walked in and he started talking to a few kids and asked them about the weekend, what they were doing outside and tell me about this school, show me around. And so the kids were really **comfortable** with him before things started". (Madison, Mentor Teacher)

In the excerpt below, Mitchell also welcomed the combined effort of "levering" PSTs' firsthand classroom experiences into lectures. Overarching codes such as "partnership" (or "side by side") and "theory" were also evident in this excerpt, along with one of the theme's codes, "discussion":

"There's one of those things I really appreciate is having me, having that **side by side** thing. Here is the, here's a **theory**, we going to teach a **theory**, now you're going into a school to

> work on it. We're [the lecturers] are going to **come out** and see how you go going with it and lever that into more **discussions** to upskill these student teachers to be more effective in the classroom when they're out". (Mitchell, Mentor Teacher)

In their accounts, the mentor teachers commented favourably about the presence of a lecturer in their classroom. Rather than the university lecturer being an outsider in the school space where mentoring usually occurs, the data showed that this space was perceived to be shared. The shared space, or boundary space, developed through shared effort is known to provide a platform for positive outcomes for the PST. Klein et al. (2013) stated that the creation of such a space is beneficial because "the knowledge base for teaching is reconstructed" (p. 28). However, a university lecturer's attendance in a mentor teacher's classroom is not a common aspect of contemporary ITE. Yet the analysis presented under this theme suggests the TTT framework was sufficiently robust to accommodate such boundary activity and that it was well received by the mentor teachers.

The mentor teachers' small stories evidenced a level of trust in the lecturers and a clear understanding of the purpose and procedures involved with lecturer attendance in their classrooms. Madison's experience indicated that the lecturer's involvement in the classroom was non-threatening and relational, which she attributed to the lecturers' background knowledge and experience of teaching. The mentor teachers placed significance on having a visiting lecturer experienced in classroom practice.

Dan also valued "the ability to have opportunities to comment on preservice teachers, stages of development" and "how they were going" with the lecturers. Dan's small story below is biographical and provides an explanation of why Dan valued such boundary activity:

> “I went through a [PST] program where I was fortunate to have highly experienced high performing principals, leaders, teachers come in and lecture, but boy, if you asked them a question about how the brain negotiated new content, say they knew that as well”. (Dan, Mentor Teacher)

In a manner echoing his experience as a preservice teacher that he recounted above, Dan was seconded by Crescent Beach College to share his own expertise and research into learning styles with the PSTs as a guest lecturer. Dan’s case exemplifies the flexible nature of the partnership and provides a further example of the mutual investment in boundary activity that supported PST development (Lecturers’ Theme 2).

Mentor teachers positioned the university as invested through explicit statements such as, "you felt like that institution was invested" and small stories, such as, “[the lecturers] are going to come out and see how you are going with it and lever that into more discussions”. In summary, the mentor teachers storied the partnership as transformative, consistent with the RPP (Chapter 2), where partners take joint responsibility for outcomes that are embedded in partners’ respective core outcomes (Hobbs et al., 2018).

5.2.3 The Principals’ Themes

Analysis of the interviews with the principals provided descriptions of boundary activity and explanations of how the partnership was mediated from a principal’s perspective. There was one theme evident in the participating principals’ data, that the Crescent Beach College partnership was relational. In the principals’ accounts, an object of boundary activity was the creation of relationships between the school, Crescent Beach College, and PSTs. Boundary activity was a result of mutual effort. Further, the principals described learning to teach as relational and ITE partnerships as necessary. In this section,

after introducing the participating principals, their small stories elaborate and substantiate this theme.

Ben was an experienced principal of 15 years. At the time of the study he was a Primary school principal in the Catholic system at a school in a large regional town and in his early sixties. His school supported professional experience placements from numerous universities.

Sophia was a P-12 school principal in a large regional town in the Independent School system. She had ten years' experience as principal. At the time of the study she was in her early fifties. Her school supported professional experience placements from numerous universities.

Gilberto was also a P-12 school principal in a large regional town in the independent system. Like Ben he was in his early sixties and had 15 years' experience as principal. Like the other participating principals, his school supported professional experience placements from numerous universities.

5.2.3.1 Principals' Theme – A Relational Partnership Different to Other Partnerships

Operational words such as "relationship", "value", "understanding", "professional", "contribution", "focussed", "mirrored", "two-way" and "connected" were located in the principals' accounts. These codes were generated from small stories of experience that drew comparisons with other ITE programs and positioned the Crescent Beach College partnerships as relational. These principals voiced an understanding that successful ITE programs do not occur in isolation but require a collaborative effort towards PST development.

The theme is elaborated in the following excerpts from Ben's interview, where he used key words "connection" and "relationship" and described the partnership as relational:

> "I felt that we had a really close **connection** with your group and it's something, we are in the **relationship** business, and I think it was something that really I found beneficial". (Ben, Principal)

> **"**So what you offered was a more of a **relational partnership**. And **I think** that yeah as I said before, we're in the **relationship** business, that's important to us because the students [PSTs] coming in, we do care about them. We wonder who they are. We wonder something about who's working with them". (Ben, Principal)

In the above excerpt, Ben voices his understanding that relational partnerships between staff and students form the core of quality teaching. He describes a joint effort with Crescent Beach College to encompass this concept to support PSTs and how this differed from other university ITE programs:

> "Well, the benefits are that because we do take an interest in these people, we do have someone that we can talk to [from the ITE program]. I'll use the example - we have students from [X University]. We do not have any contact with [X University]. I will get an e-mail. So, I think that kind of partnership has no relationship in it". (Ben, Principal)

> "So valuing **relationships** that your **partnership** offered, a different kind of **relationship**. And it was more of a personal one and I think that that's something that I value". (Ben, Principal)

> "Knowing that you're there, that the students [PSTs], had constant contact with somebody so I suppose in a sense I felt we had a really strong and a different kind of **relationship** to what we have with the other feeder universities to our school". (Ben, Principal)

Ben storied relational partnerships between staff and students as the core of education. He valued the joint effort with Crescent Beach College to support PSTs and drew upon his experience to differentiate this from ITE programs at other universities.

In a similar way to Ben's use of the word, "relational", Gilberto used the phrase, "professional relationship". In this way, Gilberto attended to how his school was positioned as part of the tertiary program by Crescent Beach College:

> **"**Obviously with that it was very much a **professional relationship** in that sense. …but the actual association is [being] part of the study or the learning program or the tertiary program. [It] was a very **professional relationship**". (Gilberto, Principal)

Further, Sophia explained that good partnerships became for her, a clear and shared objective:

> **"**So the benefit with the ITE program was the fact that you were thinking or you're working on the **understanding** that there would be some good **partnerships**". (Sophia, Principal)

Sophia, Ben and Gilberto's small stories featured the relational nature of the partnership. For them, the PSTs' professional experiences were not occurring in isolation but in a connected way between schools, mentor teachers and lecturers:

> "And also, what we were doing would be **mirrored** in what you were teaching [in lectures]. So that was easy and good". (Sophia, Principal)

> "But I think that your guys [PSTs], that they had that specific things that they were **focussing** on and that does have some implications for staff [mentor teachers] because you've got to fit that in. It seemed to work well". (Ben, Principal)

In the next excerpt, Gilberto elaborated the boundary activity. His use of the phrase "could have" in the small story, "we could have input into that partnership" evidences

boundary activity as mediated by enabling structures that supported the school's contributions to PST development:

> **"**I think it's very much a **two-way partnership**. And there is strength both ways and I think one of the ways that we could have input into that partnership was by giving those preservice teachers experience in a … school that is very similar to the ITE program but also different". (Gilberto, Principal)

The principals used their experience and knowledge of other ITE programs as a basis for comparison. They noted some unique aspects of delivery of the Crescent Beach College program that resulted in more reciprocal and relational partnerships. Their small stories emphasised the reciprocal nature of the partnership, a common understanding of the respective contributions and a collaborative effort to meet shared goals. Recounting how they had been involved at a deeper level with this ITE program compared to others, they positioned themselves and their schools as connected with and invested in the program.

The principals attended some of the ceremonial events held at Crescent Beach College (e.g., graduations) and accepted invitations to attend Crescent Beach College as a guest lecturer. Like the mentor teachers' involvement in activity at Crescent Beach College, the principal's involvement elaborated boundary activity that could occur in the physical sites of the school or the university:

> "You had that sense of community. [It] was very strong and I did feel that we had a positive **contribution** to make and a positive engagement with your college". (Gilberto, Principal)

Rossner and Commins (2012) in their study of partnerships identified that "All schools commented that developing the link with a provider is the hardest aspect of the initiative and required their steadfast commitment to ensure the partnership could endure". The analysis of the principal interviews evidences an enhanced involvement between the

principals and that enduring relationships were developed. They voiced insight into the structure and purpose of the program and storied the partnership with Crescent Beach College as different to other university school partnerships.

The principals' small stories showed a sense of obligation that their school acted in support of what the PSTs were learning in lectures. In their small stories they positioned themselves as personally invested in the shared object of the program. Ben spoke of the implications of the partnership for his staff (mentor teachers) as he was aware that the PSTs had "specific things that they were focussing on" and that "you've [the school] got to fit that in". Similarly, Sophia storied the mentor teachers as "mirroring" significant aspects of the lecturing content. The ability to discuss critical aspects of program delivery with university staff in a timely and efficient manner was seen as enabling by the principals as it was for the Mentor teachers (see Mentor Teacher Themes). A clear mediational means to the boundary activity was timely communication between Crescent Beach College and school personnel.

5.2.4 The Preservice Teachers' Theme

In their accounts, the preservice teachers described boundary activity and provided explanations of how it was mediated from their perspective. The PSTs described the boundary activity as joint effort between schools and Crescent Beach College, which formed deeper relationships. The PSTs felt supported by this collective endeavour. In this section, after introducing the PSTs, data excerpts elaborate and substantiate the PSTs theme: joint effort and care.

Ellie (Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 20-25)

Lilly (Master of Teaching 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 40-45)

Michelle (Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 40-45)

Marlee (Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 25-30)

Seth (Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 20-25)

Mitch (Bachelor of Education 2017 cohort, age demographic 30-35)

Belle (Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 40-45)

Robyn (Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 35-40)

Keith (Master of Teaching 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 50-55)

5.2.4.1 Preservice Teachers' Theme - A Joint Effort between University and Schools to Develop Partnerships for PST Care

PST small stories associated with this theme were located by operational words such as "communication", "relationships", "feedback", "personal", "perspective", "support" and "cared". The PSTs perceived a joint effort to create and sustain partnerships. For the PSTs, professional experience placements were efficiently organised by the university at multiple levels providing a variety of teaching experiences and constructive feedback. Educational dialogues featured in their small stories as mediational means to promote partnership development.

In the small story from Marlee's interview, the terms communication and support were coded:

> "There was a lot of **communication** which **I think** is vital when you are in placement and sometimes you can maybe a little bit overwhelming especially if you're new to that idea and concept. But there was lots of **communication** between us as the student, the supervising teacher and our supervising lecturer. They would come and watch which was really good to

know that you kind of had the **support** of two people. You weren't just on it on your own". (Marlee, PST)

Marlee drew on her experience of the Crescent Beach College ITE program positioning herself as authoritative on the value of communication. Staff from both systems were storied as active in boundary activity, which supported her and the objectives of the program. Marlee elaborated:

> "So the fact that they didn't just know each other via email, it was actually a face to face **conversation**. Their two teaching experiences [mentor teacher and lecturer] were able to **reflect** on how I taught to then get an idea as to **how I was going** and that kind of thing". (Marlee, PST)

Similarly, Ellie recounted the multi-voiced nature of feedback she received whilst on professional placement. She perceived a joint effort from both mentor teacher and lecturer to empower her as a teacher:

> "It was great to have the ITE program staff come in and have their **perspective** of, well your mentor teacher might be saying this and this but I think he would do better doing this and this. Getting someone else's **perspective** of how well you're doing". (Ellie, PST)

> "The mentor teacher actually **quite liked** the ITE program staff more than me [laughs]. Yes there was [a **partnership**] very professional very friendly and it worked just wonderfully". (Ellie, PST)

Lilly concurred. Below, her small story provides an account of the efforts that she observed to build relationships. She then positioned herself as authoritative, offering her opinion on the value of this in achieving the object (PST development), using the phrases "I think" and "really important":

> "I thought that was great the Head of the ITE program obviously spent a lot of time building **relationships** and being able to go and talk to those people. **I think** that was really important that they formed kind of **relationship** to because they're both here to **help** the preservice teacher and **I think** that's really important, that time that they spent together". (Lilly, PST)

In the excerpt from Seth's interview, Seth recounted a small story featuring a variety of schools in which partnerships were secured by the university. He also perceived the personal relationships forged in partnership as important for supporting his growth in ITE:

> "[At] every school [for placement] they had some sort of **personal relationship** with that school. Yeah. Whether it was out in the country or down in the city somehow they seemed to know they had **friendships** within that. So it was great. They could come along and it was very casual to come and watch me teach. And it was welcomed. Which was great. No matter what school I was at. I felt like those great **relationships**". (Seth, PST)

In the excerpt below Michelle voices how a sharing of the division of labour within the partnership supported the object of the program. Michelle perceived the division of labour and a clear, shared object as important mediators of the boundary activity. In her small story below, she recounted her own ("I felt supported") the school's, and mentor teacher's appreciation of the lecturers' contributions. In recounting and interpreting feedback from mentor teachers, caring about the PSTs was storied as a shared concern:

> "I felt very **supported** I guess in the roles and I think the school seemed to be really pleased with how we did it and they [the school] loved having people come out to watch and **I think** that made them feel that that the ITE program really **cared** about those students in what they were doing. That was the **feedback** that I always got from my mentor teachers". (Michelle, PST)

Michelle recounted the positive reactions of teaching staff at her placement school to this shared object, A clear, shared object created opportunities for transformative discussions and PST growth. Michelle continued:

> **“**A couple [of classroom teachers] were quite surprised because they hadn't seen it with other universities with their students. They said that's really amazing. That they're showing that level of interest in their students and in the learning of their students”. (Michelle, PST)

> **“**I just found that the staff in the staff rooms were just so interested in the course that we were doing. They're really legitimately interested and fascinated that you know what. Talk about the unit plans that we were doing, and they'd look at the lesson plans that we were preparing for our placements so it opened up lots of doorways to have chats about teaching. They were fascinated by what we were doing and just thought it was amazing”. (Michelle, PST)

Marlee and Seth also noted how cooperation between lecturers and mentor teachers provided a platform for their growth:

> “Oh it was definitely positive. Yeah. There was no there was no negativity at all. The teachers loved having us, the supervising teachers [lecturers] loved seeing what we had learned through the process of placement as well. So yeah it was all very positive”. (Marlee, PST)

> **“**When they [the supervising lecturer] came and visited me. Yeah it was great. Like I said they already had some sort of friendships or relationships with the school which was great. So it was just a very friendly environment”. (Seth, PST)

The PSTs were aware that the ideas and pedagogy contained within the university course did not simply exist in a vacuum but were there to be practically applied in the classroom when given the opportunity. These opportunities were enhanced when both

systems worked together to expand the object of ITE. PSTs indicated that the lecturers fostered enduring and solid relationships with schools. A joint effort for the provision of professional experience placements in different educational contexts and systems was perceived.

From the excerpts, the PSTs described professional experience placements in a range of school settings; country/city, small/large, independent/government/catholic, necessitating partnerships across these different demographic lines. The data from the PSTs revealed there was a "fit" to a range of schools and acknowledgement that staff from Crescent Beach College spent a lot of time building relationships and "being able to go and talk to those people whether it was out in the country or down in the city". The importance of an ITE provider forging partnerships with a variety of schools has been acknowledged (AHISA, 2015). The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) and Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA) acknowledge variances in theoretical approaches to education depending on the school or system to which it belongs (i.e., government, catholic, independent). Further, there needs to be an alignment between the ITE provider and the school providing the professional experience placement and PSTs require preparation to "fit" the school they are visiting (AHISA, 2015).

PSTs observed that the relationship between mentor teachers and the ITE program staff appeared professional, collegial and was conducted with shared responsibility. Seth observed, as did Ellie, that the lecturers were "welcomed". While Ellie makes a humorous comment "the mentor teacher actually quite liked the ITE program staff more than me", she was establishing that there was a personalised and enduring connection between the ITE program lecturer and her mentor teacher. The PSTs noted alignment of purpose between the school and university and their desire to expand the object of ITE activity. This observation

was summarised by Lilly: “I think that was really important that they formed a kind of relationship… because they're both here to help the preservice teacher”.

Effective communication between the subjects of this activity was noted by the PSTs as another indicator of the joint effort and shared responsibilities in this program. In their small stories the PSTs recounted face to face conversations where feedback was received from the different perspectives of the mentor teacher and the lecturer. Feedback mediated PST development so they could “then get an idea as to how I was going”. (Marlee, PST).

The PSTs were aware of an “investment” or the “buy in” from both mentor teachers and lecturers. Michelle noted: “I just found that the staff in the staff rooms were just so interested in the course that we were doing” and that “classroom teachers were quite surprised that the lecturers were showing that level of interest in the learning of their students”. This quote is indicative that the program delivery initiated a high level of interest from school staff other than the mentor teacher.

5.3 Themes on Connecting Theory to Practice

In this chapter the author has provided two tables which illustrated data from the NVivo coding of participant responses in relation to partnership development and the connection of theory to practice in the Crescent Beach College program. Each table displayed the most common themes obtained from the participant interviews and has been presented to illustrate multiple participant voices with respect to how the ITE program managed these two key research questions.

Specifically, Table 5.2 below provides the result of the systematic analysis related to the question:

"**How did the Crescent Beach College program connect theory to practice?**"

In the analysis, the author applied the same three-step process described in section 5.2 Coding Results.

Table 5.2:

Participant themes on connection of theory to practice in the Crescent Beach College program.

