Strengthening Learners' Perspectives in Professional Standards to Restore Relationality as Central to Teaching

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Abstract: Australian teacher standards have effects on what is thought about teachers' work. Just as teacher standards give expression to some characteristics of quality teaching, so too do students' views if solicited and made public, yet the archive of teaching standards pays little attention to learners' perspectives. This paper uses a theoretical framework informed by Foucauldian discourse analysis to contribute to a critical deliberation of how the diminished account of learners' perspectives sidelines the relational aspects of teaching and learning which are thus placed as inferior—as having a low ranking—in this pervasive standards-driven policy arena. In this qualitative study, exploring discourses circulating in young people's views of teaching accomplishment can advance understanding of these 'silences or blind spots' in teacher standards by unearthing subjugated knowledges to contribute to the (re)articulation of a relational view of standards. This has important implications for the work of teacher-educators, who must go beyond the current teacher standards.

Introduction

Young people articulate discerning views about their learning and can provide potent insights for improving teaching (Rudduck, McIntyre, & ESRC Teaching and Learning Programme., 2007). This can make a significant contribution to understanding what constitutes accomplished teaching (Flutter, 2007; Hopkins, 2008; Rudduck, et al., 2007; Whitty & Wisby, 2007). Yet their insights are largely absent in the development of teaching standards. Using a qualitative approach, and bringing discourse analytic tools to bear, I analysed the perspectives of consequential stakeholders, that is the students (Groundwater-Smith, 2005), and contrasted them with discursive readings of the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers. Primary and post-primary children's accounts of great teachers were used as a means to explore multiple perspectives on standards in order to uncover regimes of truth (Foucault, 1980), the historically specific mechanisms that produce discourses which function as true in particular times and places.

Standards are representations of knowledge about what constitutes good teaching, though arguably they are limited representations. Conceived in performative terms, standards are commonly described as what teachers know and can do (Ingvarson, 2002) and sometimes what teachers know, believe (or value) and can do. Calls for the teaching profession to develop and use professional standards are common (Hayes, 2006). Indeed the slogan for the development of advanced standards promoted by Teaching Australia in 2006 was "by the profession for the profession", suggesting that standards are of benefit to teachers and that

teachers should be centrally involved in their production and use. Yet in this account students' perspectives are tellingly absent.

Professional standards are expressions of discourses that regulate teachers' conduct. Standards are predominantly statements of behavioural elements of teaching, skewed to express cognitive behaviours rather than teacher attitudes or intellectuality (Evans, 2011). As such they are at best limited representations of teaching. In other words, they emphasise particular elements of teaching and diminish other representations of teaching. These limited representations of teaching feed into an audit culture and this weakens the possibility of developing robust ways of building deep understandings of teaching and learning (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009). By opening up, appraising and looking beyond standards based education reforms, richer means of understanding teaching are possible (Mulcahy, 2011).

This article is structured in the following parts. It begins by outlining the literature that supports the importance of incorporating learners' perspectives, especially affective and relational dimensions. The article then reports on an analysis of learners' perspectives of great teachers and contrasts this with discourses circulating in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011) to problematise the account of good teachers made in APST. It argues that a diminished consideration of learners' perspectives is evident in standards discourses and concludes by proposing that by attending to and articulating the affective, relational dimensions of teaching that an enriched account of teaching standards could be established to foster student wellbeing and achievement.

Incorporating Learners' Perspectives

Students provide important perspectives on learning, as they identify the elements of quality teaching that are important to them. By considering learners views this can augment "understanding of the ongoing relationship between the teacher and student as co-constructors of knowledge and practice within the classroom" (Kaur, Anthony, Ohtani, & Clarke, 2013, p. 2). It is well-established that teaching standards attempt to capture quality teaching practices; however, they focus more on teaching than learning.

Enquiring explicitly into students' views can enhance understandings of teaching and learning, augmenting the many informal ways that teachers can and do attend to students' learning. Teachers are attentive to verbal and non-verbal indicators of learning during lessons and they scrutinise and assess students' products of learning. Contrary to this, teachers may adhere to comfortable routines, dismiss feedback or only heed viewpoints which accord with their stance (Groves, 2007). As well, the teacher's major concern is with the overall flow of the lesson, not the needs of individual students (Hargreaves, 2000). Accordingly, learners' perspective research has the "power to unlock the shackles of habit that so often bind teachers to their familiar routines of practice and thought" (Flutter, 2007, p. 352). Directly attending to students' understanding of good, great and problematic teaching can lead to profound development in teaching by recalibrating the relationship between teacher and students.

