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more economical statement of the key theses. That said, this fine collection of Pring's work is a generally welcome and timely one, and I should not anyway expect to have to put much pressure on his many friends and admirers to go out and purchase their own personal copy.

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Understanding expertise in teaching: case studies of ESL teachers

Amy B. M. Tsui, 2003

Cambridge, Cambridge University Press

£53 (hbk), £20.55 (pbk)

ISBN 05216-3207-2 (hbk), ISBN 05216-3569-1 (pbk)

This is an important book about the development of expertise in teaching. Case studies of the professional development of four ESL teachers working in a Hong Kong secondary school lie at the heart of the book. However, this should not deter all who are engaged in the education and training of teachers generally, and those involved in researching the nature of teaching expertise and the processes by which it is developed, from reading this book. The case studies are designed to explore three questions that the author generates from a critical, cross-disciplinary review of the major theories of expertise currently in circulation and relevant research literature, which goes beyond the influential 'information-processing' model of cognitive psychology to embrace philosophical, anthropological, and pedagogically oriented approaches to the study of expertise. There is one notable omission, which I will refer to later, in an otherwise comprehensive review of the literature. The three questions are:

1. What are the critical differences between expert, experienced and novice teachers?
2. How does a teacher become an expert teacher?
3. What are the critical factors that shape the development of expertise?

The case studies of ESL teachers, through which these questions are explored, are good examples of well-designed and methodologically sound research in this genre. They illustrate the powerful role that good case studies can play in theory development, contrary to the prejudice against case study research that has emerged in recent years amongst certain advocates of 'big science' educational research.

In a commanding final chapter Amy Tsui draws on her case study data to address her questions systematically and in doing so she develops a synthesising conception of expertise in teaching and its development that is truly inter-disciplinary and universal in scope. Her case studies enable her to compare how three experienced teachers and a novice teacher go about making sense of their work. She describes how the practices of

the experienced teachers differ from that of the novice teacher, but demonstrates that only certain differences are indicators of expertise. Of the three experienced teachers in her sample she claims that only one of them bears the hallmarks of an expert teacher. Hence, although expertise depends on experience, it does not follow that all experienced teachers are expert teachers. The critical differences between expert and non-expert teachers, she argues, lie in how they develop their professional knowledge in concrete contexts of practice.

Tsui shows how the expert teacher in her study, Marina, relates to her context of work in a way that is significantly different from both the novice teacher and the other experienced teachers, and in doing so she develops a conception and understanding of her teaching which is richer and more elaborate than that of the other three teachers. Tsui identifies the critical respects in which the expert teacher's response to her context of work differs from that of the other teachers. First, Marina does not separate her practice into different functional domains in which discrete competencies apply. She integrates her classroom management strategies with the pursuit of her pedagogical goals, and therefore understands them in terms of the *management of learning* rather than simply *behaviour management*. Similarly Marina's conception of the value of classroom activities, like group work, is also linked to her understanding of pedagogical goals. Second, her practice is not dictated by contextual constraints—lack of resources, the models of language learning embedded in the curriculum and text books—because she actively shapes her context of work in the light of a more holistic understanding of the wider context of her work as an ESL teacher, for example of the language situation in Hong Kong. Hence, she is able to transcend the constraints which present themselves in the immediate situation by imagining new possibilities for action. Third, unlike the other teachers, Marina *theorises the intuitive practical knowledge* she has acquired through experience and *practicalises the formal theoretical knowledge* she has acquired through courses and reading. The case data shows how she is able to articulate her intuitive knowledge and test its relevance and adequacy in her present work context, and then to use her formal knowledge as a resource for extending her practical knowledge in ways that generate more contextually adequate responses.

Tsui's 'discovery' that conscious deliberation and reflection is central to the development of teaching expertise echoes the claims of the educational action research/'teachers as researchers' movement, and it is a pity that this book makes little reference to the considerable literature on the development of teachers' professional knowledge that it has generated over the past 40 years. Her account of the things which characterise the process of 'theorising practice and practicalising theory'—experimentation, problematising the unproblematic, responding to and looking for challenges—are well documented in accounts of teachers' action research. Nevertheless, Tsui's conceptualisation of the development of teaching expertise is very welcome as a fresh and in some respects novel articulation of the process at a time when teacher education reform policies, while emphasising the importance of work experience, have neglected the development of teaching excellence in favour of approaches based on a specification of functional competencies. Moreover, in the process of developing this conceptualisation Tsui generates some of the best critiques to date of influential theories of the

professional development of teachers, such as those of Dreyfus and Dreyfus, information-processing theory, Schulman and Grossman, and Schön.

I will certainly keep this book in a central position on my bookshelves for constant reference in the future.

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Ethics, social research and consulting with children and young people

Priscilla Alderson & Virginia Morrow, 2004

Ilford, Essex, Barnardo's

£12.95, 168 pp.

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Traditionally, the focus of research relating to children in health, social and educational services has been on the adults responsible for children. Adults have been seen as better able than children themselves to speak for them and to influence decisions on policy and services affecting their lives (Morgan *et al.*, 2002). Alderson and Morrow, on the other hand, write from a perspective of children as social actors with their own experiences and understandings, and as active participants in the research process and in societal life in general. This perspective has support in the United Nations *Convention on the rights of the child* (1989) which underlines that all activities (including research) that affect children's lives must proceed from the assumption that children are fellow human beings and active citizens who have the right to have a voice and to be involved, informed, consulted and heard (Christensen & Prout, 2002).

This book is an updated and revised version of the original by Alderson in 1995, and is published by Barnardo's, the largest children's charity in the UK, which is also active in taking forward research with children. Both authors are well known for their work with children in health and social research. One of the major strengths of the book is that Alderson and Morrow succeed in balancing competing agendas: children's right to be included in activities like research on the one hand, and their need to be protected from harm and exploitation on the other; the call for increasing regulation of social research in line with health service research on the one hand, and an emphasis on the individual responsibility and personal skills of the researcher on the other; and the need for ethical guidelines when researching with children on the one hand, and an acknowledgement that we must start our research from an assumption of uncertainty and develop a sensitive and reflexive approach to our practice.

Rather than advocating particular methods or the application of a particular set of ethical standards when working with children in research, they promote the use of practices which are compatible with children's experiences, interests and values. This demands a broad and critical analysis of the cultural, social and political context of a