Connecting Theory to Practice Themes		
Participant	**Theme**	**Number of Occurrences**
Lecturers	Lecturers modelled classroom practice in lectures to assist with connecting theory to practice	**20**
	Specific educational dialogue assisted PSTs to make sense of the connection of theory to practice	13
PSTs	The program allowed for a mix of theory and practical instruction	24
	PSTs were immersed in the specific language of teaching and education	16
Principals	The program constructed a balance between theory and practice	9
Mentor Teachers	The program supported theory into practice	7

Connecting theory to practice has been theorised in this study as boundary activity, that is, activity that spans school and university practice (see Chapter 3). In the sections that follow, small stories from each of the participant groups are used to better understand how boundary activity for ITE provision was perceived.

5.4 Lecturers' Themes

The lecturers storied their efforts at modelling classroom practice in lectures as boundary activity. They positioned themselves as intentional in their use of specific

educational language. In this section, excerpts are provided to elaborate and substantiate the lecturer's themes.

5.4.1 Lecturers' Theme 1 – Lecturers Modelled Classroom Practice in Lectures to Assist with Connecting Theory to Practice.

Boundary activity from the lecturers' perspective included modelling classroom practice in lectures. The words associated with this theme were, "balance", "practical", "academic", "pedagogy" and "theory". In their accounts the lecturers recounted a conscious practice of providing hands-on, realistic classroom activities. The excerpts in this section elaborate.

Nathaniel's small story positions him as deliberate in his actions to model classroom practice in his lectures:

> "**I** was trying to cut away, deliver what had to be delivered as far as the **theory** was concerned but try and break it down so it was a **practical** presentation as well. **I** always used to try and do **practical** sessions as part of the lecture". (Nathaniel, Lecturer)

Nathaniel also references how the TTT model utilised his past experiences as a principal and classroom teacher and how imperative he felt it was to the development of the PSTs that he should connect the theory with practice.

As a practitioner seconded to the Crescent Beach College program, Nathaniel embodied the TTT model. His past experiences as a principal and classroom teacher were utilised as resources for his practice as a lecturer. In the small story below, he recounted connections he was able to make between theory and practice:

“And so I thought, well maybe I can impart some knowledge on these students [PSTs], based on my **practical** experience as much as my knowledge of education and **theory** and the latest change in those sorts of things”. (Nathaniel, Lecturer)

David and Felicity positioned themselves similarly in their small stories. The lecturers perceived duality in their lecturer role. Versed in the practicalities of teaching, like Nathaniel, they sought to underpin the theory with pedagogical examples of practice:

“So there was a balance of the **academic** rigour, and we expected that. But that underpinned the, I suppose, the outcomes and the **pedagogy** needed to go into a modern-day classroom”. (David, Lecturer)

“We were teachers who were **practically** involved with teaching every day. And we could pass those ideas on, that focus on the **theory**”. (David, Lecturer)

“I always try and make the **theory** makes sense. So if we're studying for example the **pedagogical** approaches to music education. I would always model the approach with them. Like do it. So they actually see it in **practice**. And show them videos of **practice**”. (Felicity, Lecturer)

The lecturers accounts located their practice as a kind of boundary activity, equipping PSTs with an appropriate skill set that was grounded in the reality of classroom teaching whilst contextualising theories of education. Their small stories elaborated a consciousness regarding delivery styles, room configurations and artefacts to model realistic and collaborative classroom learning experiences. Felicity’s small story depicts a modelling episode. The pronouns “their” and “they” in the episode refers to the PSTs as her students in a modelled drama classroom:

"We did some dance, so I used their bodies, the student's [PSTs] body so that it was an embodied **practice**. When they were doing that, we were doing the arts. They became artists". (Felicity, Lecturer)

Rich pedagogies that challenge the perennial tension between theory and practice were evident in the lecturers' accounts. In this way, this theme positions the TTT model as innovative in its utilisation of experienced practitioners as lecturers. Historically in ITE, lectures and professional experience have been treated separately and PSTs have perceived a disconnect between theory and practice (Grudnoff et al., 2017) as discussed in Chapter 2.

5.4.2 Lecturers' Theme 2 - Lecturers Used Specific Educational Dialogue to Assist PSTs to Connect Theory to Practice.

The lecturers used education-specific terms and dialogue to connect the theory and practice in ITE. Key words used to locate this theme were "conversations", "talk", "opinion", "debate" and "dialogue". The lecturers' small stories show that the TTT framework supported them in boundary activity. They used their wider knowledge and experience of current school-based issues consciously providing nuanced accounts of the day-to-day operation of schools for the benefit of PSTs.

Nathaniel positioned himself as intentional in the small story below:

"**I** always used to try and do practical sessions as part of the lecture but **I** remember also I used to try and **talk** about some issues that had happened in schools for five or 10 minutes. Just giving **them** a bit more of an understanding of how schools work. Sometimes it was all along the same lines as the lecture topic [and] sometimes it was a bit different". (Nathaniel, Lecturer)

Nathaniel and Felicity both storied themselves as deliberately connecting theoretical content in lectures to real life situations. To this end, Felicity recounted her effort in lectures to incorporate "professional conversations":

> **"**So the nexus between theory and practice in [this program] was great. You know in the sense that we would have professional **conversations** all the time. And not only that but professional **conversations** about how children learn both in school and out of school". (Felicity, Lecturer)

The lecturers used multiple methods to purposely engage the PSTs in educational dialogue with the object of making sense of theory by connecting it to practice. Examples from David and Will's interviews are provided below:

> **"**I think what we would do, the students would research those theories through textbooks, our own textbooks they'd have their own textbooks, they'd get on the web. We would throw it up on the big screen in the class. We'd **debate** it". (David, Lecturer)

> "Students [PSTs] were coming back and saying this happened to me in the classroom. What would you have done? And there was great **discussion** not just with me being seen as the guru that could offer the pearls of wisdom. Other students were happy to enter in and say 'yep that happened to me and this is what I did". (Will, Lecturer)

David's small story below illustrated how dialogue mediated boundary activity. PSTs were exposed through dialogue to various specialist contributors in lectures. Dialogue supported PSTs to make sense of their experiences in the classroom:

> "The most exciting thing was when we could bring other teachers in who had a different differing **opinion**. Might have been a State schools person as opposed to an independent school teacher or a Catholic teacher or whatever". (David, Lecturer).

The lecturers perceived their role as encompassing more than the delivery of theoretical knowledge within their curriculum specialty. This was evident in their small stories providing illustrations of practice. With the intention of including multiple perspectives they invited other education practitioners to participate in lectures as guest speakers. Multiple perspectives were seen by the lecturers to assist the PSTs to make sense of their theory and practical experiences. Opportunities were also created in lectures to incorporate PSTs' professional experience. In this way, discourse in lectures often meshed education theory with the language of education. This was intentional:

> "We were looking at academic rigour, the academic expectations, different theories, the theories and whatever about education and then saying, well, how does it work practically"? (David, Lecturer)

The boundary activity as elaborated in the lecturers' small stories supported the development of new knowledge. Structural affordances of the TTT model expanded possibilities for ITE partnerships.

5.4.3 Preservice Teachers' Themes

Like the lecturers, the PSTs' small stories elaborated boundary activity as classroom practice modelled in lectures and the use of educational language connecting theory to practice. In this section, small stories selected from the PSTs' interviews elaborate the structural affordances that broke down a theory-practice binary.

5.4.3.1 Preservice Teachers' Theme 1 - The Program Allowed for a Mix of Theory and Practical Instruction.

Key words from the PSTs' interviews associated with this theme include: "balance", "confident", "practical", "implement" and "relevant". The PSTs' small stories indicated

their awareness of the lecturers' intentions to expose them to the theories and practicalities of teaching.

In the following, Ellie's use of "they" referred to lecturers and "it" was understood to be referring to the ITE program at Crescent Beach College or the TTT model that structured the program:

> "I think there's a pretty healthy **balance** of both [theory and practice]. You couldn't really go into the **practical** without going into the theory and **they** did a fantastic job of the theory and in so learning all the different foundation of pedagogy and all the different **relevant** learning theories and how a learner learns best really". (Ellie, PST)

> **"It** taught you how to teach not just this theory about teaching. And **it** was so **practical** and **relevant** to all aspects of teaching". (Ellie, PST)

For the PSTs, the program allowed for a mix of theory and practice described by them as a positive "balance". In Lucy's small story below, she storied herself as confident, her self-reported development providing an illustration of positive outcomes accorded to the boundary activity:

> "I think there was a pretty good **balance** between the two of them [theory and practice]. Obviously, lecturers are primarily theoretical but I think they [the theories] were applied often in a way that demonstrated how to use it in a **practical** fashion. So I think we were equipped with the tools. So when it came time for the **practical** teaching I could feel pretty **confident** in what we were doing". (Lucy, PST)

Similarly, Mitch accounted for PST development including his own development as a result of the boundary activity:

> "Not only would we learn the theory of the mathematics but then we would get out the materials and manipulate them as if we were students. And then so we get to see what it's like from the student's point of view. And then we'd also then be given the opportunity to look at it as a teacher and see what you we should be looking for as a teacher. What students will do what they won't do. What problems they'll encounter. How do we counter those problems and we knew how to do that because of a theory that we just learnt, you know 20 minutes prior, so it was that **balance** between the theory and practical that we got pretty much in every lesson that we did. That was the key". (Mitch, PST)

In Belle's small story below her self-reported development was accounted for in terms of how the program assisted her in bringing the theory and practice of teaching together:

> **"**This is a maths class or this is an English class and we'd be improving ourselves academically but we'd be learning how we're going to then bring this to the students, how would we **implement** this in the class. Not only was I getting better academically and I was learning but I really felt that I was learning how I was going to bring this into my role which was really important to me". (Belle, PST)

Like the lecturers, the PSTs elaborated boundary activity as dialogue from multiple perspectives and from theoretical and practical standpoints.

The PSTs' accounts of their own learning in this study illustrate the position supported in the literature that "consistent integration of course work and field work helps PSTs to better understand theory, apply concepts they are learning in their course work and to better support student learning" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 307). In Australia, the TEMAG report has indicated such a position as ideal, "theory and practice in ITE must be inseparable and mutually reinforced" (TEMAG, 2014, p. 18), and strong relationships between schools and universities are vital to achieving such an outcome. The PSTs expressed a desire for proficiency in both areas (theory and practice) and storied themselves

as empowered by the boundary activity, which created opportunities for making meaningful connections between theory and practice:

> "Every time I went into the classroom [lecture] I felt like I was learning something that I could automatically **put into practice** when I went out onto teaching rounds or when I did get into a classroom". (Mitch, PST)

In this excerpt, Mitch not only comments on the connection of theory to practice in lectures but also on the regularity of such occurrences.

This PST theme indicated that the TTT program promoted a balance in understanding between the theory and practice of teaching, However, the data did not provide any indication that practice had supplanted theory. As the insider researcher and lecturer, the author experienced PST commitment to high levels of academic discipline and a general willingness to discuss and take account of the theory content of the curriculum. Further, the interview data and the author's immersive experience in the program, indicated the PSTs also placed importance on small class sizes and the individual attention received in the Crescent Beach College program.

> "We were fortunate to have relatively small classes so we were able to engage with lecturers all the time". (Keith, PST)

This underscored a feeling of being cared for and respected (see PST theme Table 5.1) together with a growing recognition of the opportunities afforded in having more individualised instruction from classroom experienced lecturers to guide a balanced integration of theory with practice.

5.4.3.2 Preservice Teachers' Theme 2 - Preservice Teachers were Immersed in the Specific Language of Teaching and Education.

An outcome of the boundary activity was PSTs making connections between theory and practice. This was mediated by the educational dialogue described in the lecturer's themes above. The PSTs used the education-specific language introduced in lectures in multiple forums across the boundaries of the school and university. Words that PSTs used in their small stories that were associated with this theme were "tools", "language", "practice", "anecdotes" and "pedagogy".

Keith's account of his development involved a consciousness of learning the language of the profession:

> "Well, it's a different, it's a **language** of its own, as in any profession it has their own language but I've felt that we talked about the **language** and the vocabulary around teaching enough in the lectures. And then when that was put into **practice** in the placement that was all relevant and specific to what we were doing". (Keith, PST)

Keith elaborated on how the TTT framework resulted for him on a sense of immersion in professional conversation:

> "What I really loved is that they would give us, because they were **practising** teachers they would often give us **anecdotes** of stories from their own **practice**, you know. We'd be writing copious notes on those sorts of experiences to try and somehow learn from those experiences ourselves". (Keith, PST)

Robyn provides insight into how this language was used to support PSTs on placement and assist them to reflect on specific classroom dynamics:

> "All the teaching experience and they [the lecturers] all had a fair amount which was extremely helpful when they knew exactly what I was **talking about** when I was

experiencing those obvious hardships on placement. They're able to **relate** to me". (Robyn, PST)

The use of specific language conventions of education both in lectures and on professional experience is considered a tool of ITE. From a CHAT perspective Engeström (2008) suggests tools such as language need to be understood and valued by those involved if they are to positively mediate activity. PSTs' small stories illustrated this point when they recounted the attention given to the specialised language conventions of education (tools) in lectures and conversations with the Crescent Beach College staff and provided examples of the language used across school and university systems.

Lucy and Ellie alluded to the many tools required to be affective classroom teacher in the small stories below. They both illustrate that the use of educational language was a feature of boundary activity:

"….so I think we were equipped with the **tools**. So when it came time for the **practical** teaching I could feel pretty confident in what we were doing". (Lucy, PST)

"It very much inspired you to be a world class teacher and it also gave you the **tools** and the necessary procedures to do so". (Ellie, PST)

Not only did PSTs describe having an appropriate level of language to be able to communicate with lecturers it gave them a sense of empowerment to communicate with mentor teachers as colleagues:

"Yes and that was kind of a doorway into it being given those **resources** to open up those conversations and kind of bridge the gap between student and teacher to more like a peer I guess". (Seth, PST)

> "I felt so fantastically empowered by learning the **language** the **pedagogy** of conceptual learning of procedural fluency etc. I found that from knowing that from earlier on as well as the AITSL standards I knew what to expect and I was able to participate in those professional **conversations** because I knew what they were talking about". (Ellie, PST)

5.4.4 Principals' Theme

The principals described boundary activity that achieved a positive balance between theory and practice. Further, PSTs graduating from the Crescent Beach College Program were storied as desirable future employees.

5.4.4.1 Principals' Theme - The Program Constructed a Balance between Theory and Practice

The principals understood that the ITE program was constructed to achieve a balance of theory and practice. Key words related to this theme were, "balance", "gap", "academic", "community" and "deliberate". In this section, small stories from the principals' accounts illustrate this theme.

Ben's account of the success of the TTT model at Crescent Beach College involved achieving a balance between PSTs involvement in the two systems:

> "I think you're trying to address that **gap** between the theory and the practice and clearly we see that you know both are important that this seems to be out there. [In other ITE programs] there seems to be a massive focus on the practice part for a limited point of time and then they're back in the Uni and they're doing all the theory. I think what you guys set up had a really good **balance** where they spend more time in the school and when they went back to uni was really looking at what they were doing in that moment". (Ben, Principal)

Ben positioned the Crescent Beach College program as innovate and different. He accounted for this difference in terms of the deliberate focus on bridging the theory-practice gap:

> "And I think that your whole focus on that the relationships and on wanting to bridge a **gap** between the theory and practice trying to make something different to what's out there. I think it was disappointing to see that disappear'. (Ben, Principal)

The principals recounted examples of deliberateness in the ITE program design. They also storied the program as successful and robust. For Gilberto, human resources (e.g., lecturer visits to schools) from the university mediated the program's success. For Sophia, the program design mediated its success:

> "It's probably hard because there are costs involved but that they [did] get really good practical experience. I think that's critical. And obviously the academic integrity of what you're doing is a really important thing as well". (Gilberto, Principal)

> "But I would assume that by doing the way you did it [connecting theory and practice]. That they would be like this way a lot further down the road than the others [PSTs from other ITE programs]". (Sophia, Principal)

For the principals, effective ITE program design revolved around purposefully connecting theory to practice.

The inductive analysis revealed the principals' perspective of looking to the longer term benefits of the ITE program. Access to a pool of competent graduate teachers was a benefit they identified from their involvement in the Crescent Beach College ITE program. Not only did they explain their interest in graduates from the perspective of their balanced experience but also as graduates with specific understanding of practice within their school. The principals acknowledged rapidly changing school environments and their interest in graduates who could accommodate the changes at their school. In particular, the principals viewed a need for a shift to contemporary understandings of what it is to be a teacher.

In a recent study, Fitzgerald (2021) referred to an important change in educational practice as “breaking down the island mentality”. The contemporary vision departs from working in isolation within classroom walls to actively collaborating with colleagues to improve student outcomes. Future teachers need to be multi-faceted and display the kinds of attributes that are required to nurture knowledge development across the whole school.

The principals perceived the TTT model as preparing graduates for the contemporary classroom:

> “So they [the PSTs] saw the school as an active whole **community**, not just a, not just a teacher in a teaching room”.(Sophia, Principal)

> “But I would expect that they would have got that as part of their training here and that you would have **deliberately** or **intentionally** brought that into the conversation about what it means to be in a school. And as part of your prac training or preparation”. (Gilberto, Principal)

Here, the principals are referencing from a leadership perspective, that graduate teachers should understand that a school operates as a whole community and that the Crescent Beach College program confirms this model.

5.4.5 Mentor Teachers’ Theme

For the mentor teachers an object of the boundary activity was to connect theory to practice. The mentor teachers described the boundary activity as deliberate. The Crescent Beach College lectures were understood by the mentor teachers as a place for PSTs to connect theory into practice. The mentor teachers endeavoured to build on the links made in the lectures through the professional experience placement. In this section, the mentor

teachers' small stories elaborate and substantiate a theme of the perceived wholistic approach.