The Importance of Relationality and of Affect

Teaching has a relational dimension that is affective. Affect and emotion are often used interchangeably, yet they are not the same. Affect is a state of feeling such as feeling good, feeling exhausted, feeling valued. Emotion is the result of events; it is a response to something. Affect can be a component of emotion (Ekkekakis, 2012). Taking affect as the focus of analyses enabled me to take on the learners' understanding of what motivates them, how they feel and how this influences their actions in learning. Nel Noddings' influential work on affect is instructive. She argues that the neglect of affect in education is to the detriment of all participants in education and that affect has "been distrusted, denigrated or at least set aside in favour of reason" (Noddings, 1996, p. 435). As a result, a distance between teacher and learner that is often aligned with 'professional' relationships has come to be seen as valuable. It is a misconception, however, that distance is necessary in professionalism. Though professional relationships do not need to be distant, they must be ethical—or put more colloquially, appropriate. Teachers who foster conditions in which respect-based relationships are nurtured and strengthened can serve to increase and enhance the learning of their students (Johnson, 2008; van Uden, Ritzen, & Pieters, 2014). Indeed,

> evidence is building that indicates that the potency of quality teaching is not restricted to pedagogical techniques solely concerned with subject content and academic processes, but that its efficacy also lies in attending to the affective dimension of teaching and learning. (Lovat, 2010, p.491)

This encapsulating quotation is a call to rethink teaching as a *more than* a rational, cognitive activity.

Relationality is the connection between the teacher and the learner that is mediated by each participant's identity and agency. Such connections can range from nurturing and ethical to dominating and damaging. Such a relational dimension can be understood in terms of relationships which are the ongoing connection between two or more people (Wubbels, den Brok, van Tartwijk, & Levy, 2012). In the context of this study, I use the terms relational and relationality as they capture the concept of the social relations that circulate in learning and teaching environments, and include the affective connection between teacher and student, and also between students.

Standards prioritise knowing over relationships yet "knowledge is generated and held inside relationships; here between teachers and pupils" (Bibby, 2009, p. 45). In this worldview, teacher capability is constructed as the teacher having expertise in particular knowledge areas (e.g. Economics or literacy) but is also expert socially or emotionally (Bibby, 2009). Thus, students can have a 'good' mathematics teacher, a state of affairs experienced relationally, inasmuch as both parties are bound to the group and care for each other. In other words, a safe social and emotional space has been developed and maintained between teacher and students and enables learning to flourish. This space is shown to be crucial for students facing hardship. In the context of a pre-vocational certificate designed to provide young adults who were characterised as facing economic hardship with an alternative entry into university studies, Lesley Scanlon (2004) observes that the inclusion of learners' perspective is essential to better capture the complexity of teaching. In this perspective teachers are placed in a position where they can orchestrate relationships of various kinds.

Not only do students name relational characteristics of teaching as important; teachers do so too. Teachers recognise "that quality of relationships is an important factor to be considered in excellence in teaching" (Grieve, 2010, p. 275), and this is founded on well-developed interpersonal skills and personal attributes. For Giles, the relational dimensions of teacher-student communications influence how the students learn with that teacher by "engaging them in reciprocity of open and dynamic relating" (Giles, 2011, p. 70).

Conversely, some students avoid some teachers because their demeanour and approaches preclude building positive relationships.

The concept of pedagogy emphasises "the interrelated aspects of teaching and learning" (Lingard, Hayes, & Mills, 2003, p. 400). As Mulcahy (2006, p. 57) has it, "pedagogy is not given in any educational order of things, but rather constructed through a relationship between teacher and taught". Teachers and students emphasise the importance of relationships in the learning situation. It is not simply that learners prefer to learn with people with whom they have relationships; it is much more fundamental, in that learning is relational (McFadden & Munns, 2002). Human beings require care to thrive. Relationality in standards is inadequately evident, yet it is central to the educational enterprise as constructive teacher—student relationships have important effects in improving student engagement, achievement, and wellbeing (Cahill, Murphy, & Pose, 2011; Wubbels, den Brok, van Tartwijk, & Levy, 2012). Current teaching standards neglect the affective aspects of teaching and learning which risks diminishing their value for those who use standards to guide or audit practice (McNess, Broadfoot, & Osborn, 2003).

