

# 106 Professional Knowledge Domains in Community-oriented Teacher Education: A literature review

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## Research Domains

Academic practice, work, careers and cultures (AP)

## Abstract

Initial teacher education through higher education courses and school-based practicums has been criticised for being decontextualised and insufficiently preparing teacher candidates to address the complexity and needs of the classroom, school, and local communities. An alternative, practice-intensive initial 'teacher training' uncritically offers a curriculum-scripted approach aimed at increasing standardised test scores but attends much less if at all to students' experiences and community needs. An emerging third approach, community-oriented teacher education (CoTE), combines learning in higher education, school-based practicums, as well as experiential learning and civic participation in community life. An unresolved question remains: what kinds of professional knowledge do CoTE practices and activities develop among teacher candidates? This literature review analyses the process phases of CoTE activities in 12 contexts and identifies that CoTE develops teacher candidates' theoretical, technical, practical, and critical-emancipatory knowledge.

## Full paper

### Introduction

The knowledge base of teacher education is contentious because there are contrasting perspectives on what an 'ideal teacher' needs to know, be and do (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001). Stakeholders conceptualise differently the nature and purpose of education; and whether to prioritise developing teacher candidates' knowledge of subject, pedagogy, research, or change agency (Furuhagen et al., 2019). Kretchmar & Zeichner (2016) describe initial teacher preparation approaches dubbed 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0. Teacher Prep 1.0, offered through higher education courses and school-based practicums, has been criticised as too theoretical with too limited classroom practice to enable teacher candidates to facilitate student achievement on curricula demands, and too decontextualised to support societal development. Posited by 'reformers' (including private actors) as a remedy, Teacher Prep 2.0 offers teacher candidates non-university training primarily in implementing standardised curricula to improve students' test scores; yet still decontextualised as it seldom engages teacher candidates in local community issues. Teacher prep 3.0 bridges the university, school and local community, all as spaces with 'funds of knowledge' (Oughton, 2010; Zipin, 2009) necessary for teacher candidates to understand and address student learning needs and societal challenges.

I consider and refer to Teacher Prep 3.0 as community-oriented teacher education (CoTE) because it is a kind of education facilitated by, in, with, and for the human, environmental and institutional resources in the communities (Smith & Sobel, 2010). A question at hand regards what professional knowledge CoTE offers teacher candidates. A useful categorisation of knowledge is the Pedagogy, Education and Praxis (PEP - <https://research.tuni.fi/pep/>) research network framework. PEP categorises knowledge into "theoretical knowledge, epistemē, whose end goal is [pursuing the] truth; technical (or poetical) knowledge, technē, whose end goal is production of something; ... practical knowledge, phronēsis, whose end goal is wise action" (Mahon et al., 2020, p. 18 quoting Aristotle, NE 1139a27-8, italics added); and critical-emancipatory knowledge, whose goal is to overcome irrationality in and "transform existing ways of seeing and doing things" (Kemmis & Smith, 2008, p. 23). I use this framing to chart professional knowledge domains.

### The current study

Articles describing CoTE activities in 12 contexts (Table 1) were reviewed to identify the knowledge domains developed among participating teacher candidates.

Table 1: Reviewed articles on CoTE in various contexts

Continent	Countries and Articles
Africa	Tanzania: (Kalungwizi et al., 2020)
	Uganda: (Walimbwa et al., 2022)
Asia	Vietnam: (Nguyen & Dang, 2020)
	Hong Kong: (Harfitt & Mei Ling Chow, 2018)
Europe	Italy: (Thomas, 2020)
	UK: (Bhargava & Jerome, 2020)
North America	USA: (Burant & Kirby, 2002; Popielarz & Galliher, 2023)
	Canada: (Goodnough & Mulcahy, 2011)
Oceania	Australia: (Ma & Green, 2021; Somerville et al., 2010)
South America	Peru: (Alsop et al., 2010)

## Findings

Five process stages were identified (conception, introduction, planning, implementation, and reflection & reporting); developing four knowledge domains (theoretical, technical, practical, and critical-emancipatory).

At the conception stage, project initiators plan the 'innovation'. Since teacher candidates are seldom involved, no knowledge domain is developed here. For example, the activity in Popielarz & Galliher (2023) involved teacher educators working with community mentors from two local non-governmental organisations.

The introductory stage develops theoretical knowledge by orienting teacher candidates to the theoretical and pedagogical basis of the activities. This includes subject knowledge (environmental education Kalungwizi et al. (2020); ideological issues (social justice in Burant & Kirby (2002); and the pedagogical theory (critical action research in Alsop et al. (2010).

The planning stage develops technical knowledge as teacher candidates design their project plans considering the learned theory, curricula demands and the envisioned school and community dynamics. They usually work with multiple stakeholders to identify, pre-visit and engage with the targeted resources in the community. For example, the teacher candidates in Ma & Green (2021) work with school-based teachers and conduct reconnaissance pre-visits to a swamp and a playground, their learning sites.

The implementation stage develops practical knowledge as teacher candidates face the classrooms and communities, needing to make decisions on the go. In Alsop et al. (2010), Carmen María conducts home visits instead of joint meetings with parents. When parent lack the time to meet at home, she walks with them to the field while they talk. Such flexibility reflects practical knowledge.

The reflection and reporting stage develops critical-emancipatory knowledge, as teacher candidates introspect, and critique systems and practices for transformation. Through community projects, Tyrone and Maya in Popielarz & Galliher (2023) [re]gain the love for social studies as they now see how it connects with and impacts students and communities.

## Conclusion

As these five stages illustrate, CoTE activities develop a range of professional knowledge domains among teacher candidates. Such knowledge is necessary for addressing students' learning needs and addressing societal challenges.

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