5.4.6 Mentor Teachers' Theme - The Program Supported Theory into Practice

The mentor teachers understood that the program was attempting to contextualise the theory and practice of teaching. The key words from this theme were, "tools", "skills", "matching", "link", "consistency", "apply" and "practical". The small stories that were grouped under this theme show how the mentor teachers identified a unified and consistent approach between the school and the university. For the mentor teachers, the boundary activity connected theory with practice.

Damien elaborated this theme in the following excerpt from his interview:

> "And I felt affirmed that their program was **matching** classroom practice and like it was very real…But finding that **link** and what it looks like in practice. I knew they were focussing on that at [in the program]. And then the student teacher came in with goals around pedagogy. So it was clear that [this program] was trying to instil in its graduates, you know, in its new teachers, usable **skills** for the classroom". (Damien, Mentor Teacher)

Damien articulated his perception of connecting theory to practice and how this appeared to be prioritised within the program. Michelle in the excerpt below alluded to tools used as mediational means to assist in connecting classroom activity to theory and make sense of the teaching activity:

> "And I did like how **it** [the lecture program] lined up with all the **tools** we were using. That really made sense. And it makes sense for those students when they go out into the teaching world as well it's the same document. So lining up what we do in the classroom with what you're doing at university is this. There seemed to be **links** there". (Michelle, Mentor Teacher)

Mark drew upon his experience in the small story below. He explicitly highlighted the importance of linking theory to practice and how he perceived the Crescent Beach College program achieved this:

> "Yeah so since I've left uni and got into the workforce I have always complained that there's not enough hands on stuff with the way the current university is done. I even usually say that it needs to be more of a [Crescent Beach College type of] course where you need to be equal parts practical and equal parts theory because you can have all the theory in the world but if you don't know how to apply it it's not going to help you". (Mark, Mentor Teacher)

Damien elaborated his perception of the boundary activity. A consistency of effort towards transforming the capacity of the PST characterised the division of labour for him:

> "The student teacher, the preservice teacher, you're able to build them up in that because this wasn't going to be something brand new to him. It's like a continuation. It's like **theory into practice** in the classroom. So what you're talking about over at [your College], he could see happening in the classroom, there was a **consistency** between the trainer and all. Between the theory, the institution and the end of the classroom". (Damien, Mentor Teacher)

Such an integrated approach has been called for in the literature. According to TEMAG (2014, p. v) the "single most important action" to improve teacher education is the integrated delivery of ITE. The mentor teachers interviewed represented diverse education sectors, were experienced primary classroom teachers and had mentored PSTs previously. Their accounts of the Crescent Beach College program highlighted the integration of theory and practice through contextualised discussions and experiences of school life from both lecturers and mentor teachers. There was an acknowledgement by the mentor teachers of the importance educational theory played in the development of a new teacher. For them, the consistency of approach between the institutions accounted for the end result in classroom

competent preservice teachers. The mentor teachers accounted for the program's positive outcomes in terms of linking theory to practice. The mentor teachers accounted for this success in terms of the employment of experienced teachers as lecturers:

> "So you had people [lecturers] who were exemplary educators in school in different areas being sought out for their passion, knowledge, ability to deliver some of those practical things as well as theory". (Damien, Mentor Teacher).

In this excerpt Damien acknowledges the value of selecting experienced teacher educators with "passion, knowledge and ability" to inform theory and practice for PSTs in the Crescent Beach College program.

5.5 The Anonymous Survey Response

There were four responses to the anonymous survey. Two were received from PSTs, one from a lecturer and one from a principal. The two PSTs reported having positive experiences in the program and being disappointed that the program had closed. One PST raised the issue of a negative experience with a mentor teacher generating a discussion on the choice of classroom teachers to mentor PSTs.

The lecturer reported that the program allowed for personal and reflective practice to a collective of thoughts and ideas that were slightly different to what a lecturer would normally be exposed.

The one principal response noted disappointment that the program had closed, citing that the combination of experienced teacher/lecturers involved with PST development allowed for a greater depth of training supported by realistic teaching experiences.

5.6 In Reflection

The participant interviews were held in a one-on-one situation. The researcher was known to the participants. Shared knowledge of the program assisted the flow of the interviews, which unfolded in a conversational manner. The data generated participants' perceptions of the program. Of particular interest in the analysis was the extent to which the ITE program negotiated such factors as partnerships and the connection of theory to practice from the perspectives of the different participant groups. Table 5.1 summarised the participants' themes around partnerships. The analysis elaborated boundary activity as a joint effort to establish and maintain partnerships across a variety of education platforms, involving high levels of communication and "buy in" from school-based participants. Table 5.2 summarised the participants' themes regarding connecting theory and practice. The analysis elaborated boundary activity as a deliberate endeavour to connect theory and practice, the labour of which was divided between the two systems. The object of the activity was mediated by lecturers modelling classroom practice in lectures and immersing PSTs in the specific language of teaching and education. Together these themes reflected a collective endeavour from both systems to equip the PSTs with an appropriate skill set that contextualised theories of education and the reality of the classroom in a meaningful way.

This case study of a TTT model of ITE provision has implications for how relational and transformative partnerships can be generated and sustained and for how partnerships in ITE can be theorised. In the next chapter, the implications of these findings are discussed.

Chapter 6: Discussion

The aim of this chapter is to interpret the research findings and assess their educational importance in light of the literature review undertaken in Chapter 2. The narrative exploration of participants' perspectives on the Crescent Beach College program generated insights on ITE partnerships, which were theorised in this thesis as being supported by boundary activity. Boundary activity was defined in Chapter 3 as activity arising from a shared object across two distinct systems. The analysis provided elaborations of the boundary activity in terms of mediational means, including the material and conceptual resources utilised to achieve a shared object. Evidenced was better alignment between the schools and higher education provider for the delivery of ITE. The implications will be of interest to ITE program designers, education researchers and the participants of ITE programs: the lecturers, mentor teachers, principals and preservice teachers.

Policy developments frame educational practice and are continuously (re)shaping teachers' work across all education system levels. In particular, Initial Teacher Education in Australia and overseas has changed significantly over the past decade due to this shifting policy landscape (Hong, 2020). Participants involved in ITE programs are required to navigate between intricate streams of governance and policy whilst combining theoretical learning and complex working conditions within a classroom environment.

This study analysed boundary activity between two systems. Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) was found to be a useful theoretical framework to address the core questions of what, how and where PSTs were learning in their ITE programs (Douglas, 2012a). It was useful because of its emphasis on settings, social contexts and practices which are the product of cultural history. There are any number of social contexts and practices which have historically been embedded in the ITE process particularly around the PST

professional experience. The author used CHAT to examine how the participants accounted for the Crescent Beach College program with a particular interest in how the social systems affected their decisions and behaviour. Any changes to decision making or behaviour might be considered as “learning” and from a CHAT perspective this “learning” can positively impact on what happens within and between systems thus affecting future development of ITE programs.

In the following sections through the lens of CHAT, the author has theorised how working in a boundary space assisted the Crescent Beach College program to manage partnerships and connect theory to practice, and in doing so, establish a platform for further research as the ITE process is challenged by similar issues in the future.

6.1 Reflections on Methodology

A reflection on the methodology has been included in this discussion chapter as a precursor to Chapter 7 Conclusions and Recommendations, where the author repositions to speak about implications for future administrators and practitioners who may wish to undertake such a program in the future. The methodology chosen was innovative because it was required to accommodate a number of research difficulties. This study illustrated institutional practice within one ITE program over a relatively short period of time necessitating the creation of a retrospective account of program practices in partnership generation and connection of theory to practice. A methodology was necessary that could reveal the sociohistorical culture of Crescent Beach College program and synthesise a narrative of partnership activity between the two systems based on participant recollections. While care needs to be taken in the wider application of this methodology to other ITE situations, case studies of successful partnerships in ITE are essential for understanding how ITE programs can best support preservice teachers’ quality preparation.

A participatory ethnographic inquiry stance was adopted as a school leader-researcher within this study, providing an open exploration of the challenges that confront individuals undertaking this type of research. Yet it provided clear evidence of the benefits of deep learning and informed social action that exist within such endeavours. The study has also further revealed the potential for participatory ethnography research in relation to the exploration of ITE programs while illustrating the high degree of academic rigor that can be applied in qualitative approaches to such work. Of particular significance, the qualitative methodological approach undertaken in this research has assisted in the creation of ontological spaces where education leaders in ITE could articulate their thinking, challenge each other's understandings and promote ongoing learning. There is clearly potential for further research to be conducted in schools that explore the effectiveness and use of alternative models of university and school partnership development.

In this study, as in other qualitative studies, data are frequently collected in an interview situation, and the data are often people's experiences as expressed in narrative forms. The narratives are affected by the historical, social and cultural contexts that influence the way we can write, think and talk about social objects. Foucault, (1993, as cited in Alex & Hammarstrom, 2008) identified that we are related to various discourses and that dominant discourses lead us to move, speak and think about ourselves in specific ways. Discourses can be described as power-related structures of how we understand reality.

For future researchers in this field, the importance of being sensitive and flexible during interviews should be emphasised and with an understanding that the narratives given to a researcher are influenced by the interview situation (Sandelowski, 1991). The interviewer must understand that the narration shifts depending on the available power positions during the interview and how discourses such as age, education, gender, class and

ethnicity influence what is narrated and how the narratives are interpreted (Davies & Harré, 1990). Alex and Hammarstrom (2008) suggest that this "pattern of behaviour ought to be striven for not just by interviewers but by everyone to raise our awareness of how conversations are affected by such discourses". This was relevant particularly in relation to the long history of ITE provision cementing certain ways of thinking and relating.

Given that the author was the primary instrument of data collection and analysis it was imperative to understand implications of these discourses and especially how as an insider researcher reflexivity may be impacted by them. The author was aware that every person had many perspectives on the same event, and that what was narrated depended on the context, the listener and the intentions. Deliberately and/or unconsciously reacting to respondents' actions determined the data that could be generated, which voices would be heard in the research account, and what happened after the study.

Crucial to understanding this concept of reflexivity is the way a researcher's self, or identity in a situation, intertwines with his or her understanding of the object of the investigation. In a well-designed reflexivity process the researcher is expected to reflect on how they came to know what they know. Constas (1992) points out that "although the general qualities associated with analysis are often alluded to, the specific procedures used to organise and interpret data are not always discussed" (p. 254). As the insider researcher there are several points to note in how data were gathered and interpreted. While the semi-structured interviews used to elicit information on participants' perceptions, attitudes and meanings associated with the Crescent Beach College program mapped the main research questions, the language used and the important ideas that were threaded through this thesis were also informed by the author's immersive experience. Menter et al. (2011) argue that it is helpful if the interviewer has a good knowledge of the topics being covered as this will

help him or her to know when to probe further when salient issues emerge during the discussion. In collecting and analysing the data, a critical perspective was applied by the author; always probing further to ask what the participant meant by what he or she said, whether they appeared to be confident in what they were saying or were having difficulty in answering the question asked of them. Age, gender and course type were also noted with a consciousness to "raise [an] awareness of how conversations are affected by discourses such as age, education, class, gender, ethnicity and ideology" (Alex & Hammarstrom, 2008).

Prior to and throughout the interviews the author took steps to clarify that no power relationships were in play as this could lead to disingenuous responses from the person being interviewed. It was also clearly established that the research interest was centred on participant perceptions of the Crescent Beach College program and the manner in which it created partnerships.

The method of data collection and the parameters in which it was collected directed the author in the way knowledge of this ITE program was to be constructed. As a qualitative researcher it was important to emphasise that the researcher and the participant collaborated in the construction of knowledge (Christians, 2005) which subsequently supported a participatory ethnographic methodology. Being both a researcher and participant in the Crescent Beach College program, this methodology also allowed the author to investigate the partnership activity aimed to connect theory to practice as an insider. Through the interview process and utilising a CHAT theoretical framework, this methodology provided valuable insights into the social constructions and cultural understandings of the participants.

There were, however, some aspects of an ethnographic methodology that the design could not accommodate. From Table 4.1 (Chapter 4 Methodology) this design was not able

to employ field work to describe social practice concerned with the study and representation of culture nor did it use persistent observation and use of field notes to enable the immersion of the researcher in the world of the participants, rather it utilised the authors' retrospective recollections of time "in the field".

On the other hand, the methodology chosen maximised the use of participant interviews to immerse the researcher in the world of the participants and form a narrative of the Crescent Beach College program. Britzman (2003) concurs that this type of methodology is an appropriate choice as it was both a process and product; it provided methods for how to go about narrating the culture of the ITE program with social strategies that supported the creation of text. These ethnographic texts told stories that invariably embodied qualities of a narrative of how the actors lived the experience.

The use of ethnography also took the reader into the actual world to reveal the cultural knowledge working in a particular place and time as lived through the subjectivities of its inhabitants (Britzman, 2003). Having gained access to this cultural knowledge, readers could then be persuaded that they could imaginatively step in this world and act as a native or at the very least, understand the imperatives of behaviours, values, rituals, and beliefs of the actors. According to Britzman (2003), there is a belief and expectation that the ethnographer is capable of producing truth from the experiences of being there and the reader is receptive to the truth of the text. In this case, the reader learns to expect cultural insights about partnerships in the Crescent Beach College program.

Britzman (2003) also suggests mainstream and modernistic versions of ethnography depend on the rationality and stability of the writer and readers, and upon non contradictory subjects who say what they mean and mean what they do. In this case, the author was in a position as a former participant of the program and with knowledge of its operation, to filter

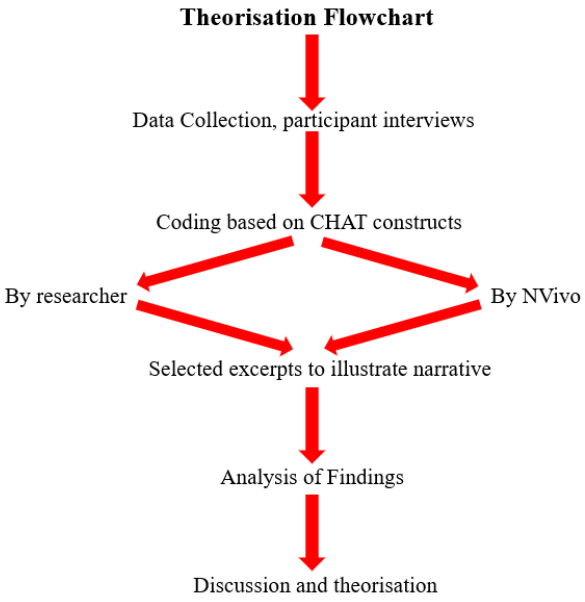
participant responses for accuracy and reliability. In considering the interviews, the author had no reason to suspect that the responses were anything but trustworthy perceptions of their involvement in the program. Thus, the participatory ethnographic methodology of this study opened a door that allowed outsiders to become vicarious insiders into the culture and activity of the Crescent Beach College program.

6.2 The Theorisation Process

Figure 6.1 below summarises the research process undertaken in this study. In the following sections major findings will be theorised and elaborated.

Figure 6.1:

The flowchart of the research process from data collection to theorisation.



6.2.1 Theorising on Activity in the Boundary Space

A key research question centred around exploring boundary activity generated by the employment of a Teachers Teaching Teachers (TTT) model. The literature review developed the concept of activity in boundary space as being influential in the development

of partnerships (Grudnoff et al., 2017). The use of a CHAT framework was instrumental in analysing boundary activity because it offered a framework for examining the intersection of two systems in terms of the mediational means supporting a shared endeavour.

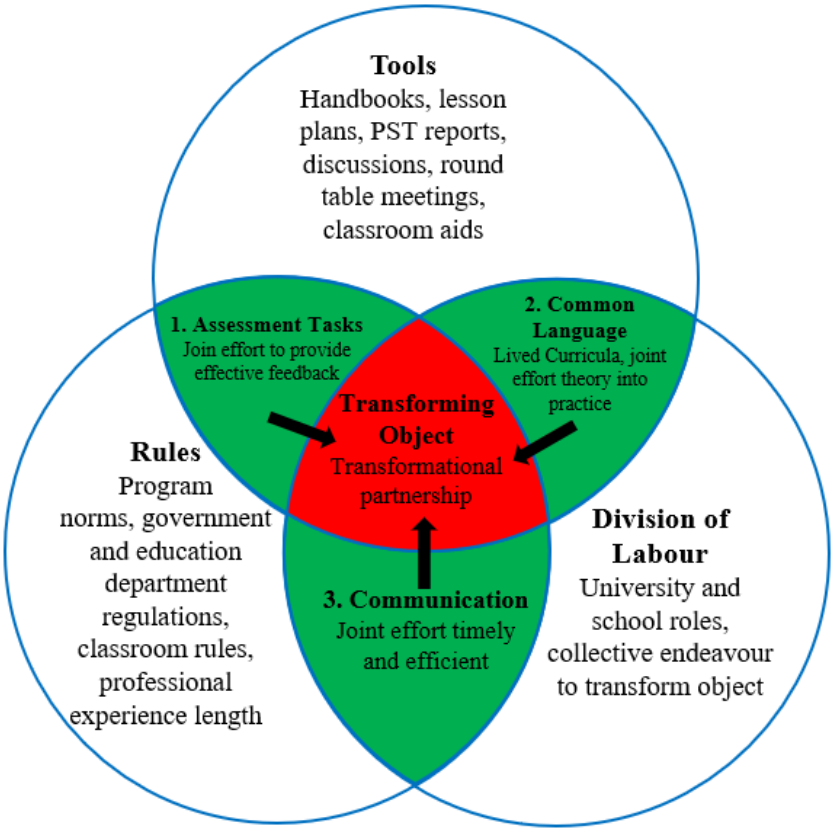
The elaboration of the boundary activity has significant ramifications for those involved in future ITE practice. Boundary activity has been shown to be a significant indicator of transformation of work practices that promote partnerships in ITE. The case study provided in this thesis adds insight to claims in the literature that enabling structures for successful partnerships are stimulated in a boundary space between the two systems (Kruger et al., 2009). While some mentor teachers in the past may have initially viewed teacher educators/lecturers as "remote consultants with little understanding of the contextual experiences of school life", Bissaker (2014) found that what ameliorated this tension, was when the preoccupation with "who's doing what" shifted to a focus on learning together. This shift went from academics being cast as the theoretical experts, and teachers as the contextual experts, to a recognition of mutuality, therefore bridging theory and practice through relationships that focused less on roles, and more on learning. It is the creation of a boundary space or shared zone that has been shown to moderate hierarchical struggles and allowed for joint effort to maximise the object of the activity.