Overview of context

In 2009, the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) conducted a World Teachers Day competition in which Preparatory to year 12 students in Victoria's schools[1] were invited to submit a three-minute film exploring the question: "What makes a great teacher?" Two hundred entries were submitted. This research analysed the ten finalists'[2] entries to identify their major discourses and draw out implications for teaching standards and for teacher education.

The entries are relevant empirical research material because they comprise a set of contemporary statements of 'great' teaching and 'great' teachers that a judging panel deemed to be most insightful and articulate. The motivations of the students in entering the competition are unknown in these publicly submitted film clips, yet I recognise that those who participated were more likely to have cultural capital (Harker, Mahar, & Wilkes, 1990) than not—those who are advantaged by school and who may consequently speak favourably of the status quo (McIntyre, Pedder, & Rudduck, 2005; Noyes, 2005).

These student responses were selected because although the students had to conform to the requirements of the competition, they were not influenced by the researcher who played no part in constructing or judging the competition, which alleviates some concerns of researcher positionality, a term I use in preference to bias.[3] Of course the selection has an implicit perspective in and of itself as these children, all less than 18 years of age, chose to furnish their opinions knowing that the ten winning responses would be published in the public domain on the World Wide Web. As well, the judges' influence is considerable. Student participants were primary and secondary school students whose entries to a

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[1] Whilst this competition was situated within primary and secondary schools in Victoria, the analysis may resonate with readers in related contexts.

[2] Finalists
http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/news/Lists/News/ViewItem.aspx?List=7c6d7605%2D3e62%2D4a12%2Db973%2D2e72d3ad1518&ID=89
Winning entries
http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/news/Lists/News/ViewItem.aspx?List=7c6d7605%2D3e62%2D4a12%2Db973%2D2e72d3ad1518&ID=90

[3] 'Bias comes not from having ethical and political positions – this is inevitable – but from not acknowledging them. Not only does such acknowledgment help to unmask any bias that is implicit in those views, but it helps to provide a way of responding critically and sensitively to the research.' Griffiths, M. (1998). *Educational Research for Social Justice: Getting off the Fence*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

competition were judged as successful, so adult sorting of student responses had already occurred.

The competition organisers explicitly stated that students' views were valued. Competitors were aware that winning films would be placed on the VIT website with full acknowledgement of the school and individual students who made each film which may have inhibited their responses, and constrained themes that were included. Nonetheless, I infer that the students participated eagerly because the process affirmed the importance of their views and they appreciated the opportunity to celebrate great teachers.

The ten films by the finalists were created by students from government and non-government primary and secondary schools in Victoria. Students were aged from 5 to 16. One film was produced by a single student, two films were produced by two students and the remainder were produced by larger groups of students, altogether 60 students were part of the ten films. The films included interviews between students and of teachers, songs and narratives.

Common practices of teaching are deeply encultured (Kaur, et al., 2013). This analysis provides participants' views on what is a great teacher. These multi-modal texts serve my purposes well as they enable me to focus on what young people view as elements of great teaching and so the role of teacher from the perspective of the learner becomes the centre of attention. In seeking out a gap in standards, counter-discourses can emerge.

Limitations

The limitations of the study design included the use of multi-modal texts from a small number of students located in one state of Australia (Victoria). The characteristics of the students and their motivations are unknown, thus getting to the heart of what students mean is challenging as the film clips precluded any opportunity to probe or clarify students' meaning. Noyes captures the challenge of analysing empirical material in ways that go beyond filtering only what is recognisable in this succinct sentence—"voices are nothing without hearers" (2005, p.536). I remain acutely aware that what I noticed from the transcript of each film and the meanings I made of this are selective. "Discovering ways to listen to thoughts (one's own and others), to listen to possibilities, to resist being side-tracked by our individualised repetitions and obsessions, is a continuing struggle" (Davies, 2010, p. 66). What this article intends to do is to contribute to the knowledge base of student perspectives on teaching standards and quality teaching through analysis of students' views about teaching.

Analytical Frame

Michel Foucault's work underpins my approach to discourse analysis, which is established on his foundational concept that power resides in prevailing discourses and it forms the objects of which it speaks (Foucault, 1972). Discourses then are viewed as a web of related practices and objects that together produce effects. Significantly, this article attends to both regimes of truths (that which is constructed as self-evident or true), and subjugated knowledge (that which is absent or silent) (Foucault, 1980). So, discourses affect what can be conceived of, or thought—and what it is impossible to think (Taylor, Wetherell, & Yates, 2001). The analysis of students' views opens a space for thinking standards otherwise and for imagining 'quality' teaching differently.

To examine the discourses circulating in the film texts, I viewed the films making holistic judgments. I then transcribed each film and this body of material was analysed

seeking discursive elements and their interrelationships. In the first phase of analysis, I aimed to identify general themes iteratively. By remaining open to what emerged from the film texts, led to unexpected themes coming into view in this study. Manual inductive exploration was used. The purpose of this initial phase of analysis was to identify major themes and concepts. In the second phase of analysis I collapsed the themes into four major discourses, and rank ordered these. Finally I selected a representative sample of each discourse from the complete texts.

Analysis

I analysed the films for their key features: what students identified as making a great teacher. Four distinct but overlapping discourses were identified: personal qualities; teacher expertise; high expectations; and teacher-student relationships. These discourses are listed below and rank ordered in the following way. The first of four discourses overall—personal qualities—was least emphasised. The final discourse—importance of relationships—was accorded by far the strongest emphasis in the films. Short representative quotes from the films are presented to invite the reader to listen to students' perspectives of good teaching (Whitehead & Clough, 2004).

Personal qualities

Discourse	Representative sample of responses
1. Personal qualities	1.1 Energetic 1.2 Creative 1.3 Fun 1.4 Inspirational 1.5 Sticks to what they say 1.6 Honest 1.7 Loves what they do 1.8 Enthusiastic 1.9 Funny 1.10 Reliable 1.11 Intelligent 1.12 A problem solver

Figure 1: Personal qualities of a teacher

According to these students, teachers are people who exhibit or choose to share elements of their character with their students. Students value, admire and indeed desire teachers who are lively and ardent, who are consistent, honest and enthusiastic and who show their passion for their work. There is a moral and ethical dimension evident in items 1.5, 1.6, and 1.10 whereby great teachers are perceived to be consistent, truthful and trustworthy. Such teachers are alert to and alive in their situation as they bring their energy, creativity, and enthusiasm for teaching to bear in their practice context.

These samples suggest that students discursively construct teachers as particular types of people with specific personal qualities. A particular humanist, individualistic discourse of teacher subjectivity is at work here. While the emphasis is placed on personal or individual qualities, they are qualities that are important in relation to others.

Teacher expertise: Performing curricular and pedagogic knowledge

Discourse	Representative sample of responses
2. Teacher expertise: Performing curricular and pedagogic knowledge	2.1 Experienced in your area and able to share that with your students 2.2 Give you the right work 2.3 A great teacher doesn't always need to be in the front of the class teaching 2.4 Great teachers show us many ways to learn 2.5 Give us information 2.6 Help us to solve things 2.7 Help us to learn 2.8 Teach us how to learn: solving problems 2.9 Teaches you and guides you 2.10 Help students learn 2.11 Teach us things that will stay with us from the cradle to the grave

Figure 2: Teacher expertise

The key discursive thread is the reciprocal elements of teacher knowledge in their field of expertise and their pedagogical knowledge—commonly described as teachers knowing their subject and how to best teach it. Curriculum knowledge underpins items 2.1, 2.2 and 2.4 and is often intricately entwined with pedagogic knowledge in these students' responses (items 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8, 2.9 and 2.10).

A discourse of transmissive teaching is evident in [the teacher] "gives us information". The phrase that great teachers "gives you the right work" points to teacher professional judgement that is based on knowledge of students as a knowledge of both curriculum and the learning needs of the students is required to provide the right work. There is a normative/values discourse evident in figure 2 e.g. "right" work. Clearly, students' accord the teacher authority; s/he is deemed to make the right judgments with respect to the work that the students are given.

The capacity to select important foci for learning is signalled in the phrase that great teachers "teach us things that will stay with us from the cradle to the grave" which is also redolent of the discourse of lifelong learning which goes beyond subject area teaching to schooling as an institutional endeavour. In contrast to the discourse of teaching as transmission, a constructivist view of teaching is signalled in "help us to learn" and "help us to solve things", implying the development of thinking processes. Surprisingly, in my view, there was little emphasis on content knowledge other than "gives you the right work" as, to meet this goal, teacher knowledge is required to know the work, as well as what is needed at any point. The teacher under construction is generic, not subject specific, as the task of creating films was to respond to "what makes a great teacher" has tailored the product. It is not what makes my English teacher or a Year 4 teacher great; the task is framed generally so discipline specific aspects don't feature in these representative samples. Generic aspects of curricular and pedagogic knowledge are foregrounded because of this.