Applying Engeström's third generation CHAT theory framework generated information that suggested there was a coalescing of the two systems around the "activity" (i.e., the connection of theory to practice) of ITE in boundary space. Positive outcomes were achieved in this space as the data revealed how the actors concretised their efforts for a joint objective through discussions and actions. Data collected from the participant interviews established a narrative of how mediational means such as tools, rules and division of labour assisted the participants to situate themselves in the others' system at key times. Such

boundary activity created conditions to support a collective endeavour and flow of ideas across the two sites to overcome obstacles and with the intention of expanding the object. Figure 6.2 is a representation of activity which occurred in the overlapping boundary space of Engeström's third generation model (red zone Figure 3.2). It is a theorisation depicting how the actors viewed the ITE activity, how it was mediated by the CHAT constructs of tools, rules and division of labour and developed partnerships aimed to expand or transform the object.

Figure 6.2:

Activity in the boundary space of the Crescent Beach College ITE program.



In simple terms, the author is theorising that the Crescent Beach College program did not treat the practical skills and theory of teaching as distinctly two separate systems but there were joint efforts to expand the object. The narrative described the facilitation of staff movement across and between both systems as the TTT model by design, was able to

accommodate working across boundaries. From the actor's perspective, the design of the TTT model encouraged work to occur at key times in shared boundary spaces. Sometimes this work occurred in the physical spaces of the school and university, other times through discussion and feedback using additional forms of media which facilitated conceptual understandings from both systems about their role and that of others. Figure 6.2 illustrates how the Crescent Beach College program's initiative utilised boundary activity to develop partnerships. The three shaded green areas identify where boundary spaces were created and the resultant activity which occurred in those spaces as reported by the actors. The red area (Figure 6.2, Transforming Object) signifies how this boundary sharing ultimately served to support a transformation of the object of the activity, that is, the production of a quality graduate teacher. The establishment of transformational type partnerships (Hobbs et al., 2018) can be understood as the vehicle to sustain this expansion. While more detailed information is provided in the following sections, a brief summary of the key points pertaining to boundary activity in the green boundary spaces is listed below.

Assessment Tasks (green area 1): The use of ITE tools and rules as mediational means created a space for joint effort in providing detailed and effective feedback during PST professional experience.

Common Language (green area 2): The use of ITE tools and a blurring of the division of labour as mediational means provided a space for PSTs to develop a useful common language of education and contextualise theory into practice.

Communication (green area 3): An understanding of program norms and objectives (ITE rules) coupled with a sharing of the division of labour as mediational means provided a space for clear and effective communication between the systems.

The following section provides specific examples in support of theorisations for each of the green areas depicted and potential implications for future ITE development. Will (lecturer) illustrated activity in the boundary space which occurred in green area 1 (Figure 6.2, Assessment Tasks) where detailed and effective feedback featuring lecturer, mentor teacher and school leadership were described. Feedback was received not only from the mentor teacher but also from school leadership who spoke to him about PST progress and what they saw as being strengths and weaknesses of the Crescent Beach College program. Will's observation is not just an acknowledgement that useful conversations transpired in managing the PST placement but that *actions* occurred between the systems to mediate the theory of activity in boundary spaces.

Interviews with the school principals revealed relationships with other ITE providers to be quite distant but in this case school leadership combined with lecturer and mentor teacher to provide effective PST feedback beyond the use of set university assessment tools. These are important considerations for staff involved in ITE as they suggest that there was an acceptance of responsibility for the program from the school's part with the mentor teacher and principal/leadership actively combining with the lecturer to share ownership and build the object of the program. Further evidence of school leaderships' movement into other boundary spaces was provided by the principals in recounting how they had been involved at a deeper level with this ITE program compared to others. Significantly, attendance at some of the Crescent Beach College program ceremonial events and the invitation to present relevant information direct to PSTs as a guest lecturer involved the principals in activity in a boundary space. Involvement at this level enabled principals to provide feedback as they were able to draw upon a common language of education between systems with these actions being recalled as stimulus to forge transformation of the object and partnership development.

Gilberto, (principal) recalled that the personal association of "being part of the study or the learning program" created "a very professional relationship".

As depicted in green area 2 (Figure 6.2, Common Language), activity was mediated by the tools and division of labour. This occurred in a boundary space underpinned by a joint effort to equip the PSTs with an appropriate skill set that contextualised theories of education with the reality of classroom teaching in a balanced and meaningful way. While there was a set written university curriculum in place, working in the boundary space allowed the lecturers to adapt and work with the tools of ITE to bring added meaning and clarity to the objective in their lectures. Lecturers expanded on their knowledge and expertise of classroom teaching experience and shared their previous educational experiences with the PSTs, mentor teachers and principals in relevant educational language.

The TTT model was suitably flexible to allow for a variety of delivery styles, room configuration and props to engage the PSTs in realistic and collaborative classroom learning experiences. Mentor teachers used classroom opportunities to expand on lecture content and contextualise theory into practice. These actions were a catalyst in generating a "living curriculum" at Crescent Beach College which can be defined as not just the information or written content of a program, but rather as the programs' learning experience (Marshall & Wilson, 2012). By providing a living curriculum, Crescent Beach College allowed for learning experiences from both systems which emphasised the links and application of theory/knowledge and work experience/practice. In this boundary space, knowledge was both applied in practice and drawn from practice. In the process of developing this living curriculum the actors noted conversations occurred about enquiry, knowledge, practice, learning and teaching approaches which focused on engagement between and among learners, teachers, communities, scholars, texts and with self. The structure of the TTT

framework was suitably adaptable to enable a living curriculum to support the written curriculum with experiences that crossed discipline and system boundaries. By developing this living curriculum, the Crescent Beach College program was able to counter the argument both locally and globally that ITE is not effectively preparing teachers for the reality of teaching (Rowan et al., 2015).

The research literature suggests that a disconnection to the reality of classroom practice in ITE can be rectified best through strengthening of partnerships (Allen et al., 2013; TEMAG, 2014). This thesis shows that the Crescent Beach College program effectively used collaborative opportunities in boundary spaces to leverage stronger partnerships through its living curriculum. Nathaniel (lecturer) voiced how this narrative evolved in his lectures where he felt obliged to impart some knowledge to the PSTs, based on his practical experience as much as his knowledge of education and theory and the latest change in those sorts of things.

Boundary activity supported by the TTT model provided for lecturers to empower the PST with a range of physical, contextual and theoretical skills. The mentor teachers acknowledged a blurring of traditional division of labour in the process. In Green area 3 (Figure 6.2, Communication) Madison's (mentor teacher) insight reinforces how activity in the boundary space was mediated by program information, norms and rules. The mentor teachers' small stories included historical accounts of their engagement in and support of PST professional experience placements. For the mentor teachers, sufficient prior notification, important program details and specific requirements in order to coordinate the best possible experience for the PST are not often forthcoming. Madison suggested that the Crescent Beach College program was different to other universities in the organisation and timing of placements. In this case, information was communicated and "plenty of notice was

given" (Madison, mentor teacher) which allowed for the mentor teacher to be fully informed prior to placement and encouraged a joint effort between the two systems. Alternatively, Madison noted involvement with other institutions as being less communicative with added pressure for the mentor teacher: "We've had the students [PSTs] approach us and they approach it with like a month's notice. And it's really tricky to fit them in".

Boundary activity supported understanding from staff of both systems regarding time constraints, staff availability and legal program requirements. Roundtable discussions brought mentor teachers, lecturers and PSTs together and assisted in meeting required assessment tasks and generating further discussions of the program objectives. The organisation of the program was storied as important also from the PSTs' perspective. PSTs small stories validated themes of shared labour and a combined effort to establish partnerships, effective and consistent communication between systems and staff input being welcomed across systems. Boundary activity in the Crescent Beach College program had important ramifications for the lecturers as they were noted by other classroom teachers "to be showing an unexpected level of involvement in the learning of their PSTs", compared to other ITE programs and they were "quite surprised" because they hadn't seen it before". (Michelle, PST).

Previous theorisation of ITE partnerships using CHAT has been from the perspectives of school and university staff as subjects of activity. This study contributes the perspectives of PSTs, whose self-reported development reinforced the importance of operating in a theoretical boundary space providing opportunities for discourse and feedback from both systems. PSTs accounted for their development in terms of a shared investment between systems. Boundary activity offered a supportive environment for PSTs to undertake their professional experience.

The research literature suggested that true boundary crossers face tensions and contradictions in the overlaps that challenge the institutional boundaries of the systems and can act as a catalyst for a transformative process of change (Tsui & Law, 2007). The manner in which the Crescent Beach College program dealt with contradictions is further developed later in this chapter. However, it should be noted that more data regarding the impact of tensions and contradictions in boundary space is needed over time to theorise conclusively in this area.

6.2.2 Elaborating Boundary Activity

The Crescent Beach College program sought and valued partnership development. The TTT model was employed to address the concern that ITE was not effectively preparing teachers for the reality of teaching. Many had suggested that this disconnection could be rectified best through strengthening of partnerships (Allen et al., 2013; TEMAG, 2014). Similarly, the Victorian government's Education and Training Committee Step Up, Step in, Step out (Parliament, 2005) noted the value of strong school university partnerships underpinning high quality ITE with recommendations such as: "Developing partnerships with schools and other appropriate education and training organisations for more effective, flexible delivery of appropriate course components" (p. xxi).

Known characteristics of successful ITE partnerships include having an integrated approach and enabling professional conversations, practices and collegial interaction that lead to learning for all participants. Successful ITE partnerships in Australia were reviewed in Chapter 2. The study reported in this thesis corroborates features of these transformative partnerships. In the Alliance partnerships, a Site Director effectively became a boundary crosser between the schools and the university to ensure PSTs' professional experience placements were well coordinated and contributed to nominated school improvement

initiatives. Boundary crossing was reflected in the Crescent Beach College program. Like the Bachelor of Learning Management program (Allen et al., 2010), the Crescent Beach College program utilised the expertise of teacher practitioners who were employed as lecturers. The Teach for Australia model utilised on-the-job training, significantly increasing the role of school personnel in ITE, blurring the traditional university-school boundaries. Similarly, a feature of the Crescent Beach College program was the "buy in" of school personnel, who became invested in what the PSTs were learning in lectures to support its application during professional experience placement. These **transformative** partnership practices (Hobbs et al., 2018) (see also Chapter 2) elaborate instances of boundary crossing, where traditional boundaries and systemic divisions of labour are blurred. The importance of supporting boundary crossing in ITE partnerships has been confirmed in this thesis and this has direct implications for future ITE leaders. Boundary activity can create and sustain partnerships.

The importance of communication between a school and the university is known to significantly affect the quality and type of partnership (Allen et al., 2010). All participant groups in this study recounted small stories that evoked a sense of **joint responsibility** and commitment to establishing **relational partnerships** for ITE provision. "Buy in" was apparent. There were back-and-forth discussions between the systems to expand the shared object. Boundary activity has been elaborated as a collective endeavour.

The CHAT framework also revealed timely and effective communication between systems acted as mediational means and brought a level of understanding and alignment of the shared processes and tools. According to Engeström (2008) these conditions create enabling structures. In partnership development at Crescent Beach College a certain reciprocity and appreciation of the others' daily operations and organisational structures was

a key factor. In planning and administering the professional placement of PSTs, consideration needs to be made of the busyness of daily interaction for mentor staff with their own students and the inherent historic contradiction that ITE is not their main educational activity. Mentor teachers in this study noted a professional willingness and goodwill to support professional experience placements however they required sufficient time and notice for preparation, that was satisfied in the Crescent Beach College case.

Lecturers too, referenced reciprocity in partnership generation. The grounding of their lecture content to the reality of classroom teaching was assisted by the boundary activity, such as observations and discussions with school staff during visits to schools. James (Lecturer) echoed the narrative that he was made very welcome by both the organiser of the school placement program and the mentor teacher and stated, “the relationship was very much a collegial one in which they were supportive of what we were doing and they were supportive of the students that we placed in those schools”. In **transformative** partnerships, partners take joint responsibility for mutually agreed practices and outcomes that are embedded in their respective system core outcomes (Hobbs et al., 2018).

This study shows the importance of principals in boundary activity. As shown in Chapter 2, the principal or school leader is a key determinant in the success or otherwise of school university partnerships. The author is theorising that early and effective communication allowed the principals time to construct a deeper understanding of critical aspects of the Crescent Beach College program delivery. When asked about the kind of relationship principals had with this university, they told of operating in a boundary space which was different to most other universities. Invitations to share in the initial program development through guest lecturing appearances and ceremonial events created conversations, expanding knowledge of the process and assisted in fostering successful and

relational partnerships. The data strongly suggests that principals grasped opportunities to embed partnership implications for their staff with a firm understanding that selection of appropriate mentor teaching personnel was a priority and the provision of physical and non-physical resources was essential (e.g., time allocation for roundtable discussions on PST progress). Principals spoke to an obligation for the schools to act in support of what the PSTs were learning in lectures. Ben (principal) having been invited to contribute his expertise to the program as a guest lecturer understood that "there were specific things that they [the lecturers] were focussing on" …. "you've [the school] have got to fit that in" and in doing so he reiterated the "buy in" principle that mediated boundary activity. Principal Sophia also leant weight to this conclusion by noting that mentor teachers "mirrored" significant aspects of the lecturing content in their contact with the Crescent Beach College program.

While data generated in this thesis has assisted in theorising partnerships between the school and university, an adjacent theme which emerged was that PSTs considered the Crescent Beach College program assisted in developing individual positive relationships with the lecturers and their fellow PSTs. Allen et al. (2010) reported that feelings of self-doubt and isolation may be evident in PSTs especially if they were on an extended or remote professional experience placement and/or they had lost meaningful contact with their university lecturers.

However, this was not the case as reported by the PSTs at Crescent Beach College. The evidence strongly suggests that the creation of partnerships between the school and the university, supported in boundary spaces, was particularly helpful in building a sense of purpose and connection for PSTs. Keith (PST) noted how the TTT model was able to accommodate lecturers in a shared space of theory and practice and thus positively impact

his participation in the program. Keith maintained that “this was a better opportunity to be taught by teachers who were practising teachers themselves”.

The TTT model was also noted by the other PSTs in the way it supported the establishment of cohesive relationships within the student group. Participants’ accounts referenced the close nature of the group and their appreciation of the positive connection with their lecturers and how this was influential in establishing a focus to learn and grow as teachers. Belle (PST) voiced that the lecturers were a really key aspect to the program because they were so approachable and “just having that relationship, you wanted your lecturers to be impressed by what you were doing” and “to make assignments that would make them think that I'd be a worthy teacher”. Other PSTs confirmed these conclusions with Keith (PST) stating that relationships were built both with his fellow students and lecturers. Ellie (PST) confirmed that “The lecturers weren't distant. They were very personable and they genuinely cared about the community of the students. We all got to know each other really well as young professionals as well as on a personal level”. “I think that personal connection was really important to me. I really looked forward to it and I really cherished it” (Lilly, PST). These professional relationships ensured that PSTs were comfortable with lecturers’ presence in the classroom, that is, lecturer’s boundary crossing, promoting their development.

Institutional practices of the Crescent Beach College program have been drawn together in this section to provide a theorised account of how they supported the creation of partnerships. Kruger et al. (2009) suggest in moving the debate regarding the value of partnerships forward, effort is needed to move beyond research and piloted studies into concerted and systematic action. Other researchers also point out that the development of partnerships must be maintained over a period of time, so that the relationship between school and university personnel can encompass change and create enhanced understanding

of different viewpoints (Allen et al., 2010; Rossner & Commins, 2012). Accounts of ITE practice in one institution over a period of 18 months have been provided to elaborate boundary activity that can stimulate authentic, effective and sustainable partnerships where the stakeholders come together around personalised and localised interests in learning with a transformative effect on the PSTs. Although this research points to the boundary activity supporting transformational partnerships, further investigation would be needed to theorise partnerships more conclusively in the TTT model. Importantly, the conclusions drawn should be viewed as developmental work to promote future discussion on partnership creation for ITE.

6.2.3 Reflecting on Tools

The CHAT theoretical framework is based on Vygotsky's (1978) thesis that human consciousness is mediated by cultural tools, concepts and artefacts. Participants' small stories accounted for the tools of ITE not as a compulsory list of rules and requirements that should be obeyed by those operating in their respective systems but as mediators of discussion and activity to support PSTs. While certain tools were specific to each activity system in the way people learned and communicated, there were some tools shared between the systems. These shared tools were integral to the boundary activity and used to connect theory to practice for the PST.

The mentor teachers reported early and effective communication of the required tools of the program. Physical tools created in the university space such as PST assessment checklists linked to government teaching standards, were provided to mentor teachers. This mediated roundtable discussions on PST progress. Madison (mentor teacher) acknowledged that the assessment checklist brought about a change to her thought processes and was likely to have a positive impact on future PSTs in the way it further enhanced understanding of

their individual learning needs. This is a clear indication that boundary activity provided opportunities for the mentor teacher to learn and understand how to use this tool and how it may benefit the object of the activity. Madison (mentor teacher) explained: "[This is] the first group, that's done that. And it's such a simple thing".

Participants' accounts indicated their perception that sufficient time and explanation was given to the use of the physical tools of teaching and that they found these tools relevant to the contextual situation. They were used as a mediational means to encourage participation from staff of both systems and were a crucial means of fostering positive partnerships. The tools also provided collaborative learning opportunities for staff of both systems where lecturers were able to discuss with mentor teachers the use of specific lesson plans and the use of ITE feedback tools such as lesson observation forms. PST lesson planning and activities were generally considered in relation to a preferred university lesson plan but were flexible enough to explore individual design.