High expectations

Discourse	Representative sample of responses
3. High expectations	3.1 Want us to do our best and encourage us to keep on trying
	3.2 Doesn't mind if I can't do it as long as I have a try
	3.3 Want me to be the best that I can be
	3.4 She makes us try something challenging
	3.5 Help us do our best
	3.6 Encouraging
	3.7 Loves when you try your best so you are not afraid of making a mistake
	3.8 Encourages us to do our best
	3.9 Make us want to learn, to reach our full potential

Figure 3: Teacher expectations

The discourse of the teacher holding high expectations for students, which I take to be founded on a relational understanding of students' capabilities and potential for development, is strongly evident. The term "best" occurs in most of the statements. This partially fits with the common standards category that "teachers know their students", although there is an implied leap of faith as teachers cannot know with certainty what their student's best is. These students suggest that great teachers are alive to the potential in each child. It can be inferred from these representative samples that teachers create conditions of opportunity such that students can reach beyond what anyone knows they can achieve, by expecting more and encouraging their charges to strive for excellence.

These interpretations accord with research that identifies a key teaching practice of setting rigorously challenging goals for students strongly contribute to high quality learning (Hattie, 2012). For example "she makes us try something challenging" describes how great teachers set challenging goals. Implicit in this statement is that teachers design pedagogical means of achieving these goals and always believe in students' ability to attain the goals (Ingvarson & Hattie, 2004). As a primary group (ages 9—12) aptly said: "great teachers want me to be the best that I can be".

In these responses, there is a clear sense that teaching is a relational act in which teachers challenge but also encourage students, which implies that affirmation and acknowledgement are indispensable. An affective charge is carried in "best", and related terms such as "encouragement" and "not feeling afraid". Certainly, not feeling afraid of making a mistake has to do with affect. Affective intensity and charge are circulating in these students' meanings about the great teacher and, by extension, great teaching.

While separated for analytic purposes, the dimension of teaching as a relational enterprise is palpable in the final two categories. The link between the two involves 'becoming'/subjectivity, or what Foucault calls the conduct of the self, for example in figure 4, item 2, "They teach us to treat each other the way we would like to be treated" (Primary group entry Ages 6-7). Discourses of moral and ethical conduct are implied here, and discourses of fairness and inclusion also circulate in the students' statements (see sub-section 4 below). Finally the frequent use of pronouns (e.g. us) suggests that those high expectations are relational—both between teacher and student and for all students.

The relationship between the teacher and student: an overwhelmingly relational account

Discourse	Representative sample of responses
4. The relationship between the teacher and student: an overwhelmingly relational account	4.1 Great relationships with their students
	4.2 They teach us to treat each other the way we would like to be treated
	4.3 Loves children; Loves kids
	4.4 Interested in how I feel
	4.5 Kind, caring; Cares
	4.6 Make us feel safe and we know that they care about us
	4.7 Always happy to help whenever we need help
	4.8 Helps everyone
	4.9 Great teachers include everyone
	4.10 Enjoys having you in their class
	4.11 Great teachers listen
	4.12 Great teachers like everyone equally
	4.13 Gives everyone a fair go
	4 14 Understanding
	4.15 Know us [the students] well
	4.16 Notices when you do something new
	4.17 Says "Hi" in the morning and misses you when you go on holidays
	4.18 Great fun to play with
	4.19 Smiles
	4.20 Teacher that you are not afraid to walk up to
	4.21 Sticks up for kids and keeps them safe
	4.22 Doesn't shout or get angry if you tell the truth
	4.23 Patient
	4.24 The teacher has got to relate
	4.25 Compassionate

Figure 4: Relationality

The great teacher is collectively described as a smiling person who is kind, caring, inclusive, interested in their students, helpful to students, and doesn't shout or get angry. She is alert to students' achievements and development as she "notices when you do something new" and treats students respectfully. By describing a teacher as "great fun to play with", who "says hi in the morning" and "misses you when you go on holidays", these students speak to the qualities of their relationship with their teachers. This composite description is drawn from both primary and post-primary films and there was no significant difference in the emphasis on relationships between primary and post-primary entries.