The implications for those considering ITE renewal is that boundary activity focussed on PST development employed tools from both systems. PSTs employed tools and resources that were demonstrated in lectures in school classrooms on professional experience. These experiences were meaningful for the mentor teachers and provided a basis for discussion and opportunities for the PST to direct their own learning. The mentor teachers perceived tools used in lectures as aligning with many of the tools they were using in schools. To Madison (mentor teacher) this was important because: "it made sense for those students [PSTs] when they go out into the teaching world as well" and it aligned with what she was doing in the classroom "with what you're [the lecturers] were doing [at the] university". Similarly, some tools which were context related to the classroom also mediated activity in lectures. Madison noted further that PSTs: "had to have all their notes organised

and ready to go". Madison voiced an understanding that these notes would form the basis of "clear conversations" in the lecture situation at Crescent Beach College.

This concept of "clear conversations" of PST activity on professional placement has led the author to theorise that use of shared language regimes, aided by specific educational terminology was a tool used in the Crescent Beach College program that mediated boundary activity. Tools such as the knowledge and use of the specific language of education in appropriate contexts and the application and use of classroom resources were effectively utilised by lecturers to create a "living curriculum" in which the theory and practice of teaching were made explicit. Utilising tools such as this allowed the mentor teacher and lecturer to come together to assist PSTs to make connections with theory and practice in a more timely manner. This concurs with the research of Douglas (2012a), who suggests that PSTs benefit when working with school and university staff who use tools to open up their thinking about teaching and learning and their ability to discuss matters of pedagogy. This has a transformative effect on PSTs as these tools stimulate questions and open debates assisting PSTs to interpret teaching contexts and develop an understanding of their complexity (Douglas, 2012a).

The evidence strongly suggests that there was a transformative effect on the PSTs at Crescent Beach College, through immersion in the specific tool of the language of education: "I think from the start at [this university] they would use a specific vocab. That was like teacher specific to what we would need to get used to" (Marlee, PST). These reflections from the PSTs evidence how language mediated valuable thinking and discussion to further define their role. Mitch (PST) voiced that when entering a staffroom on professional placement he felt like he knew what was going on: "I feel like I can hold myself legitimately and know what's being talked about and I can talk about it intelligently" which he credits as

“having learnt most of that through the teachers institute [university]”. Likewise from Ellie (PST): “I felt so fantastically empowered by learning the language, the pedagogy of conceptual learning of procedural fluency etc. I was able to participate in those professional conversations because I knew what they were talking about”.

Tools influenced the connection of theory to practice in the TTT model. Evidence from lecturers and PSTs reinforced the findings that physical tools and resources of practice were used to model and underpin the teaching strategy and content of this program. The author is theorising that these tools substantially aided the connection of theory to practice for the PSTs especially when on professional experience placement. Mitch (PST) noted with respect to lectures: “Not only would we learn the theory of the mathematics but then we would get out the materials and manipulate them as if we were students”. The evidence strongly suggests that these tools are supporting activity in boundary spaces with PSTs exposed to real classroom scenarios but within the university lecture system. The use of tools in this way were mediating means to facilitate PST learning from the point of view of the classroom student and the teacher. Mitch summarised that through the use of these tools, he gained experience with “what students will do, what they won't do and what problems they'll encounter”.

The lecturers’ narrative also verified attempts to use tools of education to bring PSTs into activity within a boundary space. Will (lecturer) deliberately utilised physical tools (curriculum specific) to enable conversation and discussion in lectures to motivate PSTs in class: “I would bring in hands-on material and talk to students (PSTs) about needing the hook at the start of the lesson”. Will explained that he would initially engage the PSTs in a discussion about the specific material, why it was in the room and what it might be leading to during the lecture. The data strongly suggests that lecturers also utilised tools to grow and expand the PST’s repertoire of teaching skills, modelling for PSTs what they thought were

effective methods to capture students' attention at the commencement of a lesson. Felicity (lecturer) also utilised physical tools in lectures with a particular emphasis on how to manage their use when in the hands of students: "I bought in paints, paper, you know so that they had physical things, materials and products so that they could work out how to use them, what happens when we have weapons of mass destruction [humour] like boom whackers or ukuleles" (Felicity, lecturer).

The use of classroom ready tools and resources in lecturers assisted the mentor teacher in building a platform to connect theory with practice with the PSTs. Furthermore, they also referenced how the physical tools of assessment together with a coordinated collective endeavour mediated boundary activity. From the mentor teachers' perspective constructive lecturer visits in the classroom supported roundtable discussions of PST progress. This generated a familiarity and willingness of mentor teachers to use the tools to complete the tasks. Madison (mentor teacher) spoke about the familiarity and logic of the assessment document based on AITSL standards: "so it was great to be able to just use the same document with the student teachers" [PSTs].

Other non-physical tools of classroom practice and current learning designs were also explicitly shared across the two systems. David (lecturer) explained that his experience as a former principal and classroom teacher mediated boundary activity from him. He deliberately mirrored pedagogical rationale and classroom experiences in his lectures as a way to embed discussion and expand the capacity of PSTs. David (lecturer): "We had different seating arrangements. We just didn't come up and have the lecture up front. We had students face each other because that's what was happening in schools".

The participating principals were conscious that the tools of ITE need to adapt to and mediate the changing landscape of teaching just as ITE needs to span both systems so that

graduate teachers can adapt to change. Sophia (principal) referenced this changed context of teaching and encouraged boundary activity with updated tools to accommodate changes: “Children have. I mean, culture has changed rapidly and students change. And we need to continue to understand how they think and how they respond to things” (Sophia, principal).

In summary, when time and effort was made to create and/or use tools with a shared understanding between systems, the clearer and more focused became the object of the activity and the partnerships to sustain it.

6.2.4 Reflecting on the Division of Labour

The Crescent Beach College program was mediated by a division of labour shared between the university and school systems. According to Engeström (2008), teams run into difficulties and find their limits when faced with objectives and structures that require constant updating and revamping. This is especially true when the activity generates rules regarding the division of labour between systems. As noted by Hasan and Kazlauskas (2014) those engaged in an activity, can knowingly or otherwise incorporate various motives into their actions. According to Engeström’s (2008) model, combined professional effort across two systems should focus on achieving a shared object, in this case, a quality teacher graduate. In the Crescent Beach College program, the author analysed how the division of labour was managed between the two systems and how this may have affected partnership development and a connection of theory to practice.

Themes from the analysis of the participants accounts revealed the collaborative nature of boundary activity designed for PST development. This has led the author to theorise that in the Crescent Beach College program there was a blurring of traditional division of labour. From the narrative, the actors perceived that there did not appear to be two distinct and separate systems at work, rather, there was evidence of a “buy in” to each

other's roles which subsequently supported boundary activity to connect theory to practice. Participants' showed respect for each system's contribution, which created a platform of reciprocity. An important indicator of this mutual effort was the way mentor teachers appreciated being apprised of what the PSTs were studying in lectures with timely and effective communication from university staff. The early notification and extended professional discussions on the programs' content, aims and delivery which occurred between mentor teachers and lecturers were also noted as enabling factors to understand each other's perception of the program and promoted a shared division of labour between the two systems.

Mentor teachers valued the lecturers' experience and knowledge of classroom practices and the ease with which they interacted with classroom students in boundary activity. In addition, the mentor teachers acknowledged the lecturers' availability to answer queries and discuss PST progress, particularly given the time constraints of a regular school day. A unified and consistent approach between the school and the university was perceived by the mentor teachers for the benefit of the PST, who developed competence in classroom teaching. This unified approach was reflected in the PST narrative with Ellie (PST), referencing the multi-voiced nature of feedback received whilst on placement. She spoke to the joint effort from both mentor teacher and lecturer to empower her as a teacher as being indicative of a shared division of labour.

Sharing the labour of ITE between a university and school creates the conditions for mutual respect, reciprocity and partnership development. Dan (mentor teacher) succinctly summarised by noting he was working with university staff: "who were exemplary educators in schools in different areas, being sought out for their passion, knowledge, ability to deliver some of those practical things as well as theory". Madison (mentor teacher) acknowledged

how she worked with university staff in boundary spaces as there was: “an opportunity for us to sit down formally [with university staff] and say, right. These are our goals”.

Lecturer involvement in the professional experience placement also created other opportunities for sharing the labour of ITE. Having firsthand knowledge of what the PSTs were experiencing at the school level enabled their experiences to be brought into their lectures. The lecturers drew upon the shared experiences of the professional experience placement as well as their biographical knowledge of classroom and teaching practices.

Sharing labour was not only confined to the school space but participants provided accounts of it also occurring within the university space. Dan (mentor teacher) and Ben (principal) contributed to boundary activity in the university space. Dan (mentor teacher) referenced being asked to share some of the innovation that he was trying to make happen at his school with PSTs in lectures: “And so that was good because I knew where they were coming from. And I felt affirmed that their program was matching classroom practice and like it was very real” (Dan, mentor teacher). Ben (principal) having been invited to make various onsite contributions in the university space, was in a position to see how this collective endeavour could grow and transform the PST. He noted that: “it was that sense of community [and it] was very strong and I did feel that we had a positive contribution to make and a positive engagement with your college”.

6.2.5 Reflecting on the Teachers Teaching Teachers Model

The employment of lecturing staff with specialised expertise and institutional knowledge in both university and school systems was a feature of the TTT model. The premise of the TTT model was that lecturers with an established classroom teaching background could draw on their previous experiences and higher education studies to create meaningful discourse between systems to transform the growth of the PST as a graduate

teacher. The data strongly suggests that the TTT model facilitated lecturers to utilise their background knowledge and experiences together with latest research to establish partnerships which enhanced the PSTs understanding of effective pedagogical practices and better connect theory with practice.

This aligns with the research of Zeichner et al. (2015), that suggested that a fundamental shift has been required in whose expertise counts in the education of new teachers and in the work of college and university teacher educators. Zeichner et al. (2015) indicated that it is no longer enough to have university academics alone framing the discourse and inviting school-based educators and people from the broader community to "participate" in a university owned ITE program (p. 10), that is, an integrated approach is required. The author is theorising that the TTT model endorsed the TEMAG (2014) recommendations in that ITE is more effectively delivered through an integrated approach. The data describes opportunities for involvement in the Crescent Beach College program across systems which assisted in establishing partnerships with a shared collective endeavour to transform the PST.

Having clear lines of communication between partners was also a consistent theme required to create successful partnerships. It was expressed in the narrative of small stories from the participants and one which was echoed in Chapter 2 Literature review. However, according to Halasz (2016) communication between the world of schools and that of universities has never been simple and straightforward. Further, Halasz (2016) noted it is reasonable that many university-based educators and mentor teachers may feel uncomfortable moving beyond their traditional domains of practice and into a collaborative mode – particularly in the professional experience space that is sometimes messy and contradictory. The evidence strongly suggests that the TTT model accommodated goal-

aligned partnerships, as well as operational processes and procedures for professional experience. According to Sutherland et al. (2005) if these operation processes are in place, they assist in developing genuine commitment from both organisations with buy-in by all concerned, not only the top level. The author is theorising that the TTT model established clear lines of communication which was an essential element to establishing a "buy in" principle to achieve shared goals in the Crescent Beach College program.

Adequate resourcing of ITE programs has been noted as an important constituent of successful ITE programs (Kruger et al., 2009). The data strongly suggests that the TTT model was sufficiently resourced and flexible enough to accommodate a number of historic professional experience placement tensions and contradictions. Timing, length of placement, quality of mentor teacher and assessment procedures were noted in Chapter 2 Literature Review for their potential to generate barriers to effective communication and PST development. The author is theorising that new activity was generated in dealing with historic tensions and contradictions in line with Engeström's expansive learning cycle. (See Figure 2.1)

The following examples illustrate the process, beginning with the historic contradiction of PST assessment procedures and subsequent documentation. As explained by Madison (mentor teacher), these tasks were historically completed by the mentor teacher but with little knowledge of how they were subsequently used by the university and how they may have expanded the growth of the PST. The data strongly suggests that the TTT model adapted new activity to meet this contradiction. In the Crescent Beach College program, PST assessment was completed with knowledge and input from both systems. Working in shared space, enabled suitable assessment tools to be devised and explained to the mentor teachers with sufficient time allocated for their completion. Madison also

acknowledged that the Crescent Beach College assessment checklist brought about a change to her thought processes and was likely to have a positive impact on future PSTs in the way it further enhanced understanding of their individual learning needs.

The data also identified a second historic contradiction, that of insufficient or anomalous professional experience placement length. Being the insider researcher, the author had personal experience as program director to explain to potential placement schools how it provided PST experience across different educational jurisdictions in metropolitan and regional environments. This, together with the provision of extra allocated professional placement days appeared to be a significant facilitating factor in partnership development and positively affecting multiple growth points of the PSTs. The 23 extra days for the Bachelor of Education and 31 extra days for the Master of Teaching, in excess of government requirements, was a counter to the narrative expressed by mentor teachers in this research that historically, PST placement time has been insufficient. Mitchell (mentor teacher) stated: " There's not enough contact in the classroom" and "they get all the theory they want in the university setting but they just sit when they come to the classroom". The data suggests that the TTT model stimulated a realignment of thinking and activity in respect of this historic contradiction.

The evidence also suggests that the historic tension or contradiction of creating a nexus between the theory and practice of teaching for PSTs was ameliorated through a blurred division of labour and activity created in shared space. This was evident in the lecturers' approach in class and during the professional experience placement in schools. This contradiction was also a catalyst for a new separate ITE activity modelled in the Crescent Beach College program. Under the supervision of a classroom teacher, PSTs were able to conduct micro teaching sessions in a school as part of their regular lecture sessions.

These sessions presented greater opportunities not only for the connection of theory to practice for PSTs but also to understand the multiple roles undertaken by a classroom teacher. In this way the TTT program provided new activity to recast another inherent historic contradiction that ITE is not the mentor teacher's main educational activity.

Finally, this discussion theorises how the historic contradiction of the quality and consistency of mentor teacher appointment was reflected in the Crescent Beach College program. As the insider researcher the author noted that mentor teachers in this study did approach their task with goodwill and a desire to support professional experience placements. However, historically the appointment of mentor teachers largely resides with the school and is susceptible to some variance. New activity was created where expectations were shared in advance by the author as program director with the senior staff of the placement schools. This prior discussion proved to be a valuable platform for mutual expectation. In one instance of professional experience placement, after two visits, the Crescent Beach College supervising lecturer notified the author as program director of serious concerns regarding the PST's classroom experience. Discussions occurred with the school principal and support organised for the mentor teacher. However, in considering the welfare of the PST, it was thought appropriate to find an alternative professional placement which was consequently achieved with a much more favourable outcome as described by the PST.

In support of the research by Elsden-Clifton and Jordan (2015), the TTT model chose to deal with these historic tensions and contradictions through the use of mentor teachers and lecturers with suitable levels of experience, qualities and knowledge who could work in a nominal "shared space". Staff directed in this way played an important role - as boundary riders between the university and the classroom. In essence, "they come out of their normal

working environment (school or university) and into a neutral 'third space' to design, develop and deliver teacher education with jointly shared understanding and vision" (Burch & Jackson, 2013, p. 57). The evidence strongly suggests that the TTT model was designed to effectively resource and support this type of shared vision and with partnership activity occurring in boundary space.

While activity in boundary space can be beneficial to partnership development and the transformation of the PST (Engeström, 2001; Tsui & Law, 2007), the TTT model also delivered physical lecture spaces which were adaptable and resourced to allow for discussion and activities which replicated actual classroom situations. In support of this style of delivery, Moran et al. (2002, p. 31) noted that "the practice of crammed lecture auditoriums to hear about the nature of teaching is finished". Data from the lecturers themes emphasised that PSTs needed to learn about what is currently successful in schools as well as experimenting with innovative methodologies (Allen et al., 2010).

Zeichner (2010), in his bold strategies research to improve the delivery of ITE, by way of example, noted classroom teachers being invited to lectures to discuss their work often brought artefacts and tools of their practice such as pupil work to stimulate discussion. The TTT model also positioned lecturers to incorporate relevant practitioner resources (hardware and software) into their lecture topics as a priority as well as integration with school-based staff and the use of real-time student work examples. In developing this type of approach the data strongly suggests that the TTT model guarded against practical components of ITE becoming "unreflective field-based experiences" that may replicate practices observed in schools but with little understanding (Sullivan, 2002, p. 222).

In summary, the TTT appeared to be an effective model of ITE because it included subject matter knowledge, theories of learning and development, and methods of teaching,

It was also designed to be flexible enough to encompass a reflective process and maintain the needs, cultures and capacities of learners at the centre of instruction (Goodwin & Darity, 2019). Consistent themes were provided by PSTs which acknowledged the care and respectful development of relationships in the program. According to Zeichner (2010), though constrained by set written curriculum and government standards, ITE programs should be reflective of a more global perspective of what constitutes effective ITE by seeking out multiple viewpoints of key stakeholders. The author is theorising that the TTT model supported deliberate efforts to strategically connect multiple viewpoints of academic and practitioner knowledge through effective partnership practices between schools and universities in support of PSTs' learning.

6.3 Limitations and Strengths of the Research

6.3.1 Researcher Reflexivity

A possible ethical concern or limitation of this study was that of researcher reflexivity. According to Creswell (2014) reflexivity "refers to the researcher being aware of and openly discussing his or her role in the study in a way that honours and respects the site and participants" (p. 502). For this research design all data from the participant interviews were filtered through the past experiences of the author and specialised knowledge of the Crescent Beach College program. As the primary collector and analyser of data an understanding of reflexivity and its implications was imperative for the author. Lichtman (2013) summarises:

> Since it is the researcher who designs the research, collects the data, analyses the data, and writes up the results, it behoves us to think about what the researcher thinks about the meaning of knowledge and how it is made known to him or her (p. 36).