According to young people, what is important in teachers' work is not explicitly epistemic (pertaining to knowledge and its development), it is affective and relational. This may be self-evident to teachers, and certainly to parents and young people yet examination of common standards frameworks finds that the relational character of teaching is not accorded the primacy that it is in these learners' perspectives. It is, at best, briefly included and not given any significant rating. I speculate that this brevity of emphasis is caused by the challenge of capturing the relational aspect of teaching. Students accord importance to teachers who talk to them, not at them, poignantly illustrating the student's preference for a teacher who is able to relate to the student's particular situation and interact with him/her (Kriewaldt, 2009).

The importance of positive and reciprocal teacher-student relationships in the educational psychology literature is well accepted (Cornelius-White, 2007; Fraser & Walberg, 2005; Newberry, 2010). More recently the positive psychology movement has aimed to value positive practices, particularly positive relationships in order to build and

sustain well-being (Lopez & Snyder, 2011). From an anthropological viewpoint, learning is naturally relational (Lave & Wenger, 1991). In the context of workplace learning, Beckett and Hagar (2002) point to a deficit in learning when it is focused on the hands and head but not the heart. Relational thinking requires attending to the interconnections between people (children and their teachers), places and things (Bingham & Sidorkin, 2004) (certainly my focus is confined to human relations rather than places and things). Young people want to be seen as responsible and trusted by teachers who listen to them. Importantly, Cornelius-White's meta-analysis of over 1000 scholarly articles finds that positive teacher-student relationships are associated with learning gains (2007) yet this is not a feature of the Australian teacher standards.

Relationality in the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

There is only cursory mention of the affective and relational work of teaching in *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (AITSL, 2011). In focus 4.1 "Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments", the Standards allude to the relational work of the teacher in which the proficient teacher establishes "inclusive and positive interactions" (Figure 5). For example, this neglect in evident in Figure 5; the standard attempts to capture the relational nature of teaching in phrases like teachers "manage challenging behaviour by establishing and negotiating clear expectations with students and address discipline issues promptly, fairly and respectfully", yet somehow the notion of a caring, smiling listener who the young people describe in this study, lurks in the shadows of this standard—it may be implicit but it is certainly not explicit. Though an attempt to acknowledge affect is present in this statement from these Australian standards, this in no way matches the strength of the discourse of relationship in which students are apparently caught up.

Focus area 4.1 Support student participation
At proficient level: Establish and implement inclusive and positive interactions to engage and support all students in classroom activities.
Focus area 4.2 Manage classroom activities
At proficient level: Establish and maintain orderly and workable routines to create an environment where student time is spent on learning tasks.
Focus area 4.3 Manage challenging behaviour
At proficient level: Manage challenging behaviour by establishing and negotiating clear expectations with students and address discipline issues promptly, fairly and respectfully.
Focus area 4.4 Maintain student safety
At proficient level: Ensure students' well-being and safety within school by implementing school and/ or system, curriculum and legislative requirements.

(Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011)

Figure 5 Selected standards statements from Create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments

Just as learners' perspectives are understated in focus area 4.1, the absence of learners in the professional engagement domain compounds the diminishment of the possibility that standards users will attend to their students' insights. In focus area 6.1, proficient teachers "engage in professional learning" in which they "use the Australian Professional Standards

for Teachers and advice from *colleagues* to identify and plan professional learning needs" (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011). I argue that relationality is underplayed in the standards and as these standards are used as the benchmark for professional learning, then oppoturnities to consider relational aspects of teachers are denied. Learners' perspectives are ignored as useful to identify and plan professional learning and revealingly it is 'colleagues' who are able to provide guidance. If this standard was to be rewritten to include advice from colleagues *and students*, this would strengthen the standards.

Relationality, then, is a discursive shadow—a muted meaning or whispered account within this managerialist discourse of standards. By not giving prominence to affective teacher-student relationships, this dimension of teaching is rendered of small importance and is less available as a focus for professional reflection, analysis and assessment. The established standards regime of truth constructs teachers as knowing their student, their subject and how to teach the subject—a uni-directional logic ostensibly applies in standards generally. It constrains foci for teacher education and in accreditation processes that utilise standards frameworks by limiting what might be addressed in order to meet the high-stakes requirements for ongoing registration.