The author's understanding of the concept of reflexivity was crucial to this research in the way identity as the Crescent Beach College Senior Administrator and program director intertwined with understanding of the research objectives and ensuing data collection and analysis. Deliberately and/or unconsciously reacting to participant actions could influence what data was collected, which voices were heard in this research account, and what future recommendations were made. By drawing attention to the fluid and multiple nature of insider research in the field, clarifying the various ways in which we as researchers may position ourselves in relation to our research participants, there were potential implications for how the presence of the author influenced and/or changed people and practices. Conversely, how the participant presence influenced the author as a researcher (intentionally or otherwise) together with potential surfacing identity relations between researcher and participants could also have implications for research practice (Cunliffe & Karunanayake, 2013; Peshkin, 2000).

Through careful application and understanding of the concept of reflexivity, the design of this research allowed the author to navigate through these issues and accommodate potential problems. The design employed many aspects of a participatory ethnographic study (see Chapter 4 Methodology) and connected with a general definition of ethnography as being a qualitative research approach characterised by in-depth exploration of social phenomena taking place in a particular time and cultural context (Creswell, 2014; Yin, 2014). As the insider researcher, the author had a deeper appreciation and understanding of the participant responses because of the personal connection to, and knowledge of the Crescent Beach College program. Through the interview process it was important to obtain the key stakeholder's perspective on boundary activity which required the author to position himself in the study by declaring background knowledge of the program, the issues of interest and the study design with the participants. It was made very clear in an information

letter to participants and again at the commencement of each interview that the author was acting in a role of researcher not as the program director or any other authority figure. With these parameters the author would therefore suggest that the actor's recollections were likely given in a truthful and respectful manner.

6.3.2 Intervening Historical Time Lapse since ITE Program Closure

The procedure that a researcher uses to elicit information can greatly influence the accuracy of the responses. In particular, the motivational strategies used, the format of questions, the elapsed time between the event and the interview, and probing by the interviewer can all affect the accuracy and completeness of the responses. In a retrospective study such as this the elapsed time between the events of interest and the collection of data will have some effect on the accuracy of the data. According to Huber and Power (1985) a reason for biased or inaccurate data collection is the apparently universal perceptual and cognitive limitations of people as information processors. For example, people have limited, imperfect recall and seem to be influenced by their implicit or espoused theories when they reconstruct the past. Taylor (1991) implies that as time passes the intensity of emotions associated with negative events should decrease more rapidly than the intensity of emotions associated with positive events.

The author as the insider researcher recognised that the participant's emotional involvement in the Crescent Beach College program and its subsequent closure would be important in the framing of interview questions and affect the accuracy of participant responses. To retrospectively recall participation accurately would depend on the participant's level of emotional intensity and whether involvement was perceived as positive or negative. However, participants appeared motivated to co-operate, giving detailed responses, with the knowledge that the information provided was understood by the author

in the context in which it was given. This allowed for a rich discourse of information to be constructed and decoded with participants confident that material which could somehow prove averse to their interests, had been minimised. The data gathered was supported and interpreted by insider knowledge rather than by convenience and have assisted in clarifying the relationship between two systems in play for a specific ITE program between 2016 and mid-2017.

Conclusions drawn do not purport to be all encompassing across the whole ITE system but are a snapshot of an historical program which used a Teachers Teaching Teachers model and how it managed the crucial concepts of partnerships and the connection of theory to practice. It adds to current knowledge about the team processes in ITE that create activity in boundary spaces and support the transformation of PSTs. While it should be viewed as a "one-off" study which cannot easily be generalised to other settings, the narrative created by interweaving the participant stories have important implications for development of future ITE programs. Future research must continue to examine how ITE practices influence and are influenced by team processes required to optimise the objective of creating a quality teacher graduate.

6.3.3 Effects of COVID 19 Pandemic

An important consideration for this research is that it reflects a pre-COVID 19 era of an ITE program which relied primarily on face-to-face delivery. Due to manifest changes brought about by the pandemic, ITE practices have subsequently evolved to consider the amount and type of personal contact between participants. Education professionals who have lived through the events of 2020 onwards have added a reform agenda in the design and implementation of ITE as their moment-by-moment experiences of continuity and change in teacher education have evolved (Seddon & Quinton, 2021). Any changes to existing

ITE programs as a result of this research would need to take into account COVID 19 safe practices.

6.3.4 Use of CHAT

Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) was the theoretical framework used to analyse and conceptualise school-university partnerships. As a theoretical framework it allowed for both forward and backward perspectives of the ITE program. In this case, backwards to examine historical contexts of ITE programs including tensions and contradictions and forwards to the current action and interaction between the university and school systems in the generation of partnerships in the Crescent Beach College program. It also provided an emic platform for the author as an insider to examine shared social practices of what happens when people meet and interact across boundaries to form new meanings and go beyond limits of what individually might have been possible (Holland & Lave, 2019). It was able to reveal information about who was doing what, why and how in the Crescent Beach College program and how this impacted the end object of creating a quality graduate teacher.

While CHAT generally examines whole group activity rather than individual actions, it was an appropriate choice of theoretical framework because the strength of evidence presented by the actors in excerpts created a narrative which demonstrated ITE activity was embedded within and between the two systems. Douglas (2012a) suggests the strength of the evidence supporting the interpretation of the learning opportunities in ITE research is recognised in terms of doing ethnographic work in a small number of subject departments. Therefore, by using CHAT, the author was able to facilitate access to and interpret information from various participant groups regarding activity generated by each system. The NVivo coding instrument was used to reveal participant themes based on CHAT

constructs. However, it also relied to some extent on the author's personal interpretation/individual perception. The interview responses from the participants reflected a shared understanding with the author as the interviewer and were therefore considered likely to be genuine. This enabled the author to draw wider conclusions in the way tools and division of labour were used to mediate this activity and stimulate partnership opportunities. It provided a lens which observed how an object of the activity, once understood and embedded into action from two systems, transformed that activity and provided principles upon which other ITE providers may build their own investigations.

6.4 Final Reflections

This study set out to explore partnership activity in the Crescent Beach College program which had undertaken a specific model of ITE instruction. While in the past it has been observed that schools and universities have had different and possibly divergent views and practices in ITE, according to TEMAG (2014) formal partnerships between universities and schools should be prioritised as a way of rectifying this to create a quality graduate teacher. In the light of such recommendations, the Crescent Beach College model was primarily developed around the concept of using a Teachers Teaching Teachers framework to provide opportunities for partnership construction and as a method of connecting theory with the practice of teaching for the PSTs. The main research question was:

> **How was partnership practice described in the Crescent Beach College program and how did this affect the connection of theory to practice for the PSTs?**

The following additional questions were used to guide the analysis of the data:

1. What mediational means do the participants evoke in their accounts?

2. How did these mediational means support the partnerships?
3. What historic tensions and contradictions emerged from the participants' accounts of participation in the Crescent Beach College ITE program?

Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) was used as a lens to examine the practices developed in this program, and how they contributed to partnership activity especially in boundary space at the intersection of the school and university activity systems. It analysed how the shared object of the activity was impacted, that is, how was learning transferred and transformed as the PST moved between different contexts of the school and university systems. Participant insight into their everyday professional learning experiences elaborated on the boundary activity and its mediational means.

Douglas (2012a), suggested that collective activity is always in a process of change, as it is linked to societal need. Engeström and Blackler (2005) supported this premise by noting "Organisations are built and maintained around partially shared, partially fragmented and partially disputed objects". Similarly, the object of ITE activity is not static and requires continual negotiation. A quick review of ITE research literature will substantiate the numerous calls for ITE reform to create quality teacher graduates for the needs of today, which is best achieved through partnerships. The methodology of this research allowed the author to report personal experience as a researcher and craft a narrative of participant experiences in the Crescent Beach College program and how they perceived partnership creation and its effect on the object of the activity. The participants responded to the author as someone they knew and were therefore more likely to give reasoned responses by drawing on shared knowledge. The narrative maintained that the object of the activity as depicted in Engeström's third generation model (Figure 3.2) was to create a quality graduate teacher.

The findings revealed that the TTT model at Crescent Beach College fostered activity to occur in boundary spaces which generated partnerships between the school and the university. This boundary activity was made visible by a collective endeavour or "buy in" expressed in the narrative of the research. It was undertaken with a view to transform the object of the program (i.e., the PST). For those considering policy change and new initiatives within ITE, defining activity in the boundary space is vital because partnership activity occurred there in the Crescent Beach College program which nourished the PSTs in their quest to become quality graduate teachers. In this boundary space, mediational means such as the use of educational tools, artefacts and division of labour supported activity concretised as the Crescent Beach College program.

Participants' small stories spanned two systems working with a collective endeavour of PST development. The narrative involved mentor teachers and principals wanting to and being involved in the design and implementation of the Crescent Beach College program. Guest appearances as visiting lecturers, involvement in university ceremonial events and collaboration with university staff in providing feedback to PSTs were also cited as mediational means which encouraged co-ownership and "buy-in" from school staff. Mentor teacher themes such as: detailed and early planning provided by the university, easy availability of lecturers to connect with and support PSTs through their classroom interaction and recognition of lecturer classroom teaching expertise were cited as catalysts to promote boundary activity. The narrative of the principals spoke to the way the Crescent Beach College program differed to other universities with activity occurring in boundary spaces to forge transformational partnerships and to connect theory with practice for the PSTs. By extension, this was also considered by principals an appealing scenario for future employment prospects.

While slight variations may have existed, the object of ITE activity at Crescent Beach College was generally viewed in similar ways, as activity occurred in and between the systems specifically for transforming PSTs pedagogical ideas and practices. The narrative described how lecturers considered it part of their responsibility to link theory with practice through practical demonstrations and discussion to provide a "living curriculum". The implication being that activity in boundary spaces promoted partnership creation as evidenced in themes from the lecturers such as: high levels of verbal communication and discussion assisted in forming deeper relationships with schools, partnerships benefited through mutual effort and lecturer expertise was welcomed in classrooms.

The narrative also illustrated the beneficial effects of partnership creation through the eyes of the PSTs. The data suggested that PSTs were aware that lecturers were working in boundary spaces with mentor teachers to transform and develop their knowledge and skill in teaching. The ability to connect theory with practice, the immersion in the specific language of teaching and education and joint efforts to create partnerships were conditions required to sustain this activity. In the way partnerships impact on an ITE program this research has shown that the object of the activity can only be truly worked on if those involved in the activity constantly negotiate it, as they need to be aware of and acknowledge any tensions and contradictions in order to develop the activity and create possible conditions for transformative learning (Engeström, 2008).

The manner in which Crescent Beach College managed contradictions, that is, historically accumulated dynamic tensions between opposing forces in an activity system, also has important implications for those undertaking an ITE program. Engeström (1987) applied the concept of tensions and contradictions to his third-generation activity theory noting how they can be a source for change and development, which support opportunities

for novel solutions that can lead to transformative action. Managing contradictions is an important part of the ITE process. By facing and exploring the tensions and differences in the way ITE is conducted, the contradictions reveal how systems can learn, reconfigure and move forward (Edwards & Mutton, 2007; Engeström, 2008). Working on and resolving these contradictions can lead to changes in ITE practices in schools and universities, by reconceptualising a radically wider horizon and an expansive transformation of PST development (Engeström, 2001).

Whilst the data did not lend itself to a full exploration of the workplace tensions, this research yielded insight regarding some of the broader historic contradictions within the ITE process. This was especially relevant to the professional experience placement which is conceived as an "expansive learning" opportunity (Engeström, 2008) for PSTs to connect the theory to practice. It is at this time, when PSTs experience activity in a second system (i.e., the school system) that can lead to some tensions and contradictions within the ITE process. These contradictions usually centre around the timing and length of the placement, the inherent logistical difficulties in supporting PST placements and that historically ITE has not been the main focus of activity for schools and mentor teachers. Douglas (2012b) also noted further tensions in that critiquing and debating ideas on pedagogy that form part of the university curriculum could be seen as negatively impinging on a PST's personal support and working relationship with their mentor teacher.

Consequently, the author is theorising that the Crescent Beach College Program through its generation of transformational type partnerships created opportunities to discuss and address some of these historic contradictions. For example, as noted in the literature review, ITE programs need to be adequately resourced (Ledger et al., 2020). The narrative suggests that the Crescent Beach College model was sufficiently resourced to accommodate

the logistics of lecturers' involvement in professional placements and PST classroom ready resources. Likewise, principals through their understanding and involvement in the program, provided suitable school-based resourcing in the allocation of time for mentor teachers to coordinate PST observation, discussion and assessments with lecturers. The program addressed other historic contradictions such as timing, length of placement and program aims and disengagement of PSTs. Mentor teachers reported themes of early and effective communication which allowed them sufficient time to plan and incorporate some of the pedagogical practices and theories associated with the program. The PSTs' narrative elaborated on their ability to discuss the merits of certain pedagogical processes with both mentor teachers and lecturers in education specific language. It was apparent that activity created in boundary space informed this process and was not alienating but was transforming in nature. While the management of these historic contradictions was further evidence of how Crescent Beach College supported boundary activity, there is simply not enough evidence from this one example to draw extensive conclusions. The author's recommendation would be that further research is required on the role contradictions and tensions play in boundary activity as part of a TTT model of ITE delivery.

In summary, Crescent Beach College took from research literature that newly qualified teachers have identified problems encountered in working across different contexts or boundary spaces. The literature historically contends that pedagogical ideas were often "lost" in their study, or "detached from their original meanings; and the need to fit in with existing school practices meant that others had been distorted" (Haggarty & Postlethwaite, 2012). Therefore, the author is theorising that the TTT model provided opportunities to create boundary spaces which capitalised on the shared aspects of activity. These spaces concretised discussion and promoted partnerships that expanded the object of the activity.

Actors in the narrative recalled collective endeavour by staff from both systems which created ITE activity within and between the two systems (i.e., boundary activity).

Wang et al. (2008) suggested "that learning to teach is an inquiry process contextualised in beginning teachers' practice that needs to be assisted by experienced others" (p. 135). By design, the Crescent Beach College program was able to utilise expertise and experience from staff of both systems in a coordinated approach. This program model provided an important framework for theorising the collective act of partnership creation through a dialogic process of enlarging the boundary space between systems. The creation of partnerships was shown in this study to involve shared mediational means, blurred divisions of labour and object expansion. In this way, the study transcended notions of a theory-practice divide and revealed the important relational work needed in achieving shared objectives. The study is of interest to ITE program providers in that it not only provides theoretical foundations for building transformative partnerships but it also supports resourcing appropriate staff and facilities to achieve those goals.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

This research set out to explore how activity within a Teachers Teaching Teachers model of ITE at Crescent Beach College affected the creation of partnerships and facilitated transformation of the PSTs enrolled in the program. It aimed to provide insight into the everyday professional learning experiences of those working within the school and university systems of the Crescent Beach College program and establish how and where opportunities for partnership development occurred. It also aimed to establish how activity was created to enable PSTs to better connect theory to practice especially in the context of the PSTs' professional experience placement.

A participatory ethnographic study examined how participants (PSTs, mentor teachers, principals and lecturers) in their respective settings worked together to build the capacity of the PST. It allowed for the author's participation as an insider researcher but incorporated the limitations of reflexivity and the intervening historical time lapse since Crescent Beach College's closure. Within each of these systems, the individual experiences of participants including PSTs and school leaders were explored in detail to gain a deep and multi-faceted understanding of the culture of the Crescent Beach College program. A Cultural-Historical Activity Theory lens was used to determine how mediating factors within each system such as tools, rules and division of labour affected the type and place of activity designed to connect theory to practice. The broader significance of the study is evidenced in how it resonates with numerous government reports within Australia and internationally which have called for ITE reform delivered through the means of successful school university partnerships. This increased focus on the development of partnerships and the spaces in which they can occur is a clearly identifiable movement in many educational settings and systems in ITE. However, given that this is a "one off" study, more research is

required that closely examines models of ITE (including TTT) which best support this process. Of equal importance, there is a need for further study to be conducted that examines how university and school systems can work together in boundary spaces to support learning about the role each can play, to become integral elements of everyday ITE practice and a sustainable part of the vision for the future development of PSTs.

The significance of this study lies in relation to the development of a conceptual framework that provides new theory and fresh insights into approaches that will better inform the ITE process and the part quality partnerships can play. The data from this study adds new knowledge and helps to deepen our understandings of how universities and schools can work effectively towards producing quality graduate teachers. While many conclusions and insights have been made throughout the course of this thesis, the following sections of this chapter provides a final summary of the findings from this research, as well as an overview of the theorisations developed through the CHAT theoretical framework of how the Crescent Beach College program addressed partnership development. Finally, conclusions and recommendations are drawn about the significance of the study for the improvement of ITE delivery focused on the development of partnerships through the implementation of the TTT model.

7.1 Summary of Findings

In Chapter 5, the analysis of the data gathered through the participant interviews demonstrated that many of the key elements of transformational partnerships were evident when referenced against the Hobbs et al. (2018) instrument Representing Partnership Practices (RPP). The data emphasised themes concerning the reciprocal nature of the partnerships, a common understanding of the respective contributions each system made and a collaborative effort to meet shared goals. The themes emphasised by lecturers were that

high levels of verbal communication and discussion assisted in forming deeper relationships and that partnerships benefited through mutual effort. For example, it was noted that explanation and discourse with mentor teachers was encouraged by the lecturers in advance of the professional experience placement, which was conducive in gaining mentor teachers' support. Thus, the lecturers' presence in schools and within the individual classes was welcomed and not a distraction or an added pressure. This was an attempt to bring together various constituents of the ITE program in a relationship of mutual benefit with a renewal of the ITE process allowing both systems to understand and share each other's culture and means of communication. Lecturers described the sharing of university resources to support specific requirements of the PST's classroom teaching and the reciprocal nature of lecture topics and discussions based on the real-life experiences of the PSTs in their professional placement.

The mentor teachers highlighted themes suggesting the lecturers from Crescent Beach College were readily accessible and provided detailed and early planning for their involvement in the program. High demand for professional experience placements for PSTs in the local region, meant that early notification and information from the ITE provider were beneficial for the mentor teachers' preparation prior to the PST placement. This was an important aspect of partnership generation as schools were described by the mentor teachers as extremely busy places with little time during the school day to attend to emails and phone calls. The theme of early planning and ease of communication with ITE staff leant support to a shared understanding and familiarisation of roles and expectations of participants in a school-university partnership. Through this, a platform was created where staff could have respectful and robust conversations with one another if needed, and to see the situation from another person's perspective. The findings strongly suggested that mentor teachers also valued lecturers' involvement in professional experience in the way they connected with

PSTs through their classroom interaction. Rather than the university lecturer being an outsider in the school space where mentoring usually occurs, the data suggests that this space was perceived to be shared for the joint benefit of the PST. Given that university lecturer's attendance in a mentor teacher's classroom to observe and assess is not a common part of the ITE process, the data suggests the TTT framework was sufficiently robust to accommodate this. There appeared to be trust and clear understanding of the purpose and procedures involved in their attendance.

The consistent theme reported by principals was that relational partnerships were developed which were different to other universities. Using their experience and knowledge of other ITE programs as a basis for comparison, they noted some unique aspects of delivery of the Crescent Beach College program, especially with the use of lecturers and other liaison personnel to connect with PSTs on professional experience placement. The data emphasised the reciprocal nature of partnerships, a common understanding of the respective contributions and a collaborative effort to meet the shared goals. They recounted how they had been involved at a deeper level with this ITE program compared to others and how this promoted a feeling of connection with the program. Activity involving principals working in boundary spaces such as attendance at some of the ITE program ceremonial events and the invitation to present relevant information direct to PSTs as a guest lecturer, were also noted as catalysts to promote partnership development.

An important partnership theme described by PSTs was the joint effort and shared responsibility between the Crescent Beach College and schools to transform the object of the activity. The PSTs narrative indicated that the lecturers fostered enduring and solid relationships with schools especially for the provision of professional experience placements in different educational contexts and systems. PSTs observed that the relationship between

mentor teachers and the ITE program staff appeared professional, collegial with observations that the lecturers' involvement was "welcomed".

On connecting theory to practice the data revealed themes that lecturers deliberately modelled classroom practice in lectures to support a theory practice nexus and used specific educational dialogue to assist PSTs in linking the two. The data suggested a very high probability that the lecturers perceived their role to encompass more than the delivery of knowledge isolated within their own curriculum area. Opportunities were created in lecture sessions to incorporate appropriate discussion of the PST professional experience where the specific language of education was employed to clarify and elaborate on PSTs' experiences. Lecturers further supported this theme by inviting other relevant educational specialists into lectures to assist the PSTs to make sense of their theory and practical experiences.

The PSTs reported themes that the Crescent Beach College program created activity which allowed for a mix of theory and practical instruction and they were immersed in the specific language of teaching and education. PSTs also indicated an understanding that the lecturers aimed to support the PSTs in becoming an effective classroom teacher through exposure to knowledge of key educational theories, supported by practical skill sets presented in lectures. The PSTs described being exposed to an appropriate level of specific educational language enabled them to grasp the academic and behavioural concepts of teaching and it also gave them a sense of empowerment to communicate with mentor teachers as colleagues.

Concerning the connection of theory with practice, the evidence suggested the principals perceived that the program was constructed with a balance between the two. The principals articulated how there was a direct attempt to connect theory to practice in the Crescent Beach College program in the way lecturers had been selected and the role they played supporting activity in boundary spaces with mentor teachers specially to embed

discussion in subsequent follow-up lectures. They commented favourably in the way this collective endeavour affected the development of the PST.

As the objects of the activity, the PSTs' main theme recognised there was a deliberate attempt to support theory into practice within the program. The data strongly supported the findings that PSTs were aware the ideas and pedagogy contained within the university course and presented by the lecturers did not simply exist in a vacuum but were there to be practically applied in the classroom, when given the opportunity. Many examples were given of the incorporation of helpful and realistic teaching resources and classroom management strategies and their application especially on professional experience placement. The findings showed how ongoing lecturer-mentor teacher collaboration worked to promote an evolving sense of collective endeavour and partnership amongst those involved in the ITE program, through the development of shared understandings and common approaches to transform the PST. The collaborative nature of both the university and school staff, when combined with an emphasis of bringing theory into practice, proved to challenge and extend the PSTs professional learning. The modelling of classroom practice in lectures to assist with the connection of theory to practice and the immersion of PSTs in the specific language of teaching and education were found to be pivotal factors in their growth and development. Together these themes reflected a collective endeavour from both systems to equip the PSTs with an appropriate skill set that contextualised theories of education and the reality of the classroom in a meaningful way.

7.2 Theorisations from Findings

In Chapter 6 important theorisations were made concerning the findings of Chapter 5. The findings substantiated that the TTT model was influential in creating a climate for activity in the boundary space where program information was shared and ensuing

discussions concretised partnership action to expand the object of the activity. The narrative described the facilitation of staff movement across and between both systems as the TTT model by design, was able to accommodate working across boundaries, especially in relation to the PSTs' professional experience placement. Sometimes this activity occurred in the physical spaces of the school and university, other times through discussion and feedback which utilised additional forms of media to facilitate conceptual understandings from both systems about their role and that of others. The flexibility of the TTT model was able to capitalise on this boundary activity to deliberately engage the PSTs in realistic and collaborative classroom learning experiences through a variety of delivery styles, room configuration and teaching resources, thus providing a platform to connect theory with practice.

Further, through the application of Engeström's third generation CHAT theory framework, a narrative of collective endeavour was established which described a blurring of the traditional division of labour in ITE programs. There was a flow of ideas across the school and university systems to overcome obstacles and historic contradictions such as timing, length of placement, quality of mentor teacher and assessment procedures as noted in Chapter 2 Literature Review. These were seen for their potential to generate barriers to effective communication and PST development. The data strongly suggests that the TTT model was sufficiently resourced and flexible enough to accommodate a number of historic professional experience placement tensions and contradictions. The author is theorising that these historic tensions and contradictions stimulated new activity through the TTT model and aligned with Engeström's 2001 expansive learning cycle. (See Figure 2.1)

The data generated suggested that there was a coalescing of the two systems around the activity of ITE in boundary space with activity being mediated through such concepts as

tools, rules and division of labour. In order for these concepts to effectively mediate the activity, it was imperative that their use and application within the program be successfully communicated between participants. The author has theorised three main conclusions in the way mediational means did act as a catalyst to promote positive outcomes and reveal a collaborative role between university and school staff to transform the object of the activity.

Firstly, early and effective communication allowed the school-based staff time to construct a deeper understanding of critical aspects of the program delivery. An understanding of the program norms and objectives (i.e., ITE rules) coupled with a sharing of the division of labour as mediational means provided a space for clear and effective communication between the systems. This was supported by the response of the school-based staff who told of operating in a boundary space which was different to most other ITE programs. By operating in this boundary space, principals grasped opportunities to embed partnership implications for their staff with a firm commitment to the selection of mentor teaching personnel and provision of physical and non-physical resources (e.g., time allocation for meetings).

School staff also spoke to an awareness of what the PSTs were learning in lectures and an obligation to act in support of it. Secondly, the use of ITE tools and a blurring of the division of labour as mediational means provided a space for PSTs to develop a useful common language of education and contextualise theory into practice in a balanced and meaningful way. These actions were a catalyst in generating a “living curriculum” for the PSTs which was not just the passing on of information or written content of a program, but rather created a program of learning experiences. Thirdly, the use of ITE tools and rules as mediational means created a space for joint effort in providing detailed and effective feedback during PST professional experience. Lecturers, mentor teachers and PSTs

described opportunities for productive discussions to provide feedback on PST progress and from the school leadership about PSTs engagement in their schools and what they saw as being strengths and weaknesses of the program.

It was further theorised that this activity in the boundary space generated a more transformational type of partnership between schools and universities where partners took joint responsibility for mutually agreed practices and outcomes that were embedded in their respective core activities (Hobbs et al., 2018). Such collaboration was found to be pivotal in supporting the ongoing development of a sense of shared mission and vision with lecturing staff, with the strong commitment and participation of school leaders as well as mentor teachers. The mentor teachers acknowledged the investment of the lecturers in observing PST practice in the classroom and how they were going to lever that into more discussions in lectures. Lecturers were made to feel welcome in the mentor teacher's classroom and participated in roundtable discussions to provide feedback and support PST progress. PSTs noted how this combined interaction provided opportunities for them to grow in knowledge and skills of teaching. It was concluded that the use of a specific educational language within this collective endeavour helped build a "living curriculum" for the PSTs. In this way, the program effectively supported the growth of the PSTs' conceptual understanding about the development of effective teaching dispositions, forging deep consideration of the ways in which such a focus could be incorporated into their classroom practice, while also generating the development of a highly thoughtful, supportive and collaborative culture within the ITE program.

7.3 Partnerships - A Conceptual Framework for the Teachers Teaching Teachers Model

The conceptual framework below (Table 7.1) briefly outlines the process of the establishment of the Crescent Beach College program and describes how the TTT model drew on research theorists, government reports and anecdotal concerns about the state of ITE. This conceptual framework links the findings of this study to recommendations made for improvement to the ITE process in the way partnership activity was created in boundary spaces. This framework was initially shaped through the author's personal engagement in the program. Subsequently, the author conducted a review of the literature in this field, before extending its development as part of an ongoing research study. In particular, the author was interested to investigate whether this framework provided an effective structure for the implementation and development of new models of ITE practice. The author concluded that this framework could inform those interested in the development of ITE programs, with a focus on boundary activity and where transformational partnership development has been identified as a core rationale. Significantly, this framework emphasised the important role that a focus on the development of such partnerships plays in bringing a connection of theory to practice for the PSTs.

Table 7.1:
Conceptual framework for the Crescent Beach College program incorporating a Teachers Teaching Teachers model.

Conceptualising →	**Resourcing →**	**Communicating →**	**Sense making →**	**Activity →**	**Outcome**
Anecdotal and research literature advocating change to ITE to create quality graduate teachers. Evolution of a shared vision with HEP to better connect theory with practice	Selection of TTT lecturers with classroom teaching experience and shared vision to transform PST.	Shared reflection of program aims amongst mentor teachers and school leaders. Encourage boundary space activity for key school and university staff.	Making sense of mediating means: rules, tools and division of labour between school and university staff.	Sustained boundary space activity for university and school staff to transform the PST, especially during PST professional experience.	Development of collective endeavour and transformational type partnerships between school and university.

This thesis analysed each dimension of the above framework in relation to how each contributed to the development of a transformational type partnership in the program. The conceptual framework for the development of the Crescent Beach College program, is not intended as a definitive model. Rather, it is offered for its potential to inform future research and practice in ITE, as well as transformative learning for the PSTs as they progress towards becoming a quality graduate teacher. The discussion offered throughout the thesis has served to both explain and elaborate upon the framework, as part of the evolution of a theory for partnership development and for those interested in further exploring its wider potential.

7.4 Implications for Future Administrators in ITE

Having described the conceptual framework to establish the Crescent Beach College program (Table 7.1) the author will now reposition from researcher to that of program director to suggest implications for future administrators interested in revitalising the delivery of ITE and the role of partnerships in developing such a program. The evidence presented in this thesis suggests that every element of the school and university systems matters in a TTT model, and that activity in the boundary space is a powerful and dynamic influence in creating transformative type partnerships. The TEMAG (2014) report strongly argued an integrated delivery of ITE is most beneficial in addressing concerns of graduate teacher preparation.

As a program director, it is important to understand how activity in boundary space assists in pursuing close partnerships between providers, school systems and schools which underpin improvement to all aspects of the preparation of teachers. The conceptualisation of a TTT model and its potential to generate partnerships with schools must be carefully understood by those involved, especially school-based staff connected with professional experience placements. In supporting activity in boundary space to connect theory with

practice, the TTT model differs from other ITE programs, although it does reinforce similar aspects of partnership models such as an Alliance, but with notable differences especially in the role of university and school staff. From an administrator's point of view, to generate significant program involvement from both systems requires early and effective communication of the program concepts to all key stakeholders, especially in the way lecturers are selected and utilised in a TTT model. Explanation of how the Crescent Beach College model differs from other ITE models and what it expects to achieve are critical aspects to fully engage PSTs, lecturers, mentor teachers and school leadership in the program. The TTT concept and how it was designed to benefit the PST, especially in professional experience placements must be fully explained. This includes a clear description of the potential for activity in shared spaces (including school leadership) and the blurring of traditional divisions of labour in ITE (university staff in school classrooms, school staff as guest lecturers). This is designed to promote a shared collective endeavour to positively affect the outcome of a quality teacher graduate.

Administrators should be aware that strong and thoughtful leadership is required at all levels of the school and university systems in the way the program is described and resourced. Staff selection from both systems is critical to the establishment of successful partnerships. This requires a commitment to activity in boundary space and understanding that lecturers and mentor teachers work together to support a "living curriculum" for the PSTs. Activity such as this is seen as being influential in the development of partnerships and the creation of a "shared object" between the two systems (Grudnoff et al., 2017).

From a logistical viewpoint, sufficient time and space must be provided for lecturers and mentor teachers to coordinate the professional experience placement. This involves resourcing time for mentor teachers to identify and attend to program specifics such as

conferring with lecturers and PSTs regarding PST progress. The university must plan to resource lecturer visits to schools thus enabling connections with mentor teachers and PSTs on professional experience placement and to facilitate connection of theory with practice in subsequent lectures. An ongoing commitment to the provision of adequate resourcing is vital to establishing a "buy in" principle shared amongst staff from both systems and assists to transcend the notion of a theory-practice divide for PSTs, as evidenced in the Literature Review (See Chapter 2).

From a program director's view, Engeström's Third generation CHAT model and the mediational constructs of rules, tools and division of labour in an ITE program have to be understood in the way they influence the creation of partnerships. They can be an effective catalyst to create activity in boundary space, but their purpose and value must be understood by all participants. Importantly, as noted by Engeström, expansive transformation of systems will occur only when a coordinated effort exists to change certain aspects of an activity in unison. Without mediational means the collective would have no way of sharing meaning and practice would be just individuals doing their own thing. Hence the mediational means act as conduits of activity but they require thorough explanation to key stakeholders in the way they affect the generation of transformative partnerships. Therefore, the rules which govern ITE programs must be understood and observed from both systems (ITE accreditation protocols, mandated professional experience days, university ITE protocols, mentor teacher classroom protocols). Likewise, the tools of ITE (handbooks, lecture discussions, classroom ready resources, roundtable PST assessment meetings) are required to be understood and utilised for their intended purpose. Finally, the division of labour in this type of program needs to accommodate a perspective that breaks down traditional school and university roles with activity in boundary space and generates a collective endeavour to

provide a living curriculum for the PST. Effective use of mediational means in this way stimulates the development of transformational partnerships.

The evidence presented in this thesis emphasised the best PST transformation takes place not in a workshop or in discrete, bounded systems, but in the context of a professional ITE community where action and discourse between systems encouraged PSTs to expand knowledge, learn from each other and education professionals. It made the argument that enabling professional transformation of the PST is about enabling the partnership potential between the school and university which support the ITE process. It also acknowledged that historic tensions and contradictions have challenged ITE especially in sustaining partnership activity. As a program director it is important to address these tensions and contradictions such as the timing and length of professional experience placements, the quality and commitment of the mentor teacher and the provision of early and effective communication between university and school staff regarding program requirements. This is important relational work conducted between staff of both systems which sets a foundation for future partnership generation.

These implications outlined above for creating a TTT model should form part of an ongoing development of effective processes for those interested in ITE renewal and improvement. The data suggests that potential and current administrators should look to a continual refinement of activity in boundary spaces in the way partnerships are generated which support the growth of PSTs. Future research must also continue to examine how ITE practices influence and are influenced by the team processes required to optimise the objective of creating a quality graduate teacher. These are critical recommendations aimed to develop insight for future teacher practice and importantly, student learning.

7.5 Final Comments

This study has demonstrated that mentor teachers, school leaders and lecturers can work collaboratively towards the creation of activities that support the development of an ITE curriculum with a learning focus of working in boundary space. Such achievement has been clearly shown to add depth to the PSTs' learning about pedagogy in relation to the development of a quality graduate teacher and effective teaching dispositions in their classrooms. The study has also emphasised the need for teachers and school leaders to make a long-term commitment towards the researching and creation of innovative types of ITE programs, including a dedication to ongoing collaboration that is designed to both sustain and continually renew partnerships between schools and universities. This type of deep and enduring commitment has been shown through this study to support the transformation of PSTs with insights into the language and effective skills required to connect the theory of teaching to its practice. It is an essential part of a shared vision for the future of education that such programs commit to these types of practices.

Despite the continuing call both nationally and internationally for the redevelopment of ITE programs, we live in a time where a narrowing focus on accountability and test scores in relation to numeracy and literacy within our education systems threatens to take the argument in a different direction. Vitally, within this Crescent Beach College context, the work of the teachers and lecturers in this study provides an example of the type of robust, holistic approach to ITE that can be developed through highly professional collaboration, supportive collegiality and a deep sense of collective endeavour. Where these characteristics are sustained in an ITE program, powerful learning can occur for PSTs.