Discussion

Potentially, neglecting the relational dimension of teaching downplays its importance and produces deleterious effects on student progress. The emotional and relational work of teachers is not afforded priority in the Australian standards framework although they may point to this in phrases such as in the very common standards statement the teacher "knows their students", a unidirectional statement—students are not required to know their teachers. The relational dimension of teaching is relegated to one small and discrete aspect of teaching standards, rather than a cornerstone of what makes great teaching, as this study suggests.

All discourses have productive effects—that is they bring things into effect. This discursive shadow serves potentially to constrain conditions of possibility regarding other conceptions of the teacher, for example the teacher as 'carer'. This alternative situation, which might be described as a 'regime of caring', is a necessary but not sufficient vision of teaching, yet the students who made these films regard it as absolutely central to their conception of a great teacher. For these students, a regime of caring is foundational for their learning.

Foucault provides a way of identifying the effects of society's beliefs and values on 'truth' (and the converse of these too). Truth is not absolute; it is a system of processes that combine to produce, regulate, and circulate statements that are accepted. Standards are part of a system that defines and regulates teaching. Standards create a 'regime of truth'—a set of interlocked 'truths' about what makes good teaching as well as practices that influence behaviour and validate the regime of truth. Knowledge that is sanctioned institutionally can produce such an authoritative consensus about how to 'be' that it is difficult to imagine how to think, act, and feel in any other way (MacNaughton, 2005, p. 32). Standards create an officially sanctioned rendition of teaching that can overshadow other renditions which are marginalised to become abnormal. By rendering the relational aspect of teaching and learning of less significance, its importance in this complex practice is diminished.

Conclusion

The empirical material presented has revealed young people's insights into elements or characteristics of great teachers. Analysing these films provides a means of speaking back

to teaching standards and has the potential to improve teaching and learning by highlighting the importance of the commitment of the teacher to taking an interest in young peoples' lives. Students' affective connection with the teacher is at best underplayed in standards frameworks but it is centrally implicated in these young people's films of what makes a great teacher. In constructing a relationship between teachers and taught, an affective dimension is unavoidable in teaching and learning. Learning is intrinsically relational. The relational quality of the relationship between teacher and learner is not at all well-captured in standards, resulting in a diminished expression of teaching in standards documents. Suzanne Gannon's research supports these findings, and as she cogently puts it, "teaching is affectively, relationally and materially contingent, and that the homogenising strategies of current standards frameworks are ill equipped to recognise this contingency" (Gannon, 2012, p. 60).

The relational discourses identified provide an important outlook for standards developers and users. As Foucault convincingly wrote: "The problem is not changing people's consciousness—or what is in their heads—but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth" (Foucault & Rabinow, 1984, pp. 74-75). Incorporating systematic ways of including young peoples' perspectives in teaching standards could help attune beginning and ongoing teachers to the significance of attending to the constructs of the teacher put forward by consequential stakeholders so that teachers can continue to improve their practice. Teachers are routinely asked to reflect on their practice: their reflections could be enhanced through consideration of learners' perspectives and the systematic collection of feedback from learners to inform their own practice (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2003). Processes such as learning partnerships, an effective pedagogical approach in which school students are used as coaches within pre-service teacher education (Cahill, et al., 2011), holds promise as one way of reclaiming a discourse of relationality in education.

Standards are historically specific mechanisms which re/produce discourses that have effects. "Discursive practices render particular aspects of existence meaningful in particular ways, which then become thinkable and calculable and thus amenable to intervention and regulation, with documentation, computation and evaluation as the main instruments or technologies for achieving this" (Fejes & Nicoll, 2008, p. 23). By rendering teaching as a cognitive, rational enterprise as some standards do, the importance of affect is minimised and is less thinkable—and arguably less valued, despite young peoples' desire to be in-relation with their teachers. This article argues that rearticulating an affective discourse will strengthen teaching and teacher-education.

Through considering knowledge and ways of knowing that are regularly subjugated and by attending to young people's 'teaching standards', this article has brought to the forefront discourses that are rendered unremarkable or resisted perhaps because the mainstream managerial culture regards them as standards that can't be articulated or only articulated in partial ways. Consequently and crucially, student perspectives are 'pushed' from view and rendered unimportant. Bringing learner perspectives into teacher education can foster transformative professional growth. During times when standards frameworks influence teacher education through mandatory accreditation processes, it is vital to go beyond the confines of the standards requirements.

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