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Appendix A: Lecturer Roles and Responsibilities

Lecturer Role and Responsibilities

At Crescent Beach College level	• Leading team meetings and professional development activities to develop the TTT model • To seek opportunities to make explicit as often as practicable the connection of theory to practice in lectures. • Open communication channels to deliver information on TTT model to schools, mentor teachers and senior school management • Encourage and manage partnership development with schools • All professional experience placement related administration (excluding PST application for professional placement) • Deliver mentoring to PSTs • Complete PST evaluations • Develop and provide templates, websites and other information relevant to developing the TTT model
At School level	• Main point of contact for Crescent Beach College and PST • Communicates with mentor teacher/senior school management about PST concerns or issues • Oversees all dimensions of the school-based professional experience placements • Facilitates discussion of mentor teacher expectations and quality • Encourages PSTs to attend school-based community and professional learning events • Supports professional conversation of the TTT program with all school based staff • Facilitates evidence-based assessment of the PSTs performance against the Graduate standards
At Preservice Teacher level	• Provides a caring environment with more individualised instruction for PSTs • Provides pedagogical support across the timespan of PST experience in the TTT program • Provides extra classroom practice opportunities for PSTs to connect theory to practice • Have one on one and small group meetings with PSTs on placement to support development and solve problems • Visit each PST during their official school placement to observe lesson taking and provide feedback and assessment of progress • Develops a strong relationship with the placement school including developing working relationships with leadership teams

Appendix B: Information Letter for Participants

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INFORMATION LETTER for PARTICIPANTS

PROJECT TITLE: An investigation into Initial Teacher Education partnerships: combining theory with practice.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR/SUPERVISOR: **Associate Professor Theda Thomas**
STUDENT INVESTIGATOR: **Graham Stephens**

Dear Participant,

You are invited to participate in the research project described below.

What is the project about?
The research project investigates an initiative bringing lecturing staff with appropriate tertiary qualifications, knowledge and firsthand experience of teaching school students, in contact with pre-service teachers (PSTs) to provide them with instruction in effective teacher strategies and enhancing the connection to the theory and practice of teaching. It seeks to explore the experiences of the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) lecturing staff, PSTs, mentor teachers and principals who participated in this program prior to its closure.

Who is undertaking the project?
Graham Stephens, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne is conducting this project, as part of his EdD studies. In 2015, Graham was employed as the inaugural Head of the Geelong Campus to oversee the implementation of an ITE program from an interstate Higher Education Provider. Graham was the Senior Campus Administrator, a lecturer, and practicum coordinator. In the 18 months of operation of this campus, Graham's involvement was in a professional capacity to the participants of this research, which for the purposes of this study, needs to clarified. Graham is now acting in a research capacity as distinct from his administrative role previously known to you. His aim is to enrich professional understandings and research into ITE, by shedding light on the reality of your experience in this program.

Are there any risks associated with participating in this project?
The risks are minimal. Participants generally report benefits from participation in research such as this.

What will I be asked to do?
You will be asked to participate in 30 minute audio-recorded interview, at a time and place of your choosing, to discuss and expand on your everyday experiences in the ITE program. There will be a series of questions relating to your experiences of the ITE program, and you will have the capacity to respond and develop a professional conversation in any number of directions. You may ask to have the audio recording switched off at any time. An online survey will be used so that participants can add any feedback that they want to give anonymously but did not want to provide in the interview.

What are the benefits of the research project?
The benefits of this research project will be to understand better how the theory and practice of teaching within the field of ITE, can be brought effectively together to create quality graduate teachers.

Can I withdraw from the study?
Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You are not under any obligation to participate. If you agree to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences.

Will anyone else know the results of the project?
The results of the project will be submitted to academic and teaching journals and may be presented at research conferences. De-identified audio data and pseudonyms will be used in all cases instead of participants' names or schools involved.

Will I be able to find out the results of the project?
Results of the project will be published in thesis form. You will be free to request access to this information upon the completion of Graham's EdD studies.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the project?
Associate Professor Theda Thomas, School of Arts (Victoria), Australian Catholic University, theda.thomas@acu.edu.au
Dr Jenny Martin, School of Education, (Victoria), Australian Catholic University, jenny.martin@acu.edu.au

What if I have a complaint or concern about the project?
The study has been reviewed by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Australian Catholic University. If you have any complaints or concerns about the conduct of the project, you may write to the Manager of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research).

Manager, Ethics
c/o Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
Australian Catholic University
North Sydney Campus
PO Box 968
NORTH SYDNEY, NSW 2059
Ph.: 02 9739 2519
Fax: 02 9739 2870
Email: resethics.manager@acu.edu.au

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. You will be informed of the outcome.

I want to participate! How do I sign up?
Please sign both forms and return to the Graham Stephens via email or bring with you on the day of the interview.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Stephens	**Theda Thomas**	**Jenny Martin**
Student Researcher	**Principal Supervisor**	**Co-supervisor**

Appendix C: Semi-structured Lecturer Interview Questions

Semi-structured interview questions – Lecturers

1. How were you recruited to the role of lecturer at Crescent Beach College?

2. Describe your role in the ITE program. (Prompts – what did it entail on a daily, weekly, monthly, basis)

3. What impact has your participation in the ITE program had on you? (Prompts – other ITE staff, PSTs)

4. Did you identify as a teacher or lecturer or both when you were working in the program? (Prompts – how do you think the PSTs saw you?)

5. What tools did you use in your lecturing? (Prompts – classroom resources, ICT, study guides)

6. How did you see the relationship between theory and practice in the program?

7. What kind of relationship did you have with the profession experience schools? (Prompts – orientating the PSTs for the expectations of the school, observations when visiting the PSTs on placement?)

8. What do you see to be the major costs and benefits of ITE partnerships?

9. How did your role as lecturer at Crescent Beach College connect with generating partnerships activity in ITE?

10. Did any conflicts or tensions arise, and if so, how were they resolved?

11. If you had the chance to do something like this again, what do you think you or Crescent Beach College would do differently?

Appendix D: Analytic Memo 1

Analytic Memo One

A main hunch coming from the material is that the lecturers' central concern seemed to be modelling good teaching practice in lectures and connecting it with theoretical understanding, to provide PSTs with a framework of skills for use in the classroom. Consequently, in the interviews the PSTs reconstructed this information as being useful in collecting resources and creating conceptual tools for their own practice or pedagogy of teaching.

From the interviews, PSTs noted that lectures were often enhanced with useful hands-on activities and supplemented with anecdotes of classroom practice. Lilly (PST) comments on the relevance and usefulness of hands-on mathematics activities undertaken in class:

> I was able to use some maths strategies [on professional experience] taught in lectures.

In addition to the hands-on activities, the data shows that the PSTs also were keen to model the tips of how to engage and manage students when it came to the practical sessions in school classrooms, often taking notes in the lectures for reference and modelling later. Belle (PST) comments regarding building her own data base of information:

> I took a lot from that. [I] got a lot of resources written down and now that's what I continue to do, pop them into my computer, different resources that are really hands on.

Ellie (PST) also comments on the type of information (notes and tips) presented in the lecture and how it framed a connection to theory:

> The first one that springs to mind was um I can't remember the name of the subject, but it was to do with pedagogy. So, we went through the lecture slides in class and pretty much all of it I was just writing down furiously all these notes, tips about how to communicate. Not

> just tips, actually explained the theory and showing you what it really looks like in the classroom.

This modelling of pedagogical practice as noted above, has been a valued element of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) reform as research from (Rowley et al., 2013), concluded that it is not sufficient to send the PSTs on professional experience and expect that they will learn regardless. A suitable framework needs to be provided creating an environment which prioritises the lecturers' efforts in creating links with the academic program and also incorporating school-based experiences with skilled classroom mentors.

The interview with Will (lecturer) drew on this framework of connecting ideas from lectures to actual classroom practice:

> It's OK to have the academics. But you also have the pedagogy you've got to have the bag of tricks. The way to deal with students. And what do you do with this situation? And I think that's what we brought to the table in our course. We were teachers who were practically involved with teaching every day. And we could pass those ideas on and focus on meeting needs and sorting the connection between theory and practice.

Furthermore, the data showed there was a conscious effort from lecturers to share their experiences with the PSTs and to deliberately employ a variety of delivery styles, room configuration and props to engage the PSTs in realistic and collaborative classroom learning experiences which they would likely encounter on professional experience. Felicity (lecturer) indicates her thoughts and perspective on modelling the arts to encourage active PST participation in her lectures:

> We did some dance, so I used their bodies, the student's body so that it was an embodied practice. When they were doing that, we were doing the arts. They became artists.

David (lecturer) comments on the lecture room set up and the model of active discussion employed in his lectures to focus on realistic classroom experiences:

> …we had different seating arrangements. We just didn't come up and have the lecturer up front and we had different seating around [the room]. We had students face each other because that's what was happening in schools.

This concept of shared experiences and modelling practice between PSTs and lecturers was noted from a mentor teacher perspective too. Madison (mentor teacher) comments on the purpose of the PST observations on placement and how these observations of practice, she predicted, would drive further discussion in the lecture room:

> They had to observe students talking to each other, they had to observe a teacher working with a student, to observe a teacher dealing with a problem and make sure they have those observations all organized. Obviously, you could see what they're going to do, then go back to uni and discuss it.

Additionally, through this process of modelling by lecturers, the data revealed that PSTs were exposed to the specific vocabulary and language of education. This assisted them to talk about specific teaching strategies, professional standards and to participate at an appropriate level in educational conversations either in lectures or on placement. Mitch (PST) refers to the effect this had on his level of confidence in speaking the language of education in his one semester of the course:

> I've been able to be in a classroom [lecture] with an ex-teacher who's just out of teaching. And they spoke the language that we heard in the classrooms on the rounds every day. And it gives you confidence that you know what you're talking about. You know what you're doing.

Michelle (PST) also makes this connection, firstly regarding the lecturers and their coverage of topics in lectures and secondly the impact this had on placement:

> I think from the start at X University they would use a specific vocab. That was like teacher specific to what we would need to get used to.

> You can pick up on what the [mentor] teachers are saying and like not having to ask for an explanation of what they're really talking about because you know the meanings of the words. So definitely helps and I think it definitely sets you up for a positive run on placement if you can understand what the [mentor] teachers are saying from the start

Appendix E: Analytic Memo 2

Analytic Memo Two

As second hunch coming from the material is that the objective of the program was perceived by lecturers not just to deliver information to the PSTs but to equip them with an appropriate skill set that contextualises theories of education and actual reality of the classroom in a meaningful way. From the data, there appears to be an emphasis from within the Crescent Beach College program which differs from the past practices of treating the skills and theory of teaching as two separate systems. This is a point of difference which could be important because (Grudnoff et al., 2017) note that there has been a perceived disconnection by PSTs between theory and practice of teaching especially where they have been treated separately by the ITE provider. This is in line with research from McMahon, Forde & Dickson, (2015) who report that the role and contribution of university-based teacher preparation that has been dominant over the past 20 years has now come under threat in order to construct rich pedagogies in teacher education that challenge the perennial tension between theory and practice and that teacher education should be reshaped to promote long term career development. The data from the lecturer interviews appears to support this hunch with all five lecturers interviewed making references around this concept of contextualising the theory of teaching in classroom practice.

> David (lecturer, 2016-17 cohort): I'm convinced the balance and the focus that we had was one that really addressed the issues of young people moving into the teaching workforce as a career, I think it was. So there was a balance of the academic rigour, and we expected that. But that underpinned the, I suppose, the outcomes and the pedagogy needed to go into a modern day classroom.
>
> Will (lecturer, 2016-17 cohort): I was trying to cut away deliver what had to be delivered as far as the theory was concerned but try and break it down so it was a practical presentation as well. I always used to try and do practical sessions as part of the lecture, but I remember

also I used to try and talk about some issues that had happened in schools for five or 10 minutes. Just giving them a bit more of an understanding of how schools work. Sometimes it was all along the same lines as the lecture topic was sometimes it was a bit different.

Nathaniel (lecturer, 2017 cohort): And so I thought, well maybe I can impart some knowledge on these students, the Crescent Beach College students, based on my practical experience as much as my knowledge of education and theory and the latest change in those sorts of things.

The PSTs perception of the objective of the Crescent Beach College program generally reflected that of the lecturers. Seven of the nine PST's interviewed referenced a broader understanding of what they thought the program aimed to achieve and how the end goals reflected the creation of a skill set enveloped within a knowledge of key educational theories. There appeared to be an understanding that this would empower them as future teachers with career development and an ability to contribute to wider education issues.

The PST data suggests the Crescent Beach College program achieved this by creating a feeling of collegiality and partnerships with lecturers and mentor teachers which supported a holistic learning community and set long term goals for the PST and their contribution to the wider education community. If the Crescent Beach College program does favour the creation of longer term, collaborative programs, which shift towards developing locally relevant, collegial learning relationships, then that is significant as it is supported by a number of researchers (Bloomfield, 2009; Le Cornu & Ewing, 2008).

Ellie commented about the tools and procedures of the program and how they assisted her to connect theory to practice.

Ellie (PST): It very much inspired you to be a world class teacher and it also gave you the tools and the necessary procedures to do so. It's not like any other university that is offered

yet. It's just overwhelming. It taught you how to teach not just this theory about teaching. And it was so practical and relevant to all aspects of teaching (20-25 age group, 2016-17 cohort).

Lilly's and Michelle's comments indicate a noted difference in approach of the Crescent Beach College lecturers compared to others, with references to 'above and beyond their duty as lecturers' in creating the perceived objective.

Lilly (PST): The highlight of everyone's goal was to make it a really good institution to make us really good teachers. The lecturers were clearly trying to do, I think, above and beyond their duty as lecturers. The camaraderie and the sense that we were all there for a common purpose. For us to be good teachers and for them to create teachers that's for the people in the community that we are going to go out and have contact with (40-45 age group, 2016-17 cohort).

Michelle (PST): A couple [of mentor teachers] were quite surprised because they hadn't seen it [visiting lecturers] with other universities with their students and they said that's really amazing. That they're [the lecturers are] showing that level of interest in their students and in the learning of their students (45-50 age group, 2016-17 cohort)

Belle's and Keith's responses suggest they valued the way the lecturers as practising teachers were able to bring the theory and the practice together. This could be significant as research by Allen, Butler-Mader, & Smith (2010) on an ITE program called The Bachelor of Learning Management, identified the value of teacher practitioners when employed as lecturers in key learning areas so that their expertise, interest and practical knowledge of the classroom could be maximised.

Belle (PST): It was a local course. So yes, while Blank Uni also have a teaching degree locally for primary school teachers, I felt that this was a better opportunity to be taught by

> teachers who were practising people, who were practising teachers themselves. So I really liked that component rather than being taught by lecturers who perhaps haven't had the teaching experience for some years. That component really attracted me (40-45 age group, 2016-17 cohort).
>
> Keith (PST); Then the other thing, and what I really loved, is that they would give us, because they were practising teachers, they would often give us anecdotes of stories from their own practice. You know we'd be writing copious notes on those sorts of experiences to try and somehow learn from those experiences ourselves (50-55 age group, 2016-17 cohort).

The data shows that the PSTs recognised that the Crescent Beach College lecturers' input was unique to the program in the way they consolidated the theory and practice of teaching in the one program. This may have been viewed as a contradiction within the usual ITE activity systems. This is important because contradictions are seen as useful areas for potential change and development when conducting a Cultural Historical Activity Theory analysis. According to Engeström (2008), teams run into difficulties and find their limits when faced with objectives and structures that require constant updating and revamping. This is especially true when the activity generates rules regarding the division of labour and boundaries with other activity systems. Contradictions are a crucial element of an activity system as they can illustrate potential areas for developing and transforming the workplace to achieve higher levels of productivity.

Appendix F: Thesis Pseudonyms

Thesis Pseudonyms		
Pseudonym	**Participant Type**	**Demographic**
Crescent Beach College	ITE program	Initial Teacher Education campus of interstate Higher Education Provider operating in Victorian regional town
Nathaniel	Lecturer	Ex-primary school principal, lecturing in the Master of Education degree with particular interest in state education. Previous experience in supervising PSTs from another local university, age demographic 60-65
Will	Lecturer	Ex-Head of school campus Years 5 to 9 lecturing in both B Ed and M Ed with particular interest in mathematics and science, age demographic 60-65
James	Lecturer	Ex-Primary school principal, lecturing in the Master of Education degree with particular interest in curriculum design and development. Previous experience in tertiary education, age demographic 65-70
David	Lecturer	Ex-principal of K-12 campus, lecturing in both B Ed and M Ed with particular interest in teaching pedagogy, age demographic 60-65
Felicity	Lecturer	Lecturing M Ed with particular interest in Arts, age demographic 50-55
Dan	Mentor Teacher	Primary school teacher, government and independent systems, previous experience as principal in small regional school, taught most class year levels, regular mentor teacher for PSTs, research interest theories of learning, age demographic 45-50
Madison	Mentor Teacher	Primary school teacher, government system, previous experience in most class levels of school, regular mentor teacher for PSTs, taught in a range of small regional schools currently in mid-sized city school, age demographic 35-40
Mitchell	Mentor Teacher	Primary school teacher, independent system, previous experience taught most class levels of school, regular mentor teacher for PSTs, age demographic 35-40
Ben	Principal	Primary school principal large regional town– Catholic system, age demographic 60-65 years, 15 years' experience as principal. Supports professional experience placements from numerous universities
Sophia	Principal	P-12 school principal large regional town – independent system, age demographic 50-55 years. 10 years' experience as principal, Supports professional experience placements from numerous universities

Thesis Pseudonyms		
Pseudonym	**Participant Type**	**Demographic**
Gilberto	Principal	P-12 school principal large regional town – independent system age demographic 60-65 years, 15 years' experience as principal. Supports professional experience placements from numerous universities
Ellie	Preservice Teacher	Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 20-25
Lilly	Preservice Teacher	Master of Teaching 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 40-45
Michelle	Preservice Teacher	Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 40-45
Marlee	Preservice Teacher	Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 25-30
Seth	Preservice Teacher	Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 20-25
Mitch	Preservice Teacher	Bachelor of Education 2017 cohort, age demographic 30-35
Belle	Preservice Teacher	Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 40-45
Robyn	Preservice Teacher	Bachelor of Education 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 35-40
Keith	Preservice Teacher	Master of Teaching 2016-17 cohort, age demographic 50-55

Appendix G: Conference Presentations

Conference Presentations

- Australian Association for Research in Education: Online Conference 28 November - 2 December 2021

- Eastern College Australia School of Education: Online Research Seminar 30 August 2